

# Lowther Hall

ANGLICAN GRAMMAR SCHOOL

*All about the girl*

# Attendance Policy (Students)

Date of last review:

2021

Review cycle:

3 yearly

Review and approval responsibility:

Executive

Category:

Child Safety

VRQA required:

Yes

Locations:

O:Drive, LowtherLink,  
Website



# STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

## 1. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy, parents include a guardian and every person who has parental responsibility for a student enrolled at Lowther Hall including persons who have parental responsibility under the Family Law Act and any person with whom a student normally or regularly resides.

## 2. PURPOSE OF POLICY

This policy sets out the expectations that Lowther Hall School has for the compulsory attendance of students at school. It identifies the individuals responsible for monitoring and following up daily attendance and outlines how current contact details for parents, guardians and caregivers are maintained.

While Lowther Hall has a very good overall student attendance record, it will adopt such strategies as it considers appropriate to ensure high levels of student attendance are maintained and to improve attendance in specific cases where there are concerns for a student's attendance record.

## 3. SCOPE AND APPLICATION

This policy applies to all students enrolled at Lowther Hall and their parents and caregivers.

## 4. LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY CONTEXT

Lowther Hall is required by law to maintain an attendance register in respect of the attendance at school of its enrolled students.

Full time attendance at school is compulsory for children from 6 – 17 years of age unless an exemption has been granted for a child, as governed by the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)*.

It is the duty of the parents of a child enrolled at Lowther Hall to ensure that their child attends school at all times when Lowther Hall is open for the child's instruction. Parents must comply with this duty unless they have a reasonable excuse.

A reasonable excuse includes:

- the child is prevented from attending school because of illness, accident, an unforeseen event or an unavoidable cause or because of a requirement to comply with another law.
- the absence from school was because of the child's disobedience or refusal and the parent made every reasonable effort to intervene but was unsuccessful.
- the child is attending or observing a religious event or obligation as a result of a genuinely held belief of the child or a parent of the child.
- the parent has provided an explanation and the Principal of Lowther Hall accepts the explanation as a reasonable excuse.
- the child has been suspended or expelled.

## 5. MONITORING OF ATTENDANCE

5.1 Lowther Hall monitors the daily attendance of each student. Their attendance is noted in the attendance register at least twice per day.

5.1.1 It is the responsibility of the relevant Head of School in Senior School, Raymond House and Blinkbonnie House to oversee the recording of attendance in their area of the School.

5.1.2 In Blinkbonnie House and Raymond House recording student attendance is the responsibility of the classroom teacher (or, in their absence, whichever teacher has been assigned responsibility for the class) at the start and end of each day in the School's administration system; Synergetic.

In Blinkbonnie House and Raymond House it is the responsibility of the relevant Receptionist to follow up that all student attendance rolls have been completed.

5.1.3 In Senior School recording student attendance is the responsibility of the Home Group teacher (or, in their absence, whichever teacher has been assigned responsibility for the class) at the start of each day in the School's administration system; Synergetic. Recording attendance is also the responsibility of every teacher who is teaching a class in Lesson 1. At the end of the day, it is the responsibility of the teacher who is teaching a class in the final lesson of the day to record student attendance.

In Senior School it is the responsibility of the Senior School Receptionist to follow up that all student attendance rolls have been completed.

5.2 Lowther Hall identifies any absences of a student from school including classes and follows up any unexplained absences.

5.2.1 In the first instance, it is the responsibility to follow up immediately with parents any students who have been recorded as absent where an explanation has not been provided for this absence by a parent, caregiver or guardian.

5.2.2 Where an absence is unable to be accounted for the matter will be escalated to the Head of School or their delegate for immediate follow up.

5.2.3 Parents will be notified of any unsatisfactory attendance at school or class attendance of their child and will record information about any unsatisfactory attendance on her student file. Such notification is the responsibility of the Head of School.

5.2.4 Parents should be aware that School Attendance Officers appointed by the government have certain powers in relation to students who are not attending school including issuing School Attendance Notices in certain circumstances that may require parents to provide reasons as to why their child may not have complied with their obligation to attend school.

5.2.5 The School will maintain current contact details for parents via the consent2go platform and the integration of information collected through that platform, into the School's administration system; Synergetic. Parents, caregivers and guardians will be prompted to update and confirm their details at least twice per year and prior to any offsite excursion or camp. It is the responsibility of the parents, caregiver or guardian to ensure the their details are correct.

## 6. ABSENCES FROM SCHOOL

Lowther Hall requires its parents to provide an explanation of the reason for a student's absence from school or a school event on any day on which the school was open for instruction. In all cases where it is possible to advise the School of a proposed absence in advance, this should be done so that the Principal (or her delegate) may consider whether or not to excuse the absence.

The Principal (or her delegate) will make a written record of the reason (if any) given by a parent.

Students should **not** generally be absent from school for the purpose of taking family holidays during school terms. If an absence for that reason or for some other pre-planned reason is unavoidable, the following procedure will apply:

- The parent/s must at least one month in advance of the proposed period of absence, or as soon as practicable if one month's notice is not possible, write to the Principal outlining the proposed period of absence and the reason for the absence and requesting the Principal to consider whether the excuse for the proposed absence is reasonable
- The parent/s will be advised by the Principal in writing if she accepts the reason for the absence as a reasonable excuse or the parent/s may be requested to meet with the Principal for further discussions
- In the event that the Principal accepts the reason for the absence as a reasonable excuse, she may impose a condition of approval for the absence that the student undertake an Absence Learning Plan during the absence. In this case, the child/s classroom teacher (Raymond House and Blinkbonnie House) or Year Level Coordinator (Senior School) will advise the parents of the Absence Learning Plan that will have to be delivered and overseen by the parents in order to minimise the student falling behind in class.

An Absence Learning Plan is an outline of the broad areas to be covered during the student's absence and is **not** a detailed document or equivalent to an Individual Learning Plan. The material outlined in the Absence Learning Plan will not be able to be individually taught to the student prior to her absence or upon her return.

If an Absence Learning Plan is not undertaken by the student during the absence, the Principal may subsequently record that the absence was not excused because of the failure to complete the work set.

Where approval has not been sought in advance or in accordance with this policy and it was appropriate for such approval to have been sought in advance, or the conditions for approval have not been met, the absence will not be excused.

## **7. HOLDING A PLACE FOR A TERM OR LONGER**

In the event that a family wishes to withdraw a student for a term or multiple terms (for example, due to a parent's secondment overseas) the family can apply to the Principal to hold the student's place. A holding fee of 25% of the tuition fee is the standard charge.

## **8. SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WHO STRUGGLE TO ATTEND**

- **General approach**  
The School will offer support aiming to focus on positive and proactive solutions and the creation of a safe, supportive learning environment. In the event of prolonged or repeated absence, or where a student refuses to attend school, advice may be sought for the student from a health or mental health professional.
- **Meeting with Principal / Head of School**  
A meeting with the student and parent/carers will be convened if a student's attendance is of concern to the school. The meeting will aim to develop improvement strategies to support the student and examine why non-attendance continues to be a problem and explain the possible consequences of repeated non-attendance.
- **Psychologist**  
A meeting with the Psychologist may be arranged when student attendance issues are identified and it becomes apparent that a student may require ongoing intensive support in order to remain engaged in school. Appropriate professionals from other agencies may also be invited to attend with the permission of the parent.

## **9. CONSEQUENCES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE**

- **Asked to leave**  
If the situation is such that all efforts to encourage the student's attendance are exhausted and she cannot be supported further by the School, her enrolment may be cancelled, in the best interests of all concerned.
- **Report to Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)**  
A failure of parents/carers to ensure a child attends school may result in a report to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) because the child's development may be deemed in jeopardy and require DHHS intervention.

## **10. PRIVACY**

The School seeks to respect privacy of families and individuals in relation to absences, through the careful management of personal information. This is achieved through the Privacy Policy and associated procedures.

## **11. COMMUNICATION OF THE POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

- The School will communicate processes for communicating student absences to parents at the commencement of each school year.
- The School will communicate the Student Attendance Policy to:
  - New families on enrolment.

- All staff every 3 years through an update process.

## **12. RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS**

- Attendance Register
- Camps, Excursions and Offsite Activities Policy
- Complaints Resolution Policy
- Discipline Policy
- Privacy Policy