FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
of Parents

What is considered an absence?
1. Illness or injury
2. Truancy
   Your child is absent from school without your knowledge
3. School Refusal
   Your child does not want to attend school, even though you have tried
4. School Withdrawal
   Your child does not attend school with your permission. For example, family reasons, baby-sitting, helping parents at home, and working in the family business.

What is my responsibility as a parent or caregiver?

Make sure your child:
• attends school on ALL school days
• is on time every day to homeroom and classes

Make sure you:
• provide the school with an explanation if your child is away by calling reception by phone 57216322
• contact the school if your child does not want to go to school
• arrange doctor and dentist appointments out of school hours
• arrange personal shopping trips with your son/daughter or birthday celebrations out of school hours
• do not allow your child to stay at home for minor reasons
• give enough notice if your child is going to be away for an extended period for family reasons so that teachers can prepare for your child’s educational needs

Why is regular attendance at school important?
• yes – from the first day. If your child misses consecutive days from school they can experience difficulties with their learning. Learning is sequential, meaning that concepts and ideas are communicated and understood within an order
• regular attendance is essential to make sure learning is not disrupted. Regular learning provides building blocks for the future

• schools help children to develop important social skills, such as friendship building, teamwork, communication skills and a healthy self-esteem

What can I expect from the school?
• monitoring of student attendance and reviewing progress on a weekly basis
• strategies to help you as a parent encourage your child to go to school

What help can I get if my child refuses to go to school or is truanting?

The school can offer a range of support options:
• teacher working with the student in a supportive, counselling role
• someone from the wellbeing team can work with the student
• provide a student mentor for your child to identify reasons why your child doesn’t want to go to school
• home visits to identify the problem and help work through it with parents
• strategies to help you encourage your child to go to school
• develop an incentive program to encourage your child to attend school
• link with community agencies and services

Must I send my child to school every day?
YES, unless:
• your child is too sick or injured to go to school
• your child has an infectious disease
• the principal has been provided with a genuine and acceptable reason for the absence

Will my child be marked absent if he/she is doing a TAFE, VET or community program?
• no – as long as it is part of the school program

What if my child is involved in sport?
• no – as long as it is part of the school program

Do I need to let the school know if my child has been away?
• yes – for the wellbeing of your child, Galen College has an attendance policy and teachers and schools are required to follow up consecutive student absences every 2 days
1. Take attendance seriously
When you attend school regularly and get to class on time you are able to do better and will be happier at school.

2. Attend school regularly
Have you ever gone into a class and been embarrassed or felt unsettled because you can’t figure out what’s going on? Maybe it is because you missed something important the day before and now it feels like you have lost the plot! Once this cycle starts, it’s hard to stop.

3. Keep the school and teachers in the loop if you are away
If you are away, let the office staff know of your absence by making a phone call on 5721 6322. When the teachers are aware of your situation then they can work with you to set up a plan and they will be more understanding when you get back to school.

4. Catch up with class teachers
If you have missed some classes, make sure you see your teachers to find out how to catch up. Teachers are usually very understanding and may even have some short cuts to make it easier. Teachers are sometimes busy and may not be able to help straight away, just keep trying.

5. Understand your out-of-school programs
i.e. VET, VCAL, work placement, work experience, apprenticeships, and traineeships.
Don't fall into the trap of getting a bit slack just because out of school programs seem new and different. These are part of your normal program and have attendance requirements just like school classes. Prepare and organise your time to take on these commitments.

6. Be smart
Learn to use a diary to note important days like homework, assessment days and excursions. Don’t schedule shopping trips, doctor and dentist appointments during the school day.

7. Develop/learn social skills friends network
School is a great place to make friends. As part of this process you will develop important social and team-work skills.

8. Become work ready
Understand that school helps you become work ready. School attendance habits prepare you for work attendance habits.

9. Access further education and training
Understand that schools help you prepare for further education and training. School work habits prepare you for further education and training.

10. Special provision
Remember that if you have explained your absences it will be easier to have consideration for disadvantage approved.

11. If you are undertaking the VCE program it is expected that
Under VCAA regulations, there are minimum attendance requirements for VCE students to meet in order to satisfactorily complete their VCE. Students who do not meet these requirements cannot gain their VCE. Students should refer to Galen, VCE and VCAL Study Information for more information.

Any students missing any class contact their homeroom and subject teacher to notify them of their absence BEFORE the class. If you are absent for two or more consecutive days it is recommended that you organise a medical certificate and present this to the office. If a student has prior knowledge that he/she will be absent from a SAC, he/she MUST have consulted with the subject teacher to request an alternative arrangement PRIOR to the SAC being held. If a student is ill on the day of a scheduled SAC, he/she MUST contact the teacher by telephone to advise of your absence. Failure to do so will result in the student forfeiting the opportunity to complete the SAC.

Remember:
COMMUNICATION
IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS