



MONMIA PRIMARY SCHOOL
- Learn and Achieve -

Attendance Policy

Monmia Primary School

This policy was presented to School Council in: September 2022
School Council President: Amanda Deakin

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to

- undertake that all children of compulsory school age are enrolled in a registered school and attend school every day the school is open for instruction
- agree that all students, staff and parents/guardians/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school
- explain to school staff and parents the key practices and procedures Monmia Primary School has in place to
 - support, monitor and maintain student attendance
 - record, monitor and follow up student absences.

This policy applies to all students at Monmia 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 Monmia Primary School, parents/guardians/carers 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.

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 Monmia 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 Monmia Primary School, or
- the student is registered for home schooling and has only a partial enrolment in Monmia Primary School for particular activities.

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

Monmia 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 to approach a teacher and seek assistance if there are any issues that are affecting their attendance.

Monmia Primary School parents/guardians/carers 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/guardians/carers will communicate with the relevant staff at Monmia Primary School about any issues affecting their child's attendance and work in partnership with the school to address any concerns.

Parents/guardians/carers 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

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

Our school also promotes student attendance strategies such as:

- Breakfast Club
- Regular teacher communication with parents/guardians/carers, e.g. phone calls, teacher requests for doctors medical certificate, absence notes from students and/or parents/guardians/carers
- Teachers regularly making chronicles entries via SENTRAL portal re: parent/guardian/carer communication of student attendance
- Support from the Assistant Principal, Student Engagement and Wellbeing Officer/Principal Class
- Attendance Improvement Plans
- Family or Child First, DHHS, SEIL support
- SENTRAL portal for parents/carers to log student absences
- Attendance articles in the newsletter
- Attendance display in the administration block
- Attendance posters in each learning space

Aim

- Promote a shared understanding of the importance of attending school every day with students, staff and parents/guardians and communicate the practices, procedures and the response required to monitor attendance.
- Maximise the attendance of all compulsory school aged children and record explanations of absences.
- Identify individual students or a cohort whose attendance is of a concern.
- Ensure the accuracy of data collection for school, legal and audit requirements.

Implementation

The primary responsibility for meeting the legal requirement for student attendance rests with the parents/guardians/carers. The principal has the overall responsibility for student attendance and certain staff have particular designated duties in monitoring student wellbeing, attendance and punctuality. The principal will determine if the explanation provided is a reasonable excuse for the purposes of the parent/guardian/carer meeting their responsibilities under the Education Training Reform Act 2006 and the School Attendance Guidelines.

Recording attendance

Monmia Primary School must record student attendance twice per day.

This is necessary to:

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

Teachers will:

- maintain accurate class attendance rolls using the Sentral Management System
- mark the roll twice daily at 9.00am and 2.30pm
- will record students as being present when attending a school approved activity
- record attendance in every class
- record explanations of absences provided by parents/guardians prior to the day of absence on the Sentral Management System using DET Codes
- record 'explained absence' if the parent /guardian/carer has provided a reasonable explanation for their child's absence
- record 'unexplained absence' if no explanation is provided by the parent/guardian/carer within ten school days of an absence

- monitor students and seek support from the Student Engagement and Wellbeing Assistant Principal if any student's attendance or punctuality is an ongoing concern
- provide students with a work plan when absent for a family holiday or suspended from school.

Parents/Guardians/Carers will:

- ensure that their child attends school on time, every day
- provide an explanation on each occasion for any absence, unless there is an exemption in place
- ring the administration office, send an email to the school or teacher explaining the absence, between 8.30am to 9.30am on the day of their child's absence
- send a written note and/or medical certificate to the administration office or teacher when their child returns to school
- log the absence via the SENTRAL portal
- communicate with the relevant staff at the school about any issues affecting their child's attendance and work in partnership with the school to address any concerns
- make an appointment to meet with the Principal to discuss proposed extended absences for holidays to gain approval
- ensure completed work plan is returned to the child's teacher
- schedule appointments and other activities outside of school hours.

Students will:

- attend school each day and be punctual for all classes
- hand in a medical certificate/written note to the administration office or teacher on the return to school after an absence
- sign in at the administration office and provide an explanation if late for school.

The Student Administrator will:

- record explanation of absences provided by parents/guardians prior to the day of absence on the Sentral Management System and on CASES 21
- contact parents/guardians/carers by 9.30am or as soon as practicable on the same day of an unexplained absence using an SMS automated message, via email or telephone to ask for an explanation for the absence and will give parents/guardians time to respond to the message allowing time for parents/guardians/carers to respond
- contact parents/guardians by telephone by 1.30pm if they have not responded to the SMS message from school
- make contact with any emergency contacts nominated on the student's file on the day of the absence if contact cannot be made with the parents/guardians/carers
- 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/guardian/carer meeting their responsibilities under the Education Training Reform Act 2006 and the School Attendance Guidelines. If it is considered that the parent/guardian/carer has provided a reasonable excuse for their child's absence the absence will be marked as '**excused absence**'. If it is determined that no reasonable excuse has been provided, the absence will be marked as '**unexcused absence**')
- generate and maintain class rolls using the Sentral Management System for staff and casual relief teachers
- print out a paper roll for casual relief teachers each day
- enter daily absences, late arrivals and early departures communicated to the office, onto the Sentral Management System.

The Student Engagement and Wellbeing Assistant Principal will:

- communicate clear attendance and punctuality expectations and attendance policy to parents/guardians/carers and students through the newsletter, website, twitter and posters
- communicate to parents/guardians/carers their obligation to notify the school of their child's absence before or on the day of their absence
- Include the number of days absent in the their child's mid-year and end-year student academic report
- include a letter to parents/guardians/carers with the mid-year and end-year student academic report detailing the impact of absenteeism on performance
- work collaboratively with parents/guardians/carers when a student has been absent for five or more days consecutively or where absences or late arrivals are frequent to:
 - establish a student support group that meet regularly to develop, implement and review short term goals
 - provide parents/guardians/carers with the student's attendance and/or punctuality data
 - discuss the possibilities of catching up on work missed through absences
 - involve Student Support Service Officers when appropriate.

The Principal or Delegate

The Principal will promote a culture that values attendance and punctuality.

The Principal has the discretion to accept a reason given by a parent/guardian/carer 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/guardian/carer to address causes and support the student's return to school
- cultural observance if the parent/guardian/carer notifies the school in advance
- family holidays where the parent/guardian/carer notifies the school in advance

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

Parents/guardians/carers 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, Monmia Primary School will work collaboratively with parents/guardians/carers, 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 an Individual Education Plan
- implementing a Student Absence Learning Plan for students who will be absent for an extended period
- arranging for assistance from relevant Student Wellbeing Staff

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 is required,

Referral to School Attendance Officer

If Monmia 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 South western Regional Office for further action.

If, from multiple attempts to contact with a parent/guardian/carer, 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/guardian/carer 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 our school's website
- Discussed at staff forums
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions as required
- Reminders in our school newsletter

- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

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

Evaluation

The school will review this policy as part of the school four year review cycle.

Policy Reviewed Last

September 2022

Approved By

Principal

Consultation

Consultation with Staff and School Council

Review Year

This policy is scheduled for review in 2024.