

Managing Student Attendance Policy and Procedure

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 At Mastery Schools Victoria (“**School**”, “**we**” “**our**”), we uphold a high standard of attendance for all students. We believe that attendance is one of the most important factors in aiding our students to gain mastery throughout their education.
- 1.2 To assist in creating and maintaining a high attendance rate, Mastery Schools Australia has developed a safe and supportive school environment that promotes positive relationships. Mastery Schools Australia also believes it is important to foster positive relationships with families to create consistent approaches to school attendance for students.
- 1.3 We aim for all students to maintain an attendance rate of 85% and above. Any time a student is not attending or participating in the educational program it is considered an absence and a reasonable explanation must be given to the school.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all School parents/guardians, students, and staff.
- 2.2 It is the responsibility of all staff to understand and comply with this policy.
- 2.3 Parents/guardians must be familiar with this policy and the School's attendance requirements.

3 Purpose

- 3.1 The purpose of this policy is to:
 - (a) support the School's ability to discharge its duty of care towards students by equipping the School to know where students are at different times of the day, each school day;
 - (b) maximise learning opportunities by ensuring student absenteeism is kept to a minimum;
 - (c) create a parent/guardian culture that views regular school attendance and communication of student absences to the school as important;
 - (d) set out requirements for attendance monitoring to support the care safety and welfare of students; and
 - (e) detail responsibilities and process regarding the marking of rolls, tracking of student attendances every day the school is open for instruction and follow up requirements.

4 Policy

- 4.1 The School notifies students, parents/guardians of attendance expectations and consequences of unsatisfactory attendance including through the enrolment process, enrolment agreement, Student Code of Conduct and School website.
- 4.2 Early identification of students whose attendance is not regular is crucial to minimising student absences, ensuring continuity of learning and ensuring care, safety and welfare of students. For this reason:
 - (a) Parents/guardians should always provide a reason for a child's absence before or on the day of the absence, or as soon as practicable; and
 - (b) the School will notify parents of an unexplained absence of their child as soon as practicable on the day of the student's absence (allowing time for parents to respond prior to the end of the school day), with continued follow up as required.
- 4.3 The School monitors the daily attendance and absence of students in the School by maintaining a daily register for each class of students (Attendance Register) which is updated multiple times each day to reflect true and accurate information.

- 4.4 The 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/guardians to improve their attendance through a range of interventions and supports. For example, allied health professionals may recommend alternative arrangements for students as part of a flexible learning plan with the end goal of that student attending full school days. We work collaboratively with families to provide alternative attendance arrangements to best support a student and their needs.
- 4.5 Student absences are identified early due to class roll making and recorded in the Attendance Register in a consistent manner by the Classroom Teacher. Non-attendances are monitored by the administration staff who are responsible for attendance tracking and communicating absences with the Principal and Assistant Principal daily.
- 4.6 Unexplained absences from School are followed up with parents/guardians on the day of the absence by the Senior Campus Administration Officer until a reasonable excuse is received (see Attendance Monitoring Procedure).
- 4.7 The School notifies parents/guardians when a student has or is at risk of having a low rate of school attendance. A meeting with the Principal and parents/guardians will be required to discuss the low attendance rate.
- 4.8 Where unsatisfactory school attendance is identified, the attendance issue and any actions taken are recorded, as appropriate, on the student file on Compass.
- 4.9 The attendance register is maintained in line with Victorian requirements and is accessible to staff via a secure network.
- 4.10 The attendance register for a student is retained in accordance with the school Records Management and Retention Policy after the last entry was made in respect of the student.

5 Student Attendance

- 5.1 Students are required to attend School during scheduled school hours every day of each term.
- 5.2 Parents/guardians must inform the School if their child is going to be absent or if they are going to arrive late/leave class early. This can be done via phone (number to come), email or through a message left at the School.
- 5.3 Students must follow sign-out processes as directed by the Classroom Teacher in charge. Students can only leave school early if the School has received permission for the relevant scheduled activity from the parent/guardian.
- 5.4 Parents/guardians must provide an explanation as soon as practicable, before or on the same day, for each occasion a student is absent from School.
- 5.5 Medical certificates must be provided for student absences due to illness.

- 5.6 The Principal will consider whether the excuse is reasonable and follow up with the parent/guardian as required.
- 5.7 If a student is at risk of low attendance, the Principal or Assistant Principal will issue a formal attendance letter to the parent/guardian and request a meeting with parent/guardian and the student to discuss the reasons behind the absences in detail and intervention strategy as required.

6 Attendance Monitoring Procedure

- 6.1 The following procedure applies to all students enrolled at the School:
- (a) The Senior Campus Administration Officer will ensure attendance records are set up on Compass (to host the School's Attendance Register) according to the student's enrolment requirements, prior to the commencement of scheduled classes.
 - (b) Classroom Teachers will mark attendance records at the beginning of all 3 sessions throughout the scheduled day (e.g. 8.30am, 10.50am, 1.30pm).
 - (c) The Senior Campus Administration Officer will monitor for student absences via Compass and inform the Principal and Assistant Principal of any unexplained absences.
 - (d) Text messages from Compass to parents/guardians regarding the student absence are automatically sent when the classroom teacher marks that student as absent at the start of every session. If the parent doesn't respond to the text message from Compass, Administration will call the parent/guardian to follow up.
 - (e) The Administration team have until 9:00am each day to record any late arrivals and add the attendance note before a text message is sent out. For other sessions during the School day, the Administration team have until the end of the scheduled day.
 - (f) Explanations are to be recorded on Compass in the student file as an attendance note. Parent/guardians have the ability to add the reason for non-attendance themselves via a link in the text message. Alternatively, they call the school's office and speak with a member of the Administration team.
 - (g) The Senior Campus Administration Officer will alert the Principal and Assistant Principal of any concerning absences or where they have been unable to contact a student's parent/guardian.
 - (h) In addition to follow up on the day of the absence and each day until an explanation is received, a wellbeing check/call will be completed by the CSO, Principal or Assistant Principal and recorded on Compass where a student has been absent for two (2) consecutive days without explanation.

7 Responsibilities

- 7.1 The Principal has a responsibility to:
- (a) inform parents/guardians of student attendance obligations;
 - (b) implement strategies to manage student attendance;
 - (c) implement and monitor the Attendance Register;
 - (d) ensure early intervention support and/or reasonable adjustments are provided the students and their families to enhance parent/guardian involvement;
 - (e) engage students in the learning process and implement appropriate incentives and recognition for attendance;
 - (f) ensure regular communication and follow-up with students and parents/guardians; and,
 - (g) manage processes for re-enforcing parent/carer obligations relating to attendance and compulsory participation.
- 7.2 The Senior Campus Administration Officer has a responsibility to:
- (a) monitor and update the attendance register daily;
 - (b) monitor student absences via Compass every day after the first session rolls are marked;
 - (c) ensure any students arriving late or leaving early are accurately signed in/out through Compass;
 - (d) on behalf of the Principal, notify parents/guardians of an unexplained absence of their child as soon as practicable on the day of the student's absence (allowing time for parents/guardians to respond prior to the end of that school day);
 - (e) continue to follow up unexplained absences as practicable with parents/guardians and record these follow ups in Compass;
 - (f) alert the Principal of any concerning absences or inability to communicate with a student's parents/guardians;
 - (g) provide a daily report to the Principal and Assistant Principal to support ongoing attendance monitoring; and
 - (h) maintain current contact details for parents/guardians by contacting all students' parent/guardians at the commencement of each calendar year and more frequently if deemed necessary.
- 7.3 Master Teachers and Classroom Teachers must ensure:
- (a) they are familiar with and comply with this policy;
 - (b) all rolls are marked by the Teachers in each classroom at the beginning of all 3 sessions throughout the scheduled day (e.g. 8.20/8.30am, 10.40/10.50am, 1.20/1.30pm); and,

- (c) any known absences that have been disclosed to teachers are reported to the administration team at reception and Principal as soon as possible.

7.4 Parents/Guardians must:

- (a) ensure their child attends school, on every school day for the educational program, unless the parent has a reasonable excuse.
- (b) ensure that communication regarding attendances is provided to the school via phone (number to come) or email (**new MSV email to come**) before or the morning of the absence.
- (c) during this communication, provide a reasonable excuse for the absence.

8 Breach of Policy

Breaches of this policy:

- (a) will be responded to promptly; and
- (b) may be a breach of the Parent or Student Code of Conduct and result in disciplinary action being taken, up to and including termination of enrolment, with or without notice.

9 Communication

This policy is made available to all prospective and current parents/guardians and students during the enrolment process and is available on the school's website.

10 Approval and Review

This policy is reviewed periodically as detailed in the policy review schedule. The next review date is June 2026.

11 Related Documents

- Records Management and Retention Policy
- Student Code of Conduct
- Parent Code of Conduct
- Enrolment Agreement
- Attendance Register

12 References relevant to MSV

- *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic)
- Guidelines to the Minimum Standards and Requirements for School Registration