



Bacchus Marsh
Grammar

School Board Policy

Governance

GOV-029 Student Attendance Policy

(source: Complispace)

Approved by the School Board 31 October 2019





Student Attendance Policy

1	Source of Obligation	2
2	Daily Attendance Register	2
3	Monitoring Daily Attendance	2
4	Following Up Unexplained Student Absences	2
5	Notification of Parents and Guardians of Unsatisfactory Attendance	3
6	Extended Absences	3
7	Records of the Register of Daily Attendance	3
8	Implementation	3
9	Related Documents	3
10	Authorisation	4
11	History	4

1 Source of Obligation

- 1.1.1 The Victorian Registration Standards (sch 2 cl 10) shown in Appendix 1, require that we must make provisions to:
- 1.1.1.1 monitor the daily attendance of each student enrolled at the school;
 - 1.1.1.2 identify any absences of a student from school including classes;
 - 1.1.1.3 follow up any unexplained absences of a student from the school or classes;
 - 1.1.1.4 notify any parent or guardian regarding a student's unsatisfactory school or class attendance; and
 - 1.1.1.5 record information regarding a student's unsatisfactory attendance at school or classes on their student file.
- 1.1.2 The Victorian Registration Standards (sch 2 cl 11) require that we:
- 1.1.2.1 must maintain a student attendance register in which the attendance at the school of any child of compulsory school age is noted at least daily, any reasons given or apparent for the absence of the child from the school is noted.

2 Daily Attendance Register

- 2.1.1 Bacchus Marsh Grammar keeps a register of the daily attendance of all students at the school in Synergetic. The register of daily attendance records the following information for each student:
- daily attendance;
 - absences;
 - reason for absence; and
 - documentation to substantiate reason for absence.
- 2.1.2 Attendance is checked at least twice a day, at:
- 8:45am Tutor Group; and
 - 1:30pm (5th period).

3 Monitoring Daily Attendance

- 3.1.1 Bacchus Marsh Grammar has implemented the following systems and procedures in order to monitor the daily attendance of students and identify absences from school or class:
- 3.1.1.1 Parents are responsible for ensuring that they notify the school to explain the absence of their children on any particular school day. Notification may be provided via email or by telephoning the school and should be made prior to the start of school.
 - 3.1.1.2 Class teachers take the class roll promptly at the commencement of the school day in morning tutor group and at the beginning of Period 5.
 - 3.1.1.3 All absences are recorded using Synergetic. All recorded absences are cross checked against the absentee notifications that have been provided to the school that day.

4 Following Up Unexplained Student Absences

- 4.1.1 Bacchus Marsh Grammar has implemented the following systems and procedures in order to follow up unexplained absences from school:
- 4.1.1.1 Where an absence of a senior school student has not been explained by 9.20am, the School will send a SMS by 9.30am advising the parents their child has been marked absent from School and to contact the School absence line. If parents do not respond to the first SMS, a reminder SMS is then sent at approximately 10.00am. If no response is received, the student will be marked as 'All Day Absence – Not Notified' with a reason: 'SMS sent'.
 - 4.1.1.2 Where an absence of a junior school student has not been explained by 9.20am, the School will send a SMS by 9.30am advising the parents their child has been marked absent from School and to contact the School absence line. If parents do not respond to the first SMS, a

reminder SMS is then sent at approximately 10.00am. If no response is received, the School will contact the parents by phone.

- 4.1.1.3 Where the absence remains unexplained the matter will be reported to the Year Level Coordinator and Heads of School for investigation and follow up.
- 4.1.1.4 All information in relation to unsatisfactory attendance is recorded on students' files and information with respect to attendance is provided in each student's school report.

5 Notification of Parents and Guardians of Unsatisfactory Attendance

- 5.1.1 Bacchus Marsh Grammar has implemented the following systems and procedures in order to notify parents and guardians of unsatisfactory attendance:
 - 5.1.1.1 Where a student is unsatisfactorily absent from school, the school will contact the parents directly to seek an explanation and to remind parents of their child's obligation to attend school.
 - 5.1.1.2 Where parents repeatedly fail to inform the school of absences the Year Level Coordinator will contact them directly seeking an explanation and to remind them of their obligation to report absences.

It is important to note that primary responsibility for monitoring student absences sits with the parents/guardians.

6 Extended Absences

- 6.1.1 Parents/guardians must inform the School in writing, addressed to the appropriate Year Level Coordinator, if their child/ren will be absent from school for an extended period of time (5 or more days).

7 Records of the Register of Daily Attendance

- 7.1.1 The register is retained indefinitely and copies of information in the register are stored electronically in Synergetic and hardcopies in Administration. The register is kept for each calendar year, and shows the twice-daily attendance checks and any reasons for absence.

8 Implementation

- 8.1.1 Bacchus Marsh Grammar has set up a series of compliance tasks on our Assurance System, to ensure that key obligations under the Victorian Registration Standards are managed effectively.

9 Related Documents

- Education and Training Reform Act 2006
- Student Attendance Procedure
- Truancy Policy

10 Authorisation

Board Document No.	GOV-029	
Board Document Name	Student Attendance Policy	
Approval Authority	Chair of the School Board	
Board Approval	Moira Berry Chair of the School Board Bacchus Marsh Grammar	
Administrator	Company Secretary	Greg Gough
Approval Date	31 October 2019	
Date of Next Review	31 October 2019	To be reviewed every year

11 History

Date	Amendment
29 March 2019	1. Revised to reflect update to following up unexplained absences
22 October 2019	2. Revised to include section 6 and updated format

Appendix 1: Legislation

Affecting student Attendance

From: Education and Training Reform Act 2006

Act No. 24/2006

CHAPTER 2—SCHOOL EDUCATION

PART 2.1—COMPULSORY EDUCATION

Division 1—Attendance at School

2.1.1 Attendance at school

It is the duty of the parent of a child of not less than 6 nor more than 16 years of age—

- (a) to enrol the child at a registered school and to ensure the child attends the school at all times when the school is open for the child's instruction; or
- (b) to register the child for home schooling in accordance with the regulations and to ensure that the child receives instruction in accordance with the registration.

2.1.2 Offence for parent to fail to comply with duty

A parent of a child of compulsory school age must not without a reasonable excuse fail to comply with the duty set out in section 2.1.1.

Penalty: 1 penalty unit for each day on which the duty is not complied with.

2.1.3 What is a reasonable excuse?

Without limiting section 2.1.2, it is a reasonable excuse for the purposes of that section, in relation to a child if—

- (a) the child has been prevented from attending school or receiving instruction because of—
 - (i) illness, accident, an unforeseen event or an unavoidable cause; or
 - (ii) a requirement to comply with another law; or
 - (iii) the child's absence from Victoria;
- (b) there is no Government school within a prescribed distance of the child's residence and the child is receiving a distance education program through a registered school;
- (c) the child is undertaking an educational program provided by a registered education and training organisation;
- (d) the child has been suspended or expelled from a registered school and is undertaking other educational programs provided by the Department or another registered school;
- (e) the absence from school or instruction was because of the child's disobedience and was not due to any fault of the parent;
- (f) the child is attending or observing a religious event or obligation as a result of a genuinely held belief of the child or a parent of the child;
- (g) the child is exempted from attendance at school by the Minister under section 2.1.5.

2.1.4 Parent to notify school of absence

- (1) The principal of, or a teacher at, a registered school at which a child of compulsory school age is enrolled may ask a parent of the child for an explanation of the reason for the child's failure to attend the school at a time when the school was open for the child's instruction.
- (2) The principal must ensure that record in writing is made of the reason (if any) given by the parent.

2.1.5 Exemption from attendance at school

The Minister, by Order generally or in a specific case, may exempt a child or children from attendance at school.

2.1.6 Obligations of parents

If a duty is imposed on the parent or parents of a child by this Division—

- (a) any parent of the child may perform or be required to perform the duty;

- (b) compliance with the duty with regard to the child by any parent is sufficient compliance with the duty imposed on the parent or parents.

Division 2—Enforcement of Attendance

2.1.7 Appointment of school attendance officers

The Minister may in writing appoint a person employed under the **Public Administration Act 2004** as a school attendance officer for the purposes of this Act.

2.1.8 Identity card

- (1) The Minister must issue an identity card to each school attendance officer.
- (2) An identity card must contain a photograph of the school attendance officer to whom it is issued.

2.1.9 Production of identity card

A school attendance officer must produce his or her identity card for inspection—

- (a) before exercising a power under this Part; or
- (b) at any time during the exercise of a power under this Part, if asked to do so.

Penalty: 10 penalty units.

2.1.10 Powers of school attendance officers

- (1) If a school attendance officer has reasonable grounds to believe that a child who is apparently of compulsory school age does not attend a registered school during school hours on a school day, the school attendance officer may stop the child in the street or a public place and ask the child for his or her name and address.
- (2) A school attendance officer may during hours when a school is open inspect the attendance register of the school that is required to be kept under Part 4.3.

2.1.11 Offence to hinder or obstruct school attendance officer

A person must not wilfully obstruct, hinder or interfere with a school attendance officer in the performance or exercise of his or her duties under this Part.

Penalty: 60 penalty units.

2.1.12 Power to bring proceedings

A school attendance officer may bring proceedings for any offence under Division 1.

2.1.13 Certificate to be evidence as to attendance of child

A certificate purporting to be under the hand of the principal of a registered school stating that a child is or is not attending that school or stating the particulars of attendance of a child at that school is evidence of the facts stated in the certificate.

2.1.14 Onus of proof

In any proceeding in relation to an offence under section 2.1.2 the burden of proving the grounds of an excuse lies on the defendant.