



ATTENDANCE POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the General Office

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Ngurruga School Attendance 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/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school
- explain to school staff and parents the key practices and procedures Ngurruga School has in place to
 - support, monitor and maintain student attendance
 - record, monitor and follow up student absences.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all students at Ngurruga School.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Department of Education's [School Attendance Guidelines](#). It does not replace or change the obligations of Ngurruga School parents and School Attendance Officers under legislation or the School Attendance Guidelines.

DEFINITION

Parent – includes a guardian and every person who has parental responsibility for the child, including parental responsibility under the *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth) and any person with whom a child normally or regularly resides.

POLICY

Schooling is compulsory for children and young people aged from 6 to 17 years (unless an exemption from attendance or enrolment has been granted).

Daily attendance is important for all children and young people to succeed in education and to ensure they do not fall behind both socially and developmentally. School participation maximises life opportunities for children and young people by providing them with education and support networks. School helps people to develop important skills, knowledge and values that set them up for further learning and participation in their community.

Students are expected to attend Ngurruga School during normal school hours of 8:45am to 2:45pm every day of each term unless:

- there is an approved exemption from school attendance for the student
- the student has a dual enrolment with another school and has only a partial enrolment in Ngurruga School



- the student is registered for home schooling and has only a partial enrolment in Ngurraga School for particular activities

Both schools and parents have an important role to play in supporting students to attend school every day.

Ngurraga School believes all students should attend school all day, every day when the school is open for instruction and is committed to working with its school community to encourage and support full school attendance.

Our school identifies individual students or cohorts who are vulnerable and whose attendance is at risk and/or declining and works with these students and their parents to improve their attendance through a range of interventions and supports.

Students are committed to attending school every day, arriving on time and are prepared to learn. Our students are encouraged approach a teacher and seek assistance if there are any issues that are affecting their attendance. Staff are observant and receptive to support students varying forms of communication.

Ngurraga School parents are committed to ensuring their child/children attend school on time every day when instruction is offered, to communicating openly with the school and providing valid explanations for any absence.

Parents will communicate with the relevant staff at Ngurraga School about any issues affecting their child's attendance and work in partnership with the school to address any concerns.

Parents will provide a reasonable explanation for their child's absence from school and endeavour to schedule family holidays, appointments and other activities outside of school hours.

Supporting and promoting attendance

Ngurraga School's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* and *Inclusion and Diversity Policy* both support student attendance.

Our school also promotes student attendance through:

- Bringing to life Ngurraga School's vision to create an innovative, inclusive, and nurturing environment where every student is empowered to reach their full potential. "Learning with purpose, growing through connection".
- Delivering an engaging and diverse curriculum to ensure that students can participate in subjects and programs that are structured to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- School-wide Positive Behaviour Supports (SWPBS) which aims to create a positive school climate
- Explicitly teaching positive behaviour through programs including, Respectful Relationships and Zones of Regulation
- Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for each student
- Student Support Group (SSG) meetings every term, with further meetings available on request
- Providing students with the opportunity to be involved in making decisions about their school through the Student Representative Council (SRC)
- Breakfast Club- offering free, nutritious and healthy food for students
- Lunchtime Programs tailored to students' interests
- Maintaining regular open communication with families

Recording attendance

At Ngurraga School, student attendance must be recorded twice per day. This is necessary to:



- meet legislative requirements
- discharge Ngurruga School's duty of care for all students
- meet Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) requirements for VPC students

Attendance will be recorded by the classroom teacher at 9:00am and after lunch at 1:30pm using Compass.

For students arriving at school after 9:30am, the days first attendance record will be completed by Admin or via the kiosk sign in.

If students are attending a school approved activity, the teacher in charge of the activity will record them as being present.

Attendance - Senior Secondary Learning Area

Senior Secondary students at Ngurruga School are expected to attend all scheduled classes unless they are unwell or participating in a school approved activity. To ensure good attendance habits and consistency for all students, attendance requirements for Senior Secondary students will be the same regardless of enrolment in the Victorian Pathways Certificate (VPC).

Students who participate in studies outside the college, such as VET, will be expected to adhere to the college's attendance policy, including attending all scheduled classes. Ngurruga School's attendance officer will be responsible for monitoring attendance at external organisations and sharing information with VPC Coordinator and VET Coordinator for follow up if concerns arise.

Students participating in study with external providers

Ngurruga School may enter arrangements with external providers to deliver part of the Victorian Pathways Certificate (VPC). External providers may include:

- TAFE providers
- Private providers (RTOs)
- Registered schools, including both government and non-government that are also RTOs, and
- Learn Local providers that are also RTOs.

Ngurruga School will enter into a written agreement between the school and the external provider detailing the responsibilities of each party including how the attendance of students will be managed and monitored between the parties. Ngurruga School will appoint a member of staff to monitor the attendance on students studying with external providers upon entering into any agreement.

The external party must provide the services consistent with the Department's Policies and Procedures on Supervision and Purchasing Secondary Courses and Vocational Training from External Providers.

Attendance Requirements for Victorian Pathways Certificate (VPC) Students

Students undertaking the Victorian Pathways Certificate (VPC) are expected to attend all scheduled classes and participate in learning activities associated with their program.

Regular attendance is important to ensure students have sufficient opportunity to demonstrate the learning outcomes required for satisfactory completion of VPC units, in accordance with the VPC Administrative Handbook.

Where a student's attendance raises concerns, the classroom teacher will notify the VPC Coordinator and relevant leadership staff. The school will work with the student and their parents/carers to implement strategies to support improved attendance and engagement.



A substantial breach of attendance requirements may occur where a student's absences result in insufficient opportunity to demonstrate the learning outcomes of a VPC unit. In these circumstances, the school will work with the student and their family to identify appropriate supports and determine whether satisfactory completion of the unit can be achieved.

If a student is absent from a school-based assessment task, the student or their parent/carer must notify the school and provide an explanation for the absence. Where appropriate, the student may be provided with an opportunity to complete the assessment at an alternative time.

Students experiencing circumstances that significantly impact their attendance may be considered for Special Provision, in accordance with school procedures and the VPC Administrative Handbook.

Recording absences

For absences where there is no exemption in place, a parent must provide an explanation on each occasion to the school.

Parents should notify Ngurruga School of absences by:

- Contacting the classroom teacher or reception for either planned or unplanned absences

If a student has been marked as absent on any school day, Ngurruga School will notify parents by (SMS/push notification message at 10:30am). The classroom teacher will attempt to contact parents after 3 consecutive days of unexplained absence, allowing time for the parent to respond.

If contact cannot be made with the parent and the student's unexplained absence has extended to 5 consecutive days, the classroom teacher or attendance officer may attempt to contact any emergency contact/s nominated on the student's file held by the school.

If a student is absent for 10 consecutive school days, Leadership will be notified for further action.

Ngurruga School will keep a record of the reason given for each absence. The Principal will determine if the explanation provided is a **reasonable excuse** for the purposes of the parent meeting their responsibilities under the *Education Training Reform Act 2006* and the School Attendance Guidelines.

If Ngurruga School considers that the parent has provided a **reasonable excuse** for their child's absence the absence will be marked as '**explained absence**'.

If the school determines that no reasonable excuse has been provided, the absence will be marked as '**unexplained absence**'.

To support classroom teachers with maintaining accurate records, they will be notified weekly regarding unfilled unexplained absences which require follow up.

The Principal has the discretion to accept a reason given by a parent for a student's absence. The Principal will generally excuse:

- medical and dental appointments, where out of hours appointments are not possible or appropriate
- bereavement or attendance at the funeral of a relative or friend of the student, including a student required to attend Sorry Business
- school refusal, if a plan is in place with the parent to address causes and support the student's return to school
- cultural observance if the parent/carer notifies the school in advance
- family holidays where the parent notifies the school in advance



If no explanation is provided by the parent within 10 school days of an absence, it will be recorded as an 'unexplained absence' and recorded on the student's file.

Parents will be notified if an absence has not been excused.

Managing non-attendance and supporting student engagement

Where absences are of concern due to their nature or frequency, or where a student has been absent for more than five days, Ngurruga School will work collaboratively with parents, the student, and other professionals, where appropriate, to develop strategies to improve attendance, including:

- establishing an Attendance Student Support Group
- implementing a Return to School Plan
- implementing a Student Absence Learning Plan for students who will be absent for an extended period
- arranging for assistance from relevant staff including but not limited to the Wellbeing Leading Teacher, Mental Health in Primary Schools (MHIPS), Mental Health Practitioner, Speech Pathologist or Occupational Therapist.

We understand from time to time that some students will need additional supports and assistance, and in collaboration with the student and their family, will endeavour to provide this support when it is required.

Referral to School Attendance Officer

If Ngurruga School decides that it has exhausted strategies for addressing a student's unsatisfactory attendance, we may, in accordance with the School Attendance Guidelines refer the non-attendance to a School Attendance Officer in the Southwestern Victoria Region office for further action.

If, from multiple attempts to contact a parent, it becomes apparent that a student will not be returning to the school, the Principal may make a referral to a School Attendance Officer if:

- the student has been absent from school on at least five full days in the previous 12 months where:
 - the parent has not provided a reasonable excuse for these absences; and
 - measures to improve the student's attendance have been undertaken and have been unsuccessful
- the student's whereabouts are unknown and:
 - the student has been absent for 10 consecutive school days; or
 - no alternative education destination can be found for the student.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on the [Ngurruga School Website](#)
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in staff handbook
- Discussed at annual staff briefings/meetings
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request
- Through VPC enrolment meetings with students and parents
- VPC course information materials and attendance expectations

MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- The Department's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL): [Attendance](#)



POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Created date	March 2026
Consultation	Consultation the school community took place in Term 1, 2026.
Endorsed by	Elaine Quinn (Principal)
Endorsed on	16 th March 2026
Next review date	March 2029 To ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed every 3-4 years thereafter*