At Point Cook College we develop academically, socially and emotionally within a safe, engaging and inclusive learning environment.

We are Learners. We are Responsible. We are Respectful. We are Safe.

VALUES:

Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, Integrity, Respect, Friendliness, Resilience, Understanding and Acceptance

RATIONALE

In the State of Victoria the law requires that all children between the ages of six and up to their seventeenth birthday to attend school (The Education and Training Reform Act 2006).

School participation helps people to develop important skills, knowledge and values which set them up for further learning and participation in their community. Regular school attendance enables students to maximize their full educational potential and to actively participate and engage in their learning. Frequent lateness also has a major impact on students’ learning and on the learning of others within the homeroom.

It is important that children develop habits of regular attendance at an early age. Students who are regularly absent from school are at risk of missing out on fundamental aspects of their educational and social development.

Accurately recording attendance is a core professional responsibility of all teachers and as such they will be held accountable to this process.

There is no safe number of days for missing school. Every Day Counts.

Each day a student misses may impact their development, and can affect their educational outcomes.

AIMS

This policy aims to:

• Reinforce the importance of regular school attendance for all students.

• State responsibilities for students and families, teachers, administration staff and school leadership in relation to student attendance.

• Detail the processes involved in response to student absences.
IMPLEMENTATION:

Maintaining student attendance is a responsibility shared between all stakeholders. Specific details of required responsibilities are located in the Procedures and Processes section of this document.

- Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school everyday, and are only absent if ill or if absolutely necessary.
- Parents have an additional responsibility to notify the College of their child’s absence as close as possible to the date of absence.
- The College has a responsibility to ensure that attendance records are maintained and monitored.
- The College has a responsibility to ensure that student attendance is recorded in COMPASS twice daily.
- The College has a further responsibility to ensure that unexplained absences are investigated and that high levels of absenteeism are adequately explained.
- The College will ensure parents of students with high levels of unexplained or unapproved absences are contacted, and that these families are well supported in identifying and implementing strategies to minimize absences.
- In the event that parents’ cooperation with the College regarding significant absences is not evident, the College will refer the matter to the Student Attendance Officer of the Department of Education.
- Student attendance data and absence figures will appear on student half year and end of year reports.
- The Department of Education and Training and enrolment auditors may request and question student attendance records.
- Aggregated student attendance data is reported to the Department of Education and Training and the wider community each year as part of the Annual Report.

Extended Family Holidays

As outlined in the rationale, regular attendance at school is key to maximizing potential both educationally and socially and the more days that are missed, the more likelihood of this having a negative effect. We acknowledge the rich experiences and opportunities that family holidays can provide and as such fully support and encourage this practice, however we recommend for these to be planned within the scheduled holiday times as much as possible. If this becomes a regular pattern over a number of years, the negative impact on educational outcomes may be significant.

From an accountability perspective, extended family holidays are considered by the Department of Education and Training as an ‘explained’ absence and will contribute to your child’s overall attendance figures. They will also be recorded as such in the College Annual Report School Attendance data.

Parents of students intending to take an extended family holiday are required to:

- Inform the Homeroom teacher/s via email/letter by providing names and grades of students who will be involved.
- Provide expected departure and return dates.

EVALUATION

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the College’s three year review cycle.

Endorsement

Ratified by College Council 1st June 2016

Review date: JUNE 2019

www.pcc.vic.edu.au
PROCEDURES FOR MANAGING ATTENDANCE AT PCC

Parental Responsibilities

Parents/Guardians are responsible for:

• Ensuring that their children attend school everyday, and are only absent if ill or if absolutely necessary.
• Accessing COMPASS to confirm relevant attendance data
• Notifying the College of the student’s absence by one of the following methods, in preferred order;
  a) Calling the College absence line on 03 83487117 before 8.30am and leaving a message explaining their child’s absence.
  b) Providing (upon the child’s return to school and within 3 days of the absence) a written note or email explaining why an absence has occurred, if not communicated via the absence line
  c) Completing, signing and returning unexplained absence letters as received.

Absences Without Parental Consent:

If it has been established that a student has been absent without the parent’s knowledge the following process will occur:

• A meeting will be called involving the student, parent/guardian, Homeroom Teacher and Leadership representative.
• An intervention plan (targeted response for the individual student) will be devised to prevent any further unauthorized absences. The plan will be uploaded onto COMPASS.

NOTE:

Responsibilities and procedures for relevant school staff have also been documented and are visible within the Staff SWPBS matrix.