

Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School

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 Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School (YYRCHS) has in place to
 - support, monitor and maintain student attendance
 - record, monitor and follow up student absences.

Please note that YYRCHS facilitates dual/concurrent enrolments. Students remain enrolled at their base school. YYRCHS attains consent to provide education services to inpatients. The base school maintains dual responsibility for recording attendance and following policy regarding absence.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all students at YYRCHS.

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 YYRCHS, 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* 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 who meet the criteria for YYRCHS are strongly encouraged to participate in the teaching and learning program at YYRCHS. This is an individualised program for all students and aligns directly with the school work set by the student's base school. Students may not be involved in the YYRCHS program if they are exempted due to shortness of admission or if they are deemed too unwell by the medical/health staff. YYRCHS believes all students should engage in the school sessions while in the

hospital if/when directed by medical teams. YYRCHS is committed to working with base schools, Royal Children's Hospital (RCH) staff and community agencies to encourage and support 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.

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

Supporting and promoting attendance

YYRCHS's [*Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy*](#) supports student attendance.

Recording attendance

YYRCHS must record attendance for every class a student engages in. This is necessary to:

- meet legislative requirements
- discharge YYRCHS's duty of care for all students
- support Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority requirements for VCE students

Students at the YYRCHS are enrolled through CASES21 and then added onto one combined class list on Compass (Learning Management System). This occurs as soon as consent for education has been received. Students remain active on Compass for the duration of the year, due to the transient nature of admissions and the unpredictability of medical and health conditions in a hospital setting. YYRCHS monitors attendance by documenting when a student engages in an education session, marking that student as present.

Attendance is recorded by the allocated ward/classroom teacher following the completion of the lesson. Attendance is marked using Compass, where teachers complete a Compass Meeting Entry (Teaching and Learning Session), that documents the start time and finish time of the lesson.

If a student is not able to engage in an education session (for example, in case of discharge, medical reasons or scheduled hospital appointments), a Compass Meeting Entry is not created and students are marked as absent.

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 YYRCHS of absences by:

- 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, YYRCHS will notify parents by a direct check in to the student's ward room or a phone call. YYRCHS will attempt to contact parents as soon as practicable on the same day of the unexplained absence, allowing time for the parent to respond. Note that parents of students who are discharged and not a current inpatient of the YYRCHS are not contacted.

YYRCHS 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.

Unexplained absences are reviewed at the start of each day on Compass. If YYRCHS considers that there is a **reasonable excuse** for their child's absence the absence will be marked as '**excused absence**'.

If the school determines that no reasonable excuse has been provided, the absence will be marked as '**unexcused 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 or health reasons
- where the medical or allied health team advises education not suitable for the day
- medical, allied health and dental appointments
- a student was discharged and is not an inpatient at the RCH
- 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

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 medically cleared student, who is well enough to participate, has declined education sessions for more than five days, YYRCHS will work collaboratively with parents, the student, and other professionals, where appropriate, to develop strategies to improve attendance.

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

Referral to School Attendance Officer

YYRCHS will not inform the School Attendance Officer of a student who does not attend the education sessions while an inpatient in hospital. However, they will alert the Student Attendance Officer (DE Regional Office) if they are aware that a student has disengaged from their regular school or are simply not attending a school. This will also include communicating with the student's base school.

MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

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

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	29 th July 2026
Consultation	Consultation with YYRCHS Leadership Team
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	July 2030 The recommended minimum review cycle for this policy is 3 to 4 years