

Attendance Monitoring Policy

School Background

Doxa School Bendigo is a Child Safe community committed to providing an environment that is true to the values of our schoolwide expectations: being **Safe, Kind** and **Curious**. We promote care for all individuals in the school community and this is reflected in our support of students to learn to understand and regulate their own behaviour.

All of Doxa School's policy and procedural documentation is underpinned by our **5 key Pillars of the Doxa School Model: Student-Centred Approach, Trauma Sensitive Practice, Social and Emotional Literacy, Choice Theory and our Catholic Identity** and complies with the requirements of Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd. This Policy can be found on our school website, www.doxabendigo.catholic.edu.au and applies to all staff members of Doxa School Bendigo.

Policy Context

In accordance with the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)*, schooling is compulsory for children and young people aged from 6 to 17 years unless an exemption has been granted. The Principal may authorise an exemption and provide written approval for student attendance and enrolment to be exempt or reduce to less than full time in accordance with DET Guidelines.

The Education and Training Reform Regulations (2017) require that schools have policies and procedures to monitor student attendance and follow-up unexplained absences. We view this as a serious duty-of-care responsibility while also recognising the significant links between attendance/engagement with wellbeing and learning.

Doxa School recognises the significance of maximising attendance as an important step in students achieving their goals and broadening their opportunities. Effective attendance monitoring and support helps to ensure the safety of students while engaged in school activities, and track the engagement and participation of students across the school.

Doxa School aims for all students to attend school during normal school hours every day of each term. However, we also recognise that many students enrolled at Doxa School experience circumstances that impacts on their ability to attend school regularly.

Attendance Monitoring Procedure

While Doxa School has a relatively small student enrolment, we still recognise the critical importance of giving students every opportunity to build/maintain a positive attendance record. The following Doxa School procedures for monitoring student attendance are aimed at doing that:

- The school role is marked and recorded in the SIMON Administration system each learning session (twice on half days; four times on full days)
- Students not in attendance are noted and their families contacted
- Teachers are responsible for recording attendance on SIMON at the beginning of each session
- Students are signed in and out of the school each day if they arrive or leave outside normal times through the SIMON Kiosk with appropriate reasons recorded
- Where a student becomes absent during the day without Doxa School having prior approval from a parent/carer/guardian, contact must be made by the Administration Officer or a member of the Classroom Team with the students' parent/carer to advise of their absence. The Classroom Team must also attempt to contact the student to determine the context of their absence from school
- It is the responsibility of the Administration Officer to follow-up general absences:
 - Communication with parents/carers/guardian should be done in a way that allows them to most easily confirm the absence and reason, or confirm they have been advised of the absence (eg. phone call, text, private messenger carriage)
 - Where confirmed communication is not possible with a parent/carer/guardian after a reasonable time, the student's absence should be notified with the student's emergency contact
 - The Administration Officer is responsible for maintaining accurate parent/carer/family contact details (supported by class teams)
 - In the absence of the Administration Officer it is the responsibility of the class teacher to follow up absences in conjunction with the allocated Wellbeing worker
- Student attendance must form part of Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) with attendance improvement strategies (where necessary) becoming part of the goals/strategies/adjustments for relevant students
- Student attendance must be included in Part A ILP documents and reported as part of end of semester reports
- Where a student's attendance becomes cause for significant concern, and a range of ILP support strategies have been unsuccessful in supporting their needs and improving

attendance/engagement, the Principal will be informed and assist in determining additional options for support/attendance improvement

Notifying the school of your child's absence either prior to, or on the day that they will be away, helps ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and will fulfil your legal responsibility.

Parent/Carer/Guardian Responsibilities

Doxa School seeks the support of all parents/carers/guardians to effectively manage their student's attendance. This means Doxa School expects parents/carers/guardians to:

- notify the school of any student absences as soon as they are able to do so (every time)
- advise the school of any planned late arrival or early exit of their student
- provide the reason for the absence (for accurate record-keeping, and to allow Doxa School to determine the reasonableness for the absence in line with Government requirements)
- engage with consultations and planning regarding their student's attendance
- confirm the dates of any planned extended absences from school with the reason/s for the absence outlined
- confirm any regular absences (eg. weekly appointments), the expected duration, and when the student will no longer be absent regularly
- provide a medical certificate for extended absences from school due to a medical issue

Roll-Marking Categories:

The following categories are used to assist Doxa School to record accurate school attendance data.

- ✓ Present
- o Absent (Parent Notified - Refusal)
- o Absent (Parent Notified - Medical)
- o Absent (Discipline)
- o Absent -
- o Absent - Doxa Approved Absence
- o Absent -

If Doxa School considers the reason for the student absence to be reasonable, we will record this as a 'Parent Notified - Approved Absence'. If we are unable to determine the reason, or the reason is not deemed as reasonable, we are required to mark the student as an 'Unexplained Absence' or 'Parent Choice - Unauthorised'. On these occasions, parents/carers/guardians will be advised.

Doxa School's Principal Responsibilities:

- a) Implement and review this 'Attendance Monitoring Policy' as part of student attendance and engagement
- b) Document a whole-school plan to promote full attendance in accordance with Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd's 'Student Behaviour Framework'
- c) Maintain an up-to-date attendance register
- d) Ensure current contact details for parents/carers/guardians and emergency contacts are maintained
- e) Maintain accurate attendance records on student files
- f) Ensure that a check and record of daily attendance of all students occurs accurately
- g) Ensure student attendance is recorded in every class
- h) Record, in writing, Doxa School's reason given for each absence
- i) Identify and follow-up unexplained absences on the day of a student's absence
- j) Advise parents/carers/guardians of unexplained absences, as soon as practicable on the same day of the absence, including for post-compulsory aged students
- k) Identify the Doxa School staff members with responsibility for monitoring daily attendance
- l) Ensure staff are provided with training and development opportunities in promoting and recording attendance and following-up absences
- m) Ensure this policy is made publicly available
- n) Provide reports to the Executive Director – Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd on the policy and its implementation as required

Related Documents

- Doxa School 'Positive Behaviour Support Policy' (via Doxa School website)
- Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd 'Student Behaviour Framework' (via Doxa School website)
- 'Guidelines to the Minimum Standards and Requirements for School Registration' (via VRQA website)
- Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd 'Enrolment Framework' (via Doxa School website)
- 'School Attendance Guidelines' (via Victorian Government Department of Education and Training website)