

ATTENDANCE

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 Caulfield Junior 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, families and staff at Caulfield Junior 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 Caulfield Junior College, parents and School Attendance Officers under legislation or the School Attendance Guidelines.

DEFINITION

Parent – includes a carers 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 Caulfield Junior 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 and principal-approved enrolment with another school and has only a partial enrolment in Caulfield Junior College, or
- the student is registered for home schooling and has only a partial enrolment in Caulfield Junior College for particular activities.

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

This policy was last updated on 24 June 2020 and is scheduled for review in June 2024.

Caulfield Junior 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 families are encouraged approach a teacher and seek assistance if there are any issues that are affecting attendance.

Caulfield Junior 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 Caulfield Junior College about any issues affecting their child's attendance and work in partnership with the school to address any concerns. Relevant staff include:

- Classroom teacher
- Student Wellbeing Officer
- A member of the Principal Class or nominated Leadership team member.

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

Caulfield Junior College's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* supports student attendance.

Our school also promotes student attendance by:

- Providing a challenging and exciting curriculum
- Sharing attendance data
- Acknowledgment in the biannual school report
- Sharing resources and ideas in the school newsletter
- Teachers to make a phone call home on the third day of an unexplained absence

Recording attendance

The staff at Caulfield Junior College must record student attendance twice per day. This is necessary to:

- meet legislative requirements
- discharge Caulfield Junior College's duty of care for all students

The classroom teacher will record attendance in the morning by 9.15am and after lunch by 2.15pm using Compass.

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 Caulfield Junior College of absences by:

- Entering the absence in Compass ahead for planned absences and on the day for unplanned absences.
- If unable to access Compass, parents or carers must contact the classroom teacher by email or the school office by phone before the start of the school day.

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, Caulfield Junior College will notify parents by push notification message via Compass at 10.15.

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.

Caulfield Junior 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 Caulfield Junior College considers that the parent has provided a **reasonable excuse** for their child's absence the absence will be marked as '**explained absence**'.

If the school determines that no reasonable excuse has been provided, the absence will be marked as '**unexplained 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
- Illness
- 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. Students who have an approved family holiday of/or greater than 5 days will be provided with a learning plan by their classroom teacher. (Appendix 2)
- A staged attendance plan based on behaviour or needs of the student

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

Parents will be notified if an absence has not been excused.

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, Caulfield Junior College will work collaboratively with parents, the student, and other professionals, where appropriate, to develop strategies to improve attendance, including:

- establishing an Attendance Student Support Group, coordinated by the school's Wellbeing Coordinator.
- implementing a Return to School Plan
- implementing an Individual Education Plan
- implementing a Student Absence Learning Plan for students who will be absent for an extended period. (Appendix 2)
- arranging for assistance from the Wellbeing Coordinator or Classroom Teacher.
- 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 Caulfield Junior 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 East Victorian 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 excuse 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

- Attendance role and responsibility flowchart (Appendix 1)
- Learning Plan Template (Appendix)
- [School Attendance Guidelines](#)
- School Policy and Advisory Guide: [Attendance](#)
- [School intranet](#)

REVIEW CYCLE AND EVALUATION

This policy was last updated on 24 June 2020 and is scheduled for review in June 2024.

APPENDIX 2 - ATTENDANCE POLICY – STUDENT ABSENCE LEARNING PLAN

Students who are taking extended absences from school must have a Student Absence Learning Plan to support their education.

Student Name: year:	Year Level:	Total of days absent this year:
Teacher:	Dates of Absence	/ / to / /
Date Plan prepared:	Entered in cases by:	

Activities to be undertaken by student / family whilst away from CJC (Teacher to select)	
	Reading each day. Books from home / library etc.
	Keeping in regular electronic contact with the class on the following address caulfield.jr.co@edumail.vic.gov.au
	Writing a daily journal / diary
	Year level books from Kmart/Target/newsagent etc. to complete during the trip
	Maths – Telling time, currency, shopping, timetables, card games, puzzles
	Project completed on holiday / destination including stickers, maps, tickets etc. collected whilst away
	Visit Caulfield Junior College website to read newsletter every week
	Use internet to access current affairs / news from Australia or country of destination
	Watching local news / current affairs programs
	Using an Atlas to plot and plan the itinerary
	Travel brochures for destination
	Build a photo journal of the trip
	Teacher specific tasks (please add)

Resources that student may find useful
Project book, journal, resource books, stationery, document wallet, display books, newspapers, brochures, maps, atlas, electronic device / online access, camera

Agreed role of the parent / carer
To encourage / support the student to continue their learning outside the school classroom
To ensure the student completes regular work to keep them as current as possible with the school program

Signatures:	
Teacher:	Parent:
Principal:	Date: