



# Lakeview Senior College

## ATTENDANCE POLICY



### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Lakeview Senior College on 9219 3100.

### 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 Lakeview Senior College has in place to
  - support, monitor and maintain student attendance
  - record, monitor and follow up student absences.

### Guiding principles

1. Our expectations are also underpinned by Department of Education and Early Childhood Development policy which can be found at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/behaviour/Pages/attendance.aspx>
2. The minimum acceptable level of attendance is 90%, without a medical certificate, of scheduled class time per unit during a semester.
3. Where a student has completed classwork but there has been a substantial breach of the attendance policy a student may be awarded an N grade (not satisfactory). The classroom teacher needs to be confident that all work completed and/or submitted for assessment is genuinely that of each student. A significant amount of classroom time is spent on each learning and assessment task so that the teacher is familiar with each student's work in progress and can regularly monitor and discuss aspects of the work with the student/s.
4. Substantial absences from school limit the capacity of the teacher to authenticate student work and academic progress. When a student is absent from school for prolonged periods, or has been unable to complete all assessment tasks because of illness or other special circumstances, the College may, upon application from the student, grant Special Provision for School-Based Assessment Tasks.

### Scope

This policy applies to all students at Lakeview Senior 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 Lakeview Senior 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 Lakeview Senior 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 Example School, or
- the student is registered for home schooling and has only a partial enrolment in Lakeview Senior College for particular activities.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

Both schools and parents have an important role to play in supporting students to attend school every day. Lakeview Senior 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 and arriving on time. Our students are encouraged approach a teacher and seek assistance if there are any issues that are affecting their attendance.
- being prepared to learn by taking all necessary equipment to class. They are expected to collect books and resources prior to class commencing. Going to lockers between classes should be avoided as this may result in lateness and disruption to the learning environment
- providing a medical certificate/written note from parent/guardian to the relevant Year Level Coordinator on return to school. A medical certificate is required for absences on the day of a scheduled assessment task and if this does not occur a zero score will be the result.
- providing explanation if late for school and collect a late pass from a teacher in the quadrangle until 9.15am or the General Office after 9.15am. See Appendix A
- discussing with each teacher procedures for completing work missed through lateness or absence including attending after school classes (redemption) if requested.

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.
- communicating with the relevant staff at Lakeview Senior College about any issues affecting their child's attendance and work in partnership with the school to address any concerns.
- providing a reasonable explanation for their child's absence from school and endeavour to schedule family holidays, appointments and other activities outside of school hours. Note: all students require a medical certificate for absence on the day of a scheduled assessment task

## Supporting and promoting attendance

Lakeview Senior College's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* supports student attendance.

Our school also promotes student attendance by:

- Providing a guaranteed and viable curriculum
- Wellbeing programs such as breakfast club, alcohol and other drugs support, sensory space
- Community Liaison Officer support
- School communication for absences
- Compass Parent Portal for tracking student attendance
- Modified programs and timetables
- Pathways support
- School connectedness curriculum and activities

## Recording attendance

Lakeview Senior College must record attendance in every class. This is necessary to:

- meet legislative requirements
- discharge Lakeview Senior 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 lesson 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 Lakeview Senior College of absences by:

- Adding an attendance note to the Compass Parent Portal
- Calling the school absence line on 9219 3100

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, Lakeview Senior College will notify parents by a coordinator phone call. Lakeview Senior 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) on multiple occasions, the school will attempt to make contact with any emergency contact/s nominated on the student's file held by the school.

Lakeview Senior 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 Lakeview Senior College considers that the parent has provided a **reasonable excuse** for their child's absence the absence will be marked as '**excused absence**'. If the school determines that no reasonable excuse has been provided, the absence will be marked as '**unexcused 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
- 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 '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, Lakeview Senior 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
- 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
- arranging for assistance from the Year Level Coordination and Wellbeing Teams

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 Lakeview Senior 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 Soth Western Regional Office 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.

### Special Provision

Special Provision provides eligible students with the opportunity to participate in and complete their senior secondary studies. Underpinning Special Provision is the understanding that students enrol in senior studies with a reasonable expectation of being able to meet the requirements. Students who are eligible for Special Provision are not exempt from meeting the requirements for Satisfactory Completion of Year 10 studies or the VCE, or from being assessed against the outcomes for a study.

### Eligibility for Special Provision

A student may be eligible for Special Provision if, at any time while studying at Lakeview Senior College they are adversely affected in a significant way by:

- illness (physical or psychological)
- any factors relating to environmental impacts beyond the student’s control
- an impairment or disability, including learning disabilities.
- Significant illness or the death of a loved one

The circumstances affecting the student do not include matters or situations of the student’s (or family’s) own choosing, for example involvement in social or holiday activities during school terms. To apply for Special Provision a student must see the relevant Year Level Coordinator or Assistant Principal. It is the responsibility of the student (and/or parent) to apply. It is expected that supporting documentation will be provided to the relevant Year Level Coordinator or Assistant Principal.

### Appeals

A student (and parent) may appeal a decision related to the implementation of the Lakeview Senior College Attendance Policy. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the relevant Assistant Principal who may convene a panel to assess the application. Full documentation supporting an appeal must be supplied by the student and parent with the application. Please contact the relevant Assistant Principal prior to writing the application to discuss the documentation that is required for an appeal. It is the responsibility of the student (and/or parent) to request an appeal of a decision related to the College Attendance Policy.

### Communication

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school’s website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in Student Management Guide
- Included in the student diary
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

### More information and resources

- The Department’s Policy and Advisory Library (PAL): [Attendance](#)

### POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	November 2023
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	November 2027

Appendix A – Late to School Procedures

