

**GLENROY PRIVATE**



**GLENROY PRIVATE**

# **Student Attendance Policy**

**Reviewed July 2021**

**Table of Contents**

RATIONALE .....2

AIM .....2

THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK .....2

Software .....3

BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES .....4

    General .....4

    Sickness .....5

    Unexplained Absence.....5

    Exemptions.....6

    Roll Marking .....6

Related Documents and Legislation.....9

Appendices .....9

## **RATIONALE**

Regular attendance at school is crucial if students are to develop their talents. Glenroy Private, in partnership with parents, is in charge of maintaining the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, school staff as part of their duty of care, share that responsibility in monitoring and responding to part or whole day absences.

## **AIM**

The school aims to encourage a positive and supportive learning environment for all the students by following the attendance policy which students along with parents and school staff work together to make sure that all enrolled students attend their classes and other scheduled educational activities.

## **THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

Under the *VIC Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, schools are required to ensure that individual students meet certain attendance standards. This includes mandatory attendance for students less than 17 years of age unless exemptions are applicable.

In response to the national agenda and changes to the *Education and Training Act* resulting from the Wood Royal Commission and the new School Leaving Age, significant changes to school processes and practices around student attendance are required.

In introducing the attendance codes, the VIC Minister for Education has delegated the power to grant or cancel Exemption Certificates to non-government school principals within strict guidelines. This delegated authority ensures that independent school principals have the same level of authority as principals in government schools. It allows principals to provide an Exemption Certificate for students to be exempt from attending school for up to 100 days in a year or an exemption to leave school following the completion of Year 10 to undertake an apprenticeship or traineeship.

The Attendance Register must be available for inspection during school hours by a Board inspector or by any authorised person, who may require the principal of the school to furnish a copy of the register or any part of it, *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*.

## Software

The MAZE software, which gets backed up twice daily as a normal procedure at the School, is the method used by Glenroy Private to keep records. A copy of the backup is kept in the School's safe and another is kept with the Principal. Maze retains the register of enrolments indefinitely thus meeting its legal obligation of retaining the register for a minimum of five (5) years before archiving. IWISE is also used to register the daily attendance indefinitely thus again meeting its legal obligation of retaining the register of daily attendance for a minimum of seven (7) years after the last entry was made. MAZE and maintains a register of enrolments and a register of attendance including the following information for each student:

- Name, age and address
- The name and contact telephone number of parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Date of enrolment and, where appropriate, the date of leaving the school and the student's destination
- For students older than six (6) years, previous school or pre-enrolment situation

Where the destination of a student below seventeen (17) years of age is unknown, the School will notify a Department of Education and Communities officer with home school liaison responsibilities of the student's full name, date of birth, last known address, last date of attendance, parents' names and contact details, an indication of possible destination, other information that may assist officers to locate the student, and any known occupational health and safety risks associated with contacting the parents or student.

## BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES

### General

- The school uses the “IWISE Software” for all record keeping in relation to students’ attendance and absence.
- Parents are requested to contact the school either by phone, message or by note whenever a child is absent or late.
- The parent of any child without explanation will be contacted by letter or phone requesting an explanation for any absence on the second day of absence, this is to ensure that students are not absent without their parents knowledge or consent.
- No student is allowed to leave the school grounds during school hours without a note. All students’ parents must also sign the Register when leaving early. Parents who are collecting students should do so directly from the office.
- Students who arrive at school after 8:40am (secondary) and 8:40am (primary) must report to the office to collect a late slip, and then go to their classroom. When students receive a late slip they will be marked on the roll as present but late, and the late arrival will be recorded in the "Late Arrival Register" followed by an entry on IWISE
- No student should arrive at school before 8:00 am.
- Class teachers are directly responsible for monitoring daily attendance.
- All absences are carefully monitored and followed up by referring to appropriate personnel as required.

## Sickness

- Parents are requested to phone the office before 8:35am (secondary) and 8:35am (primary) or send a note with another member of the family if a child is to be absent from school. Any unexplained absences will be investigated after this time.
- Parents are required to inform the class teacher in writing of reasons for their child's absence the first day the child returns to school.
- Parents are requested to notify the school immediately if it is known that a child's absence is likely to exceed one week.

## Unexplained Absence

- The parents are contacted on the third day of absence for a verbal explanation. If the school is unsuccessful in contacting the parents a note is left on the IWISE stating (unable to contact parents).
- If the child is still absent the following day another attempt is made to contact the parents, and a note is left on the IWISE if we are still unsuccessful.
- The school will try all emergency numbers on file in an attempt to have direct contact with the parents.
- After the child has been absent from school for a week (5 consecutive days) a letter is sent home asking parents to contact the school immediately to provide an explanation. (A copy of the letter is kept in the student's file) and a request for a visit by a school representative to the student's family home is suggested to check on the child without causing any discomfort to family or child
- If there has been no response from the parents a second letter is sent via registered mail informing them that the matter will be forwarded to the Victorian Regulation and Qualifications Authority with home school liaison responsibilities
- The school will contact Victorian Regulations and Qualification Authority with home school liaison responsibilities informing them of the situation and the concerns the school may have.
- Every time an attempt is made to contact the parents a note of the date and the time the attempt was made is kept.

## Exemptions

The process for considering an application for exemption is:

- Put the parental application on letterhead and give to the parent to complete
- Review the parent's application against the criteria in the guidelines located <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/Pages/attendanceexemption.aspx> ((Ministrial Order 705).
- Put the certificate of exemption on school letterhead and complete for the parent (if the application is supported)
- Give the original certificate to the parent

Keep a copy of the application, certificate and Minister's delegation on the student's file.

## Roll Marking

The School uses “IWISE software” to record student attendances/absences. Teachers are to complete the “Roll group with Attendance Grid form” each morning. These forms are to be sent to the office to be recorded by office staff on “IWISE”.

1. Class Rolls must always be marked accurately. Principals are required to maintain an attendance register (roll) in a form approved by the Minister (Education Act and Training 2006).
2. Teachers should be conversant with the school’s Policies and Procedures.
3. Parents or carers should be informed that it is their responsibility to:
  - a. ensure that their child attends school regularly
  - b. explain the absences of their children from school promptly.
4. The first and last day of attendance each term should be marked with an ‘X’.

5. The **exception method** (marking absences only) is to be followed as shown:

- a. place a lower case ‘a’ in the day’s column against the name of the absent student at the time
- b. when the declaration of student attendance is made
- c. subsequently, when the declaration regarding the nature of leave is made, either **A, S, L, E, M, F, B** or **H** is written above the ‘a’, for example:

A	S	L	E	M	F	B	H
a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a

6. The following entries should be made

- First and last day of attendance each term (see 4) ..... **X**
- Absence declared (absence included in absence return) ..... **a**
- Absence for part of a day ..... **P**
- Absence unexplained after 7 days or unjustified ..... **A**
- Absence on official school business (absence not included in absence return) ..... **B**
- Absence due to suspension (absence included in absence return) ..... **E**
- The student is participating in a flexible timetable and not present because they are not required at school.
  - if the child is of or above the age of 15 years-paid work or a combination of approved education or training and paid work. (absence not included in absence return) ..... **F**
- The student is enrolled in a school and is required or approved to attend an alternative educational setting on a sessional or full time basis ..... **H**



- Absence with leave – reason accepted by the principal (absence included in absence return) ..... **L**
- Absence with approved exemption (absence not included in absence return) ..... **M**
- Absence owing to sickness or as a result of medical or paramedical appointment (absence included in absence return) ..... **S**
- Public holidays and other days on which the school is not open for instruction are indicated by a vertical broken line in the column for that day.

7. No codes other than **a, A, S, L, E, P, M, F, B** or **H** are to be used in marking the roll.

8. The student’s absence is unexplained or unjustified. This symbol must be used if no explanation has been provided by parents within seven days of the occurrence of an absence or the explanation is not accepted by the principal. It is at the principal’s discretion to accept or not accept the explanation provided.

An **A** should be recorded for the day.

9. The symbol ‘**B**’ is used where a student is absent from the school site on official school business. This may include work experience, student exchange, school sport (regional and state carnivals), and school excursions.

11. The student is enrolled in a school and is required or approved to be attending an alternative educational setting on a sessional or full time basis. The symbol is recorded where a student accesses education settings separate to their mainstream school such as:

- behaviour schools
- juvenile justice
- hospital schools
- distance education

An **H** should be recorded for the day.

13. Absences on an occasion (i.e. part of a day) or unjustified lateness or fractional truancy is shown by placing ‘**P**’ next to ‘**a**’ in the day’s column against the name of the student when the absence is determined. When the reason for the part absence is determined, either **A, S, L, E, M** or **B** is to be placed above the ‘**a**’, for example:

A   S   L   E   M   B  
Pa Pa Pa

Details of Partial Absences i.e. times and dates are to be recorded in the “Details of Absences on Occasions” which follows the Term 4 section of this roll. Partial absences are not included in tallies of absence returns.

14. The number of absences for each student are to be counted and recorded at the end of each term. Exemptions (**M**), flexible timetable (**F**), official school business (**B**), absence from home school due to attendance at a specialist education setting (**H**) and partial absences (**Pa**) are not to be included in tallies and Absence Returns.
15. In the column headed ‘Special notes’ comments such as ‘speech therapy Tuesdays’ or ‘medical history – no exertion’ may be made. Confidential notations should not be included.

## Related Documents and Legislation

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/attendance.aspx>

**Education and Training Act Victoria 2006**

## Appendices

1. 2021 Attendance Register Codes
2. Absent note
3. Student Temporary Leave Declaration
4. Notice of Regular Lateness

**ABSENCE NOTE:**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Absence(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Absence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent's/Caregiver's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**ABSENCE NOTE:**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Absence(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Absence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent's/Caregiver's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_