

# Yarra Junction Primary School

School Number: 3216



## ATTENDANCE POLICY

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">School Attendance Guidelines</a></li></ul>

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# ATTENDANCE POLICY

## PURPOSE

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/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school
- explain to school staff and parents the key practices and procedures Example 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 Yarra Junction Primary School.

- This policy should be read in conjunction with the Department of Education and Training's [School Attendance Guidelines](#)
- It does not replace or change the obligations of Yarra Junction Primary 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 Yarra Junction Primary School during normal school hours 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 Yarra Junction Primary School, or
- the student is registered for home schooling and has only a partial enrolment in Yarra Junction Primary School for particular activities.

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

Yarra Junction Primary 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 will identify individual students or cohorts 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 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.

Yarra Junction Primary 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 Yarra Junction Primary 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**

Yarra Junction Primary School's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* supports student attendance.

Our school also promotes student attendance by offering before and after school care services with TheirCare, Breakfast club, range of specialist subjects, providing engaging learning, a variety of welfare support, break time clubs and frequent communication between school and home.

### **Recording attendance**

Our school must record student attendance twice per day. This is necessary to:

- meet legislative requirements
- discharge Yarra Junction Primary School's duty of care for all students

Attendance will be recorded by the class teacher at the start of each school day and at second break eating time on Compass.

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

### **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 Yarra Junction Primary School of absences by either:

- logging into their Compass portal and entering a reason for the absence

- contacting the office on 5967 1544
- informing the classroom teacher (if it is a planned absence)

If a student is absent on a particular day and the school has not been previously notified by a parent, or the absence is otherwise unexplained, Yarra Junction Primary School will notify parents initially by SMS. Yarra Junction Primary School will attempt to contact parents as soon as practicable on the same day of the unexplained absence, allowing time for the parent to respond.

If contact cannot be made with the parent (due to incorrect contact details), the school will attempt to contact parent via email/compass.

Yarra Junction Primary School will keep a record of the reason given for each absence. Classroom teachers can approve “Parent Choice” with an explanation, however if unsure are to seek Principal advice to 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 Yarra Junction Primary School considers that the parent has provided a **reasonable excuse** for their child’s absence the absence will be marked as ‘**approved absence**’.

If the school determines that no reasonable excuse has been provided, the absence will be marked as ‘**unapproved absence**’.

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 • 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.

Teachers are expected to monitor students approved attendance. Attendance is a regular item on Team meeting agendas to support monitoring.

### How to mark Unapproved to Approved:

1. Log into Compass
2. Select student in “search for people, activities and more.
3. Select Attendance icon
4. Select Notes icon
5. Look through all absences and for each reason “Parent Choice-U” select the pencil icon

and re-select "reason" from drop down options to Parent Choice Approved and select save.

6. If you refresh and scroll over reason "Parent Choice – A" will appear.

### **Student absence ranges:**

#### **0 – 6: This is within normal range.**

A child with this attendance rate is able to take full advantage of the teaching and learning opportunities available to them.

#### **7 – 10: This attendance rate is below average.** (attendance concerns)

A child with this attendance rate could miss over 1 year of schooling between Prep and Year 10.

**11 – 20: This is a poor attendance rate.** (critical/towards chronic) A child with this attendance rate could miss out on up to 2 years of schooling between Prep and Year 10.

#### **20+: This is a very poor attendance rate.** (critical / chronic/high concern)

A child with this attendance rate could miss over 2.5 years of schooling between Prep and Year 10.

### **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 three consecutive days or absence is identified as "critical/chronic", Yarra Junction Primary School teachers will take attendance action as appropriate to support individual students.

Teachers are to record actions on YJPS Attendance Plan chronicle.

Actions include (not limited to): Calling Parents, Emailing Parents, providing home learning packs, engaging regional wellbeing staff etc).

If students have been away due to illness/school refusal **for more than 10 consecutive days** our Wellbeing coordinator will work with classroom teachers, parents and student to implement a Return to School Plan.

If students have been away from school **for more than 20 days in the school year**, classroom teachers with support from the Wellbeing coordinator (as required) are to create an Attendance Improvement Plan using the Department of Education documentation. This Attendance Improvement Plan is required to be communicated with parents/carers (via email or SSG) and a copy uploaded to Compass Chronicle under attendance.

Template link: [Attendance Improvement - Primary - updated May 18.docx \(eduweb.vic.gov.au\)](#)

Where absences are related to a [Plan](#) extended holiday (more than 5 days), the classroom teacher will provide a holiday plan for students to engage in learning. Teachers to record information regarding the holiday plan using the YJPS Attendance Plan chronicle. Teachers to chronicle if a holiday learning pack is not required by parents.

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 Yarra Junction Primary 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 Regional Office for further action.

If, from multiple attempts to contact with 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.

### **Attendance rewards:**

During the whole school assembly each week, the JSC representative from each grade will collect the Attendance slips from the classroom teacher and place them into the schools attendance box.

Classroom teachers are to award one Attendance Slip per student who has attended school for a full week (nb: students who have attended sessions with a certified specialist eg: Speech/Behavioural are to be included as full attendance).

Attendance slips will be provided to classroom teachers and placed in their Staff Folders.

The School's attendance box will have whole school reward targets. Eg: Whole school ice cream day, sausage sizzle etc.

Once attendance slips reach the reward line all students at YJPS will receive the identified award.

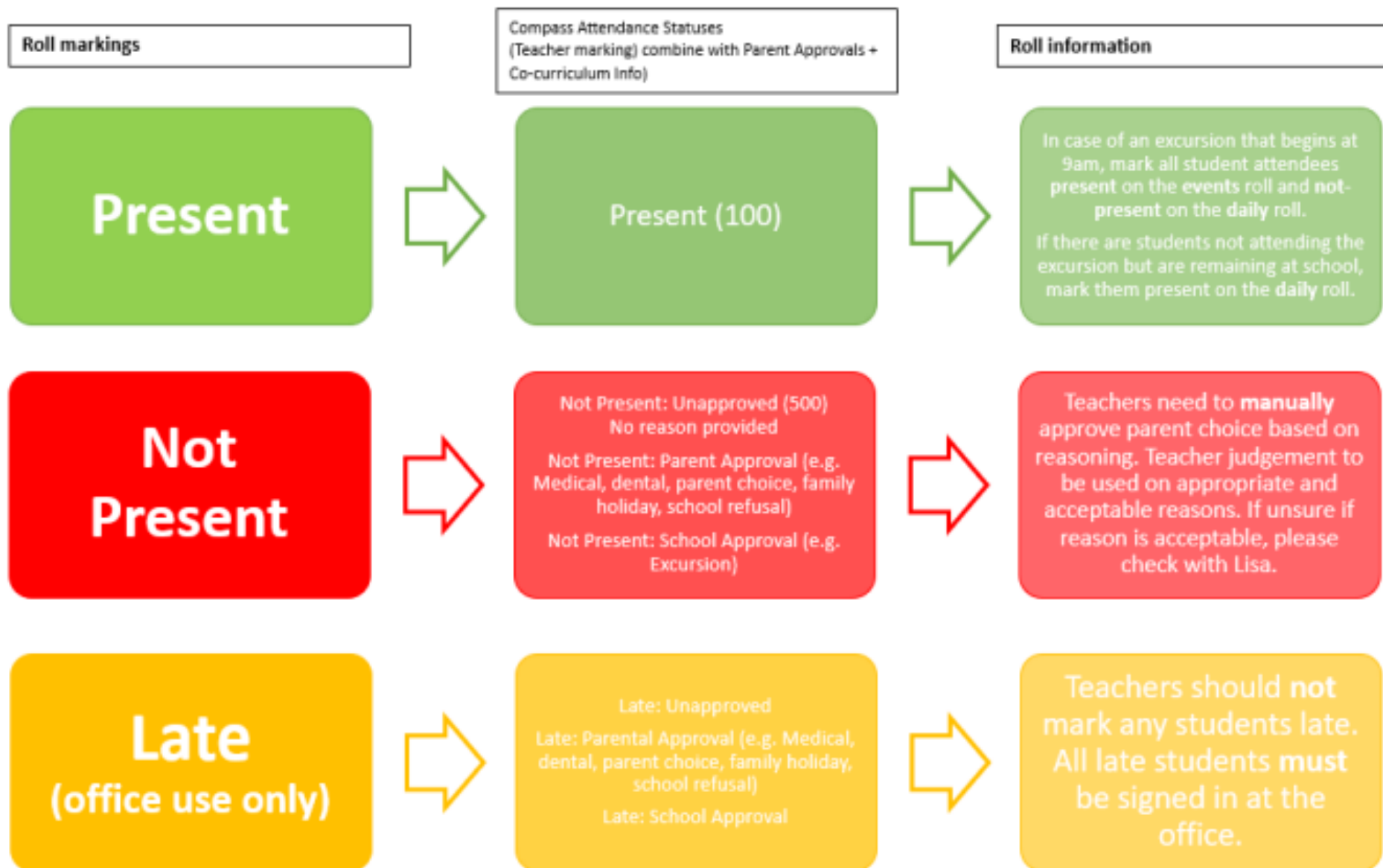
JSC are to give suggestions for whole school rewards and Consultative are to consider suggestions and decide upon four potential rewards for the year.

## MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/attendance/policy>
- [Appendix I: Yarra Junction Primary School – Attendance Flow Chart \(Staff roll marking\)](#)
- [Appendix II: Yarra Junction Primary School – Parent roll marking Guide](#)



## Appendix I: Yarra Junction Primary School – Attendance Flow Chart (Staff roll marking)



**Roll marking extra information:**

- If teachers are notified of a family holiday by parents, they must let the office know so they can record the dates on compass. - Teachers must

chronicle if students have been provided with schoolwork for their school holiday.

- Parent choice absences that are unapproved need to be checked at team meetings twice a term and changed to 'school approved'. See *Attendance policy page 5 for more information*.

- Students must get a **Wominjeka** pass from the office before coming to class late. These passes will be collected by teachers and the Grade 6 Peer Support Leader will collect them all on Friday to bring back to the office



# Compass Quick Guide

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## Newsfeed

- When looking at a newsfeed item, make sure you tap on the item to reveal all of the information in the post.
- Some posts are manually selected to stay at the top. You are able to sort your newsfeed by clicking on the 'sorted by' button and select 'most recent.'

## Absences

- Video tutorials for reporting student absences can be found on the Compass page of our YJPS website.
- If using the Compass app, click on the blue 'plus' symbol on the bottom menu, and select submit absence note. Fill in the required details and click 'add attendance note'.
- Please select the appropriate reason and comment (must be 10 characters).
- Parent approvals for absences must be entered on the day of absence. There is no need to change the default times of 8:00 am - 5:00 pm when reporting a full day absence.
- If you do not enter an attendance note, you will receive an SMS message at approximately 10:00 am reminding you to do so. To assist our administration team, please ensure absences are entered on Compass.
- Parents/carers cannot edit attendance notes once submitted, if you need to make any changes please contact the office.