



Northside
Christian College

Attendance and Roll Marking Policy

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Scope

These procedures are in place for all students at Northside Christian College.

Introduction

All children of compulsory school age have the right to an effective full-time education, regardless of age, aptitude, ability and any special needs s/he may have. Regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunities available to them. Northside Christian College takes seriously its responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of its students. It acknowledges that irregular attendance seriously disrupts continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to underachievement and low attainment and impedes a student's ability to develop friendship groups within the College.

Rationale

Statutory expectations require all schools to record student attendance twice per day in Primary Schools and in every class in Secondary Schools.

There may be various reasons for poor attendance – including student health and wellbeing, family disruption, extended family holidays, school refusal, or poor motivation on behalf of the student. Most concerns about the rate of attendance will require a pastoral focus.

Generally speaking, school attendance is compulsory in Victoria. However, there are specific attendance expectations for VCE students, which need to be monitored and managed carefully.

Attendance Regulations

The *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic) notes that children of compulsory school age (six years and up to the age of seventeen years) who are residents in Victoria are required to be in full-time attendance at a government or registered non-government school unless they are receiving approved home tuition or correspondence education through the Virtual School Victoria or another online provider. In exceptional circumstances, an exemption from school attendance may be granted.

Specific Attendance Requirements

VCE Students.

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) *VCE Administrative Handbook* expressly invite schools to set their own attendance requirements for the VCE.

“All VCE units involve at least 50 hours of scheduled classroom instruction. A student needs to demonstrate sufficient class attendance to fulfil the time and work requirements of the unit. The school sets minimum class time and attendance rules. If a student has completed work but there has been a substantial breach of the school's attendance policy, the school may be unable to authenticate the student's work completed across the outcome. Where the school chooses to assign an N result for the unit, because the work cannot be authenticated, the school must assign an N for the outcome or outcomes that cannot be authenticated” (VCAA, 2023, p. 87).

At Northside Christian College we communicate the following expectations in the 'VCE Student Policy Handbook' (a document which is given to all VCE students):

“Students are expected to be punctual and attend all time-tabled classes, excursions, College and Year Level Assemblies and Chapel services. The College policy is a minimum required class attendance of 90% (unless acceptable explanations are provided) for each unit of study during a semester. All subject teachers will mark a class roll during each lesson.”

VCE Staff and Students at Northside Christian College should be familiar with Section 4.3 of the VCE Student Policy Handbook.

VCE Staff are required to keep a roll for every VCE class. (See VCE Staff Policy Handbook)

Implementation

- The attendance rolls are marked digitally: Primary School during Home Group in the morning and immediately after lunch by the Class Teacher, Secondary School in Home Group and at the commencement of each period throughout the day. The rolls are marked on a digital device (web enabled) using the College Administration software (SEQTA).
- Reasons for absences must be in writing to attendance@ncc.vic.edu.au or a handwritten note.
- Parents and carers are required to notify the College before 9:30am about any attendance matters.
- Students that are late to school are required to sign in at the College Office.
- Ongoing unexplained absences or lack of co-operation regarding student attendance will result in a meeting being organised with the sub-school Director of Learning.
- Parents and carers are expected to contact the College in writing if their child is absent and are required to give a reason for the absence. This information is entered into the College Administration software (SEQTA) by the College Administration Staff.
- If a student is absent for 3 days in a row, their Home Group teacher will notify the Reception team by email. The student's parents or carer will be contacted by phone by the Reception team to ascertain when the student will return to the College and to offer pastoral care.
- Unresolved attendance issues may be reported by the Deputy Principal to the to the Student Attendance Officer (DET Regional Director).(See Appendix 3 and 4)
- Students leaving the College early should report to the College Office. Primary and Secondary School students should be signed out by a Parent/Carer.
- Parents / Carers are required to give prior notice in writing regarding early departures, where possible. All students are required to be collected from the Office by a Parent/Carer.
- Students are requested not to communicate with their Parents/Carers except via the College Office. Mobile phones are not to be used to contact Parents/Carers directly, either by SMS, social media or phone call.

Acceptable reasons for student absences:

- Sickness.
- Danger of being affected by an infectious or contagious disease.
- Temporary or permanent infirmity.
- Unavoidable and sufficient cause, e.g. bereavement within the family or of a close friend, or family trauma.
- Attending a specialist appointment, VET Course, approved Private Study at home.
- Attending a College organised activity which is considered an approved absence, e.g. excursion, camp, work experience or Cultural event.

Examples of unacceptable reasons for absences:

- Truancy.
- Shopping expeditions with or without caregiver.
- Haircuts.
- Helping at home or at Parent / Carer's place of work.
- Part-time or casual work (including travel to and from such work).
- Appointments which could be made out of school hours (including driving lessons / tests).
- Excessive time for appointments which are avoidable.
- Finishing homework.
- Late nights.
- Birthdays.
- Holidays.

Parent/Carer's Responsibilities Regarding Student Absences

It is the Parent/Carer's responsibility to ensure that their children are enrolled in and attend a school every day, unless there are acceptable reasons for absence. Parents/Carers are asked to notify the College in writing of any absence before 9:30am on the day of the absence.

Short-term absences - 1 or 2 days

Parents/Carers are asked to provide a written note (email is acceptable), detailing the reason for absence, by the day of return to the College. Parents/Carers may notify the College in advance of the absence and the reason for the absence if this is possible.

Long-term absences - 3 or more days

Parents/Carers are asked to contact the College before the absence, if possible, or on the third day at the latest to explain the absence. In addition, a written note, stating the reason for the absence needs to be provided on the day of return to the College. If the reason is sickness, caregivers are expected to provide a Doctor's Certificate (for 3 days or more).

VCE students are advised to seek a doctor's Certificate for any absence from the College. Please refer to the VCE Student Policy Handbook for additional information.

Very long-term absences

Parents/Carers are asked to discuss with the Principal the implications of long-term absences from the College, before firm plans are made. When students are unavoidably absent for a long period of time, where possible the College will provide details of work for students to go on with, if requested to do so.

Please note that the College and Parents/Carers need to be familiar with the attendance requirements as detailed in the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*.

Late Procedure

1. All students arriving after 8:55am must go to Reception in the College Office to have their attendance recorded. A Receptionist will record in SEQTA the student's arrival time and the reason the student arrived late.
2. Class Teachers should not admit students late to class, without enquiring as to the reason for lateness. Student attendance can be verified on the College Administration software (SEQTA).

3. Persistently late students will be referred to the sub-school Director of Learning and have such other consequences applied as are deemed appropriate by the Deputy Principal.

Examples of acceptable reasons for lateness

- Accident on way to the College.
- Transport breakdown on way to the College.
- Transport or College bus late.
- Other unavoidable and sufficient reasons.

Parents/Carers are asked to provide a written note. If no note is written on the day of lateness, then a note must be shown to the Home Group Teacher on the next day.

Examples of unacceptable reasons for lateness

- Truancy.
- Sleeping in.
- Just late (no reason given).
- Haircut.
- Shopping.
- Appointments which could have been made out of school hours (including driving lesson / test).
- Other avoidable and insufficient reasons.

The Home Group teacher will monitor any patterns of unacceptable late arrivals.

College Action for Unacceptable Reasons

- Referral to the sub-school Director of Learning.
- Restorative Interview with the sub-school Director of Learning for second and third offences.
- Referral to Deputy Principal or Principal for subsequent offence for more serious consequences.

NOTE: Lateness on compassionate grounds, e.g. family trauma, will be followed up by the Welfare Team for the sake of the welfare of students. In these cases, additional consequences will not be given.

Early Departure

VCE students are permitted to leave the College grounds to go to Bundoora Square during lunchtime if their Parents/Carers give written permission at the beginning of the College year. These students must sign out before leaving via the Senior School office. They must sign back in at the College Office before the end of lunch when they return. VET students are required to sign-out at the Reception office.

If students need to leave the College early or leave in the middle of the school day, e.g. to attend a medical appointment or for family reasons, they must attend the College Office before leaving to sign out and provide a written note. All students must have their Parent/Carer with them when they do this. The student's Parents/Carers must come to the Office to collect the student and sign them out. If students return before the end of the school day they must sign back in at the College Office before attending class.

Camps and Excursions

In the case of an excursion which requires students to meet offsite without attending the College first, the Teacher in Charge provides the College Office Administration Staff with a list of students expected to attend the excursion the day before the excursion occurs. The Teacher in Charge then takes the roll on the day of the excursion and either emails or calls the College Office to confirm or make any alterations to the list of proposed attendees. This information is then entered manually onto the College Administration software (SEQTA) by Administration Staff. When this is not possible, the Teacher in Charge will do this remotely.

To meet Duty of Care responsibilities, the college attendance records should indicate whether the student was physically present in a classroom, or absent. If the student is attending a College-approved activity, this will be indicated with an event, excusing the student from class. In the latter situation, the Teacher in Charge of the activity should record attendance and ensure Parents/Carers are notified of any absences in the same manner as for regular absences from school.

CRTs

Casual Relief Teachers (CRT) are met by the CRT Co-ordinator in the morning before the College day starts and are shown how to mark the roll. If the CRT has a digital device, they are given a password so that they can mark the roll electronically. If they do not have a digital device, they are given a hard copy of the roll for their class and asked to mark it at the usual times, returning it to the College Office Administration Staff at the beginning of periods 1 and 6 so that the information can be entered manually into the College Administration software (SEQTA).

Paper Rolls

In the case where electronic roll marking is not possible, up to date paper copies of the roll will be available from the College Office. These should be marked at the same time and by the same staff as electronic rolls and returned to the College Reception Office.

Marking Rolls Procedures

It is important to realise that rolls are a legal document. They can be used in evidence in a court of law and if incorrectly filled in can bring evidence into question. They are a legal record of a student's attendance at school for the compulsory years of schooling. They also provide important information concerning VCE students. Rolls show the attendance of students in a school and are used for determination funding of per capita grants. For all these reasons they need to be marked accurately.

1. Attendance Rolls must be marked twice daily for Primary School classes and at the commencement of each period, including morning Home Group, for Secondary School classes.
2. Students not present at the commencement of Home Group should be marked as absent. The Administration Staff will update this entry if a student arrives late.
3. Insist that all absences are followed up with a note in writing from the Parent/Carer. This information must be communicated to the Office Administration Staff so the attendance can be recorded accurately into the College attendance system.
4. Long term and/or habitual absences as well as welfare concerns regarding absences should be brought to the attention of the appropriate sub-school Director of Learning. This is also particularly important for VCE students.
5. **STUDENTS SHOULD NEVER BE ALLOWED TO MARK A ROLL.**

6. All Prep to Year 12 rolls should be completed at the start of the period for Emergency Management Procedures and compliance with attendance recording regulations. Late arrivals should be updated during the period when students arrived.
7. Rolls will be checked regularly by sub-school Directors of Learning and Administration Staff for Government requirement data collection and maintenance purposes.

Procedures for Following Up Unexplained Student Absences & Monitoring Attendance Issues

Teachers input absentees from their roll during the morning Home Group. The Administration Staff process all incoming calls and attendance emails. At approximately 10:15am, once all absentees' notifications and reasons for absentees have been processed, the Administration Staff contact Parents/Carers of students with unexplained absentees. Attendance alerts are primarily communicated via SMS.

Absence reports are emailed by the Reception Team to the Executive Team upon request.

During the course of the day, if there are any concerns about the accuracy of the daily attendance records, Staff are advised to contact the College Office for clarification. The Administration Staff will communicate this to either the sub-school Director of Learning or Principal if the student's location is unknown.

Procedures to Identify Students with Poor Attendance Records

- The school attendance of every student is recorded in Home Group at the start of the day. The reason for any absence recorded must subsequently be substantiated, and recorded on the attendance system at the College Office using of a set of approved absence codes.
- Home Group Teachers are required to notify Reception and the appropriate sub-school Director of Learning on the third day of any absence, unless the College received prior notification. (Note that, in most cases, unexplained absences are followed up with Parents/Carers via email contact on the day of the absence).

Once identified, any ongoing concerns about the regular attendance of a student will trigger a series of steps.

In the Primary School, the Classroom Teacher will work closely with the family and the Director of Learning - Primary School to address any concerns.

In the Secondary School, concerns about attendance will trigger the 'Procedures for Managing Concerns about Student Progress'. For VCE students this trigger will be activated before the attendance rate falls to 90%. The VCE Learning Coordinator needs to be aware of any situation where this is occurring.

Monitoring Attendance of Students Participating in Courses Provided by Another Senior Secondary Course Provider

The attendance of students at curriculum programs outside school premises needs to be recorded by the provider and reported back and recorded by the school. The Director of Senior School Learning will manage absences in conjunction with the provider.

Attendance from external providers is emailed back to the College via the sub-school Director of Learning and the attendance email address at: attendance@ncc.vic.edu.au.

Responsibilities

The Principal has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

The Principal will determine if the explanation provided for an absence is reasonable for the purposes of the parent meeting their responsibilities under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*. The Principal should use their discretion in making this decision.

The Principal or their nominee must record:

- Student attendance twice per day in Primary Schools and in every class in Secondary Schools for every student enrolled at the College.
- The reason given for an absence and whether this is reasonable in accordance with the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*.
- An absence as unexplained if no explanation has been given and change the attendance record once an explanation is provided or established.

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the necessary arrangements are made for their son / daughter to arrive at the College at the required time each day during school term time.
- Ensuring that their son / daughter attends school every day the College is open for instruction – including, but not limited to, attendance at excursions, carnivals, retreats, and camps planned by the College, as they are part of the educational program and attendance is compulsory.
- Responding to Absence & Lateness email messages (which they receive if their son / daughter has been marked absent or has arrived late without Parent/ Carer explanation) by replying via email message with an explanation, including their child's name, year, date of absence and reason for the absence or lateness.
- Making medical and dental appointments outside school hours (where possible).
- Advising the relevant Home Group Teacher if their child is expected to be absent for more than three days and detailing the reason for this absence (such as illness or other circumstances).
- Providing a Medical Certificate (with details of the nature of the illness) for their child should s/he suffer from an acute illness that necessitates extended leave from the College.
- Advising the relevant Home Group Teacher in writing of their (Parents/Carers) absence from home for more than a few days and providing the name, address and phone numbers of someone to act for them during their absence.
- Putting in writing requests to the Principal for planned extended absences of 5 or more days during term time (for example, an overseas holiday).

Home Group Teachers are responsible for:

- Being punctual in attending to their daily Homeroom duties.
- Accurately marking student attendance data in the College Administration software (SEQTA) and submitting it by 8:55am.
- Ensuring students do not mark the roll as this is a breach of the College's Duty of Care.
- Ensuring that the electronic roll marking system is correctly used, i.e. only students actually present in the room are to be recorded.
- Ensuring all students who arrive after 8.40am are directed to the College Office before going to class.

- Reporting to the sub-school Directors of Learning any student attendance concerns such as
 - Repeated absences
 - Unusual absences
 - Fraudulent notes.

Secondary School Subject Teachers are responsible for:

- Being punctual in attending to their scheduled class duties.
- Marking student attendance at the commencement of the lesson, recording data in the College Administration software (SEQTA).
- Reporting unexplained absences from the class by immediately contacting the College Office to investigate student whereabouts.
- Notifying the sub-school Director of Learning for any student who misses a lesson without an acceptable explanation.
- Providing the College Office with the names of students on excursions / incursions, then advising the Office of any absences on the day of the excursion/incursion.

Office Administration Staff are responsible for:

- Checking that all Home Group attendance rolls have been digitally submitted daily (by 9:00am).
- Collecting explanation / absentee notes written by Parents/Carers, if appropriate, for any absence from the College within 7 days of the student's return to the College (this is a legal requirement).
- Managing computer data entry including:
 - All daily explanations of student absences
 - All explanations of late student arrivals
 - All students who go home ill
 - All students who leave for appointments
 - All student sick bay attendance
 - Incursion and excursion attendance
 - Special event attendance;
- Following up on a Subject Teacher notification of a student's unexplained absence from a class by:
 - Confirming attendance in Home Group
 - Confirming attendance with previous Subject Teacher/s
 - Checking attendance with College Counsellor/s and other Support Staff
 - Alerting sub-school Directors of Learning of the unexplained absence. Sub-school Directors of Learning to commence a search of the site and inform Parents/Carers of ongoing unexplained absence.
- Recording absence type in the College Administration software (SEQTA) on receipt of a Parent/Carer explanation according to the Attendance Register Codes.
- Contacting a Parent/Carer on the third day to ascertain a reason for the absence; if a student is absent from school for 3 consecutive days and the Parent/Carer has made no attempt to contact the College. This rule also applies for 3 unexplained

non-sequential absences. The outcome of this phone call is to be communicated to the College Office.

All students are responsible for:

- Ensuring their attendance is recorded in Home Group class.
- Signing in at the College Office, if they arrive after 8:40am.
- Attending every timetabled class, including Study Periods.
- Providing an explanation of lateness if their Parent/Carer has not provided a written explanation to the College Office.
- Providing a signed permission note from a Parent/Carer to leave the College grounds during school hours. The note must be approved and signed by the Home Group Teacher and the sub-school Director of Learning. Students must show the approved note to their Subject Teacher prior to the exit time. Students must then sign out at the College Office.

Evaluation

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

Related Policies

VCE Student Policy Handbook

VCE Staff Policy Handbook

Relevant Legislation

Community Services Act 1970 (Vic.)

Education and Training Reform Act 2006

Education and Training Reform Regulations 2007

Education and Training Reform (School Attendance) Regulations 2013

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Victorian Attendance Legislation

In Victoria, it is compulsory for children and young people aged 6–17 years to attend school.

Parents are legally required to ensure their child attends school every day and to provide an explanation for their child's absence from school unless an exemption from attendance has been granted or an exception to their attendance applies.

Evidence shows that daily school attendance is important for young people to succeed in education and to ensure they don't fall behind both socially and developmentally. Young people who regularly attend school and complete Year 12 or an equivalent qualification have better health and employment outcomes and enjoy higher incomes.

The law provides a framework for school's attendance, exemptions and exceptions from attendance and parents' obligations relating to ensuring attendance. The rules are not in place to punish students' time away from school, which can be unavoidable. Instead, the laws are an effort to promote and improve student attendance across Victorian schools.

The compulsory school age

All children aged 6–17 years are required to either be enrolled at a registered school, or registered for home schooling. In some circumstances a parent can apply to the Regional Director to exempt a child from enrolment at school. For more information see: [Exemptions](#)

Responsibility for ensuring that a child attends school

School attendance is mandated under the *Education Training and Reform Act 2006*. It is the responsibility of parents, guardians or anyone who has parental responsibility for a child to ensure the child attends school on a regular basis.

How attendance is recorded by schools

Schools must record student attendance twice per day in primary schools and every period in secondary schools.

Requirements that apply to children attending non-government schools

The rules apply to parents of compulsory school-aged children attending any Victorian Government, Independent and Catholic Schools.

Processes for following up attendance

'Poor attendance' for the purpose of the legislation

What is considered as "poor attendance" is determined on a case by case basis. However, under the legislation, if a student of compulsory school age is absent from school for five days within a school year and without a reasonable excuse, then further action can be taken, at the discretion of the principal.

Unexplained or unapproved absences

A principal can approve or not approve any absence, based on the requirements of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, an individual school policy or on a case-by-case basis.

The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 provides some examples of what a reasonable excuse is for the purposes of explaining a school absence and includes, amongst other considerations:

- Illnesses and accidents;
- Unforeseen and unexplained circumstances;
- If the absence was a result of complying with another law;
- The child is receiving distance education through a registered school;
- The child is undertaking approved education, training and/or employment;

- The child has been suspended or expelled; and
- The child is attending or observing a religious event or obligation.

Unexplained Absence:

A principal will record an absence as 'unexplained' if no explanation about the absence is given to the school by the parent or carer of the student.

If you do not contact the school to provide an explanation on the day of the student absence, the school must attempt to contact the parent or legal guardian either by phone or in writing and seek an clarification within three days of the recorded absence.

If no contact can be made with the parent or other carers of the child within 10 days, the absence will be recorded as an unexplained absence and a noted will be made in the child's file. A parent or legal guardian can contact the principal at any time after the recorded absence to provide an explanation.

Unapproved Absence:

In general, a principal may record an absence as 'unapproved' when no reasonable explanation has been given for the student's absence. If a reason is given for a student absence is not approved by the principal than the school will notify the parent or legal guardian in writing.

Action that will be taken if your child reaches five days of unapproved or unexplained absence

If a child reaches five days of unapproved or unexplained absence in the preceding 12 months then the school and principal will work with the parent or legal guardian to implement the appropriate support or intervention to assist the child and ensure they attend school every day and remain at school during school hours. If the support and intervention do not improve your child's attendance, the principal may decide to make a referral to the School Attendance Officer. This person is the Regional Director of the Department's Regional Office where you are located.

When a referral is made to the school attendance officer

The School Attendance Officer will investigate the student absence records and may take one or all of the following steps depending on the circumstances.

- Issue a School Attendance Notice
- Issue an Official Warning
- Issue an Infringement Notice

For more information on the School Attendance Officer, see: [School Attendance Officers](#).

What you can do if you have been issued a school attendance notice

The School Attendance Notice is not a fine but rather an opportunity for the child's family to explain the absences and work with the child's school to improve attendance in the future. The School Attendance Officer will assess the family's response to a School Attendance Notice.

For more information, including how a School Attendance Officer assesses your family's response, see: [School Attendance Notices](#).

What you can do if you have received a school attendance notice but your child was not with you on the date listed

The School Attendance Notice gives parents and legal guardians the opportunity to state why their child was absent on the dates listed in the notice. The notice should be completed and returned to the School Attendance Officer by the due date.

What you can do if you have been issued with an official warning

A School Attendance Officer may decide to issue an Official Warning prior to, or instead of, issuing an Infringement Notice.

For more information see: [When to Issue an Official Warning](#).

Circumstances under which you can be issued with an infringement notice

After other strategies to improve attendance have been implemented and failed under the new legislation, the school have the right to issue an Infringement Notice, which used as a last resort.

For more information see: [Infringement Notices](#).

Appealing an infringement notice if you think it has been issued unfairly

If there is reason to believe that the Infringement Notice was unfairly issued, than a parent or legal guardian can apply for an internal review with the Department of Education and Training or elect to have the matter heard in the court.

For more information on the grounds for review and the process for lodging a review request, visit: [Infringement Notices](#) ('[Appeals](#)').

How much is the fine

The infringement notice is currently \$78. The amount changes each financial year.

Types of absence

Circumstances when you may receive a fine if your child has missed lots of school due to illness

A genuine illness is a reasonable excuse. The cause of each absence will be considered on a case by case basis. While a child is absent, a parent or legal guardian should continue to update the school on the situation and work with the school to develop a Student Absence Learning Plan to ensure that the student's educational needs are supported and they do not fall behind in their school work.

If a child is absent for a long period of time due to illness than the parent or legal guardian may wish to discuss flexible options for accessing school. The principal will be able to advise if arrangements such as Distance Education are appropriate.

Circumstances when you may receive a fine if your child attends remedial tutoring or classes outside school that are scheduled during school hours

A school principal has the discretion to decide whether an absence caused by attending remedial class or tutoring will be approved or unapproved. The parent should discuss this before the child starts undertaking the classes. In general, it is expected that the family and the school work together to identify the child's educational needs and address them within the school setting and school hours.

Taking your child for an extended holiday during school term, and what you can do to ensure that their learning needs are supported

Generally, schools advise against planning a family holiday in term time.

If you are planning an extended holiday discuss this with your school principal well in advance of finalising any plans. The principal has the discretion to decide whether or not to approve the absence taking into account the student's educational interests. If the principal approves the absence, work with your child's school so you support your child's education during their holiday. See: [Student Absence Learning Plan](#)

If the principal decides not to approve the absence, the parent or legal guardian should work with the school to decide on a reasonable length of absence or a more appropriate time for the child to go on holiday. If the parent or legal guardian decides to go on a holiday during the school term despite it being an 'unapproved' absence and the duration of the absence is over five days, the principal may choose to refer the case to the School Attendance Officer for further action and this may result in an Infringement Notice.

When it's appropriate for your child to attend school part-time due to a disability

Full-time attendance is compulsory for all students aged 6-17 unless an exception from school applies, an exemption has been granted or there is a reasonable excuse provided for non-attendance. For either an exception or an exemption, a student and/or parent needs to submit an application to the relevant principal who will then make a recommendation to the Regional Director who, in turn, makes a determination based on Department policy. For more information see: [Admission](#)

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for students with a disability to attend school for a reduced number of hours. This arrangement should only be entered into on a short-term basis and only if it is agreed by all parties, including school, family, practitioners and Department regional offices, that the reduced amount of school hours is in the best interests of the child. Each arrangement will be assessed on a case by case basis.

If the child is attending school for a reduced amount of hours as part of a plan that both outlines the return to full-time schooling and has been developed in consultation with the child's school then this will be considered as an approved absence and will not be referred to a School Attendance Officer.

For more information contact the Disability Coordinator at your closest departmental Regional Office for further advice. See: [Regions](#).

What happens if your child skips school without your knowledge

The *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* recognises absences that are due to the child's disobedience and are not any fault of the parent. It is therefore deemed a reasonable excuse and will not count towards the total of unapproved or unexplained absences.

If these absences are a continuing issue for your child, you should work with the school to develop plans or strategies to support their continuing engagement in school and to prevent further truancy.

For more information on strategies and supports available see: [Attendance](#)

What happens if your child refuses to go to school, and how you can support them to return

School refusing children experience significant emotional distress not only when going to school but also at the thought of going to school; they may be absent from school for weeks or even months at a time. School refusal differs from truancy as children generally stay home with the knowledge of the parents and despite the parents' best efforts to encourage their child to go to school.

School refusal may be considered a reasonable excuse for absence and if supports and interventions are being sought, should not count towards unexplained or unapproved absence.

It is important in these circumstances that you clearly communicate your situation and concerns with your child's school. You should work with your child's school to find the best way to support them in this situation. Schools have the flexibility to modify the school experience for students so that it better caters to their needs, goals and strengths.

For more information on the supports and interventions to support your child see: [Attendance](#)

What happens if your child is employed in the entertainment industry and misses school regularly

Any child employed in the entertainment industry during school hours must have been granted a school exemption. When considering an application, a principal will consider, amongst other factors, how the employment might adversely affect the child's educational needs and wellbeing. The process for applying for these exemptions is outlined in the Department's School Policy and Advisory Guide. Non-government schools are also advised to follow these procedures.

For more information, see: [Attendance - Exemption Application Process](#).

Being issued a school enrolment notice

All children of compulsory school age (6–17 years) must be enrolled in school or registered for home schooling. If you have been issued with a School Enrolment Notice this means that the School Attendance Officer has become aware that there is no record that your child or children are enrolled in school or registered for home schooling. The School Enrolment Notice is not a fine instead, it is an opportunity for your family to work with the School Attendance Officer to ensure your child is enrolled at school or properly registered for home schooling.

For more information see: [Enrolling Your Child in School or Registering for Home Schooling.](#)