

ATTENDANCE POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to

- ensure all children of compulsory school age are enrolled in a registered school and attend school every day the school is open for instruction
- ensure students, staff and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school
- explain to school staff and parents the key practices and procedures Rosebud Secondary College has in place to
 - support, monitor and maintain student attendance
 - record, monitor and follow up student absences.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all students at Rosebud Secondary College

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Department of Education and Training's [School Attendance Guidelines](#). It does not replace or change the obligations of Rosebud Secondary College, parents and School Attendance Officers under legislation or the School Attendance Guidelines.

DEFINITION

Parent – includes a guardian and every person who has parental responsibility for the child, including parental responsibility under the *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth) and any person with whom a child normally or regularly resides.

POLICY

Schooling is compulsory for children and young people aged from 6 to 17 years (unless an exemption from attendance or enrolment has been granted).

Daily attendance is important for all children and young people to succeed in education and to ensure they do not fall behind both socially and developmentally. School participation maximises life opportunities for children and young people by providing them with education and support networks. School helps people to develop important skills, knowledge and values that set them up for further learning and participation in their community.

Students are expected to attend Rosebud Secondary College during normal school hours every day of each term unless:

- there is an approved exemption from school attendance for the student
- the student has a dual enrolment with another school and has only a partial enrolment in Rosebud Secondary College, or



- the student is registered for home schooling and has only a partial enrolment in Rosebud Secondary College for particular activities.

Both schools and parents have an important role to play in supporting students to attend school every day.

Rosebud Secondary College believes all students should attend school all day, every day when the school is open for instruction and is committed to working with its school community to encourage and support full school attendance.

Our school will identify individual students or cohorts who are vulnerable and whose attendance is at risk and/or declining and will work with these students and their parents to improve their attendance through a range of interventions and supports.

Students are committed to attending school every day, arriving on time and are prepared to learn. Our students are encouraged approach a teacher and seek assistance if there are any issues that are affecting their attendance.

Rosebud Secondary College parents are committed to ensuring their child/children attend school on time every day when instruction is offered, to communicating openly with the school and providing valid explanations for any absence.

Parents will communicate with the relevant staff at Rosebud Secondary College about any issues affecting their child's attendance and work in partnership with the school to address any concerns.

Parents will provide a reasonable explanation for their child's absence from school and endeavour to schedule family holidays, appointments and other activities outside of school hours.

Supporting and promoting attendance

Rosebud Secondary College's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* supports student attendance.

Our school also promotes student attendance by proactive programs including breakfast club (Tuesdays and Thursdays) and mindfulness sessions.

Recording attendance

Rosebud Secondary College must record attendance in every class. This is necessary to:

- meet legislative requirements
- discharge Rosebud Secondary College's duty of care for all students
- meet Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority requirements for VCE students



Attendance will be recorded by the classroom teacher at the start of each period using Compass roll marking, which is compatible to CASES 21.

If students are in attendance at a school approved activity, the teacher in charge of the activity will record them as being present.

Recording absences

For absences where there is no exemption in place, a parent must provide an explanation on each occasion to the school.

Parents should notify Rosebud Secondary College of absences by:

- Contacting reception if it is an unplanned absence
- Contacting reception via the Compass app (attendance notification)
- Informing the classroom teacher if it is a planned absence, via the Absence Learning Plan form

If a student is absent on a particular day and the school has not been previously notified by a parent, or the absence is otherwise unexplained, Rosebud Secondary College will notify parents by SMS notification message. Rosebud Secondary College will attempt to contact parents as soon as practicable on the same day of the unexplained absence, allowing time for the parent to respond.

If contact cannot be made with the parent (due to incorrect contact details), the school will attempt to make contact with any emergency contact/s nominated on the student's file held by the school, where possible, on the day of the unexplained absence.

Rosebud Secondary College will keep a record of the reason given for each absence. The principal will determine if the explanation provided is a **reasonable excuse** for the purposes of the parent meeting their responsibilities under the *Education Training Reform Act 2006* and the School Attendance Guidelines.

If Rosebud Secondary College considers that the parent has provided a **reasonable explanation** for their child's absence the absence will be marked as '**approved absence**'.

If the school determines that no reasonable excuse has been provided, the absence will be marked as '**unapproved absence**'.

The Principal has the discretion to accept a reason given by a parent for a student's absence. The Principal will generally excuse:

- medical and dental appointments, where out of hours appointments are not possible or appropriate
- bereavement or attendance at the funeral of a relative or friend of the student, including a student required to attend Sorry Business
- school refusal, if a plan is in place with the parent to address causes and support the student's return to school
- cultural observance if the parent/carer notifies the school in advance
- family holidays where the parent notifies the school in advance



If no explanation is provided by the parent within 10 school days of an absence, it will be recorded as an 'unapproved absence' and recorded on the student's file.

Parents will be notified if an absence has not been approved via the coded entry on Compass.

Managing non-attendance and supporting student engagement

Where absences are of concern due to their nature or frequency, or where a student has been absent for more than five days, Rosebud Secondary College will work collaboratively with parents, the student, and other professionals, where appropriate, to develop strategies to improve attendance which may include:

- Establishing an Attendance Student Support Group
- Implementing a Staged Response Plan, which may include:

Implementing a Return to School Plan

Implementing an Individual Learning Plan

Implementing a Student Absence Learning Plan for students who will be absent for an extended period

Arranging for assistance from relevant student wellbeing staff

We understand from time to time that some students will need additional supports and assistance, and in collaboration with the student and their family, will endeavour to provide this support when it is required,

Referral to School Attendance Officer

If Rosebud Secondary College decides that it has exhausted strategies for addressing a student's unsatisfactory attendance, we may, in accordance with the School Attendance Guidelines refer the non-attendance to a School Attendance Officer in the South Eastern region for further action.

If, from multiple attempts to contact with a parent, it becomes apparent that a student will not be returning to the school, the principal may make a referral to a School Attendance Officer if:

- the student has been absent from school on at least five full days in the previous 12 months where:
 - the parent has not provided a reasonable explanation for these absences; and
 - measures to improve the student's attendance have been undertaken and have been unsuccessful
- the student's whereabouts are unknown and:
 - the student has been absent for 10 consecutive school days; or
 - no alternative education destination can be found for the student.

MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- Appendix A: RSC Procedures
- Appendix B: Attendance Flow Chart
- Continuum of Attendance and Behaviour Support
- [Senior School Attendance and Assessment Policy](#)
- [School Attendance Guidelines](#)
- School Policy and Advisory Guide: [Attendance](#)

REVIEW CYCLE AND EVALUATION

This policy was last updated on 12/12/2018 and is scheduled for review in August 2019

Appendix A

1. Attendance

Students need to be in class in order to learn the necessary skills and knowledge to satisfy the outcomes of each unit. As learning is sequential, it is imperative that students attend all classes. Teachers need to be able to demonstrate that students have met outcomes through completion of work in class so that it is verified and authenticated.

● At Rosebud Secondary College students should aspire to **95% attendance in their classes**. At VCE/VCAL, a student is required to maintain a **minimum of 90% attendance** for each class to achieve a satisfactory result (S). If they drop below 90% they will be required to redeem attendance (see redeeming attendance).

● No more than 10% of classes can be missed for unapproved reasons. Please note: Family holidays are NOT approved absences. If a student wishes to take a holiday during the school year they need to seek written permission from the Principal.

● If a student has an approved absence that is supported by a medical certificate, this certificate needs to be submitted to the House Support Officer (HSO), located in the House administration room. This approved absence will then be taken into consideration when calculating student attendance statistics (on Compass, VCE compliant).

● If more than a total of 20% of classes are missed for approved medical reasons, the VCE student may need to apply for Special Provision (see Special Provision).

● Years 10 to 12 inclusive: Students may be awarded an 'N' for a unit if attendance falls below this level. Students will first be given the opportunity to redeem attendance before an 'N' is issued (see redeeming attendance and teacher responsibilities).

IMPORTANT: If a student misses a SAC / SAT (assessment task) for an unapproved absence they cannot receive a grade for that task. They may sit the SAC / SAT (assessment task) to help determine their S/N result only.

As outlined in the VCE and VCAL administrative handbook (10.1 - VCE/VCAL attendance) 'The school



sets minimum class time and attendance rules. If a student has completed work but there has been a substantial breach of attendance rules, and the school therefore wishes to assign an N to the unit, the school must assign an N for one or more outcomes.'

Redeeming attendance

Years 10 - 12:

In the event of a student exceeding the permissible absence rate, there will be an enrolment review meeting involving the Senior School Curriculum Leader and Year Level Coordinator and the student. The outcome of this review could be that a student may:

- Have to withdraw from a Unit.
- Be permitted to apply for consideration of disadvantage on grounds of illness or other hardships (see Special Provision).
- Be permitted to redeem attendance on Thursdays after school after completing the "Attendance Redemption" form and with the agreement of the Senior School Curriculum Leader and Year level Coordinator. The possibility of make-up classes is not automatic, especially if a student has not made sufficient effort to improve attendance.
- **Be involved in Positive Case Management.**

Approved reasons for absence	Unapproved reasons for absence
Illness – medical certificate (approved documentation) Funeral – documented evidence Year 12 Examinations Medical/dental appointments (which cannot be arranged out of class time) – medical certificate Court appointments and counselling – letter from court State/National representation in sport – if outside school, letter from coach License testing (one attempt only) - receipt Approved school event, excursion, camp or extra-curricular activity	Driving lessons Personal issues (without further explanation) Family commitments SAC / SAT preparation or completion of work due in other subjects Part time work commitments Sleeping in or missing the bus Car or bike breakdown Truancy Supporting upset friends or timetable mix-ups Centrelink appointments Family holiday Note from parent or guardian



2. To achieve an 'S' for a Unit a student must:

- Produce work that demonstrates achievement of the outcomes - Submit work on time - Submit work that is clearly his/her own - Observe the VCAA and school rules - Satisfy attendance requirements.

3. At risk of achieving an 'N' for a Unit:

A student may achieve an 'N' for a unit if they have not adhered to any of the requirements listed above (2).

NOTE: As part of our school improvement goals, the focus is on learning progress, achieving high expectations, improved median study scores and creating a culture where students strive for their personal best. It is essential to also note, that the VCE is also designed for a diverse range of students and for each of these students, achieving their personal best can look very different and individual. An 'N' result can have a significant impact on a student's future and our role is to ensure we are working with students to support them in their endeavours to achieve an 'S'.