



Geelong Lutheran College is committed to providing a safe environment for all our students when they are in the care of the College.

#### **Definitions**

**The College:** Geelong Lutheran College St John's Newtown and Armstrong Creek

**Parents:** Parents, Guardians, Caregivers

#### **Rationale**

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 have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school
- explain to school staff and parents the key practices and procedures Geelong Lutheran College (GLC) has in place to
  - Support, monitor and maintain student attendance
  - Record, monitor and follow up student absences.

Attendance at school has a direct impact on student achievement.

The Education Act requires that children of school age (six to seventeen years) resident in Victoria are required to be in full-time attendance at a government or registered non-government school unless formally exempt. The College requires that post-compulsory aged students also attend school unless a valid reason exists.

The College aims to maximise student learning opportunities and performance by ensuring that children required to attend school do so regularly, and without unnecessary absence.

This Policy applies to all students at Geelong Lutheran College.

#### **Unexplained absences from school**

GLC will contact parents on the same day of an unexplained student absence. This supports student safety and wellbeing. GLC currently prefers the use of text messages on the day of an unexplained absence. The College needs to know when and why a child is absent, and parents need to know if their child is not at school. Prompt communication assists with daily school attendance

Parents must notify the College of their child's absence as soon as possible on the day of absence or prior to that absence.

#### **College and parents working together**

Building positive and collaborative relationships through clear communications with parents is critical to the successful implementation of the same-day notification requirement.

The responsibility for attendance needs to be underpinned by a shared understanding and clear expectations about the procedures for monitoring, recording and follow-up student attendance as outlined in the College's Attendance Policy.

The College will work in partnership with families in helping to co-manage individual student attendance.



The College will identify individual students 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 to be committed to attending school every day, arriving on time, and be prepared to learn. Our students are encouraged to approach a teacher or Wellbeing staff to seek assistance if there are any issues that are affecting their attendance.

**Leave during term time**

Leave approval needs to be sought in advance from the Head of Primary/Secondary for any planned absence of one week or more, such as family holidays, etc. during term time. Please be aware that there are restrictions on term time holidays in the Senior School as outlined in the 'Senior School Policies and Procedures' booklet. There is no reduction in College fees for any leave taken during term time. Applications should be directed to [SJReception@glc.vic.edu.au](mailto:SJReception@glc.vic.edu.au) (St John's Newtown) or [AC.Student.Services@glc.vic.edu.au](mailto:AC.Student.Services@glc.vic.edu.au) (Armstrong Creek) for processing.

**The College's responsibilities**

**Notify parents**

The College must notify parents as soon as practicable on the same day of an unexplained absence.

At times, the parent may not be able to be reached because the College has not been provided with the updated correct contact details. In this instance, the College will attempt to contact any emergency contact/s nominated on the child's file held by the College, on the same day of the unexplained absence.

**The parents' responsibilities**

Reasons for absences can be provided by phone, via the SIMON Everywhere app or email (AC campus) [student.services@glc.vic.edu.au](mailto:student.services@glc.vic.edu.au)

**Implementation**

Education is a sequential process. Absences often mean students miss important stages in the development of topics, causing them to find 'catching up' difficult.

Please note the following:

- All enrolled students are required to attend school unless reasonable and valid grounds exist for them to be absent
- Independent students not living with parents are also required to contact the College
- Ongoing unexplained absences or lack of cooperation regarding student attendance will result in a meeting being organised with the Heads of School or Deans of Students and Wellbeing Department
- Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly and are only absent if ill or if necessary. Parents have a further responsibility to provide a written note or to contact the College explaining why an absence has occurred

Where absences are of concern due to their nature or frequency, the College will involve the parents and the student as appropriate in developing strategies to improve attendance.



Whilst making parents and students aware, the College then seeks to implement a support structure to improve attendance. This is initiated through the student's respective Head of School, Dean of Students and Wellbeing Team. Families are not encouraged to take holidays during Term time as this will have an impact on their child's education.

**Evaluation**

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

**Policy Administration**

Responsible Person/s	Approver	Date Approved	Next Review
Executive Principal	College Board	August 2023	August 2028