



Macquarie College

Student Attendance Guidelines

Rationale

College

It is a NESA requirement that all registered schools mark attendance rolls each day for all students. NESA also requires teachers to maintain accurate attendance records for their classes. These records must be maintained according to prescribed NESA standards.

NESA also requires schools to appropriately manage all circumstances of student non-attendance. In doing so, the College will ensure that the safety and wellbeing of each student is considered as a paramount concern, whilst also seeking to satisfy the need for NESA compliance.

(See Appendix A - Management of Student Absences)

Students & Parents

Regular attendance at school is required by law up to the age of 17 years. NESA also requires satisfactory attendance before granting either the Record of School Achievement or Higher School Certificate. During the course of a school day, students are expected to be in class with their classroom, subject or supervising teacher unless excused by a School Leader.

Implementation

College Hours

School commences at 8.20am for both Junior School and Senior School students each morning. School finishes for the Junior School at 2:40pm and Senior School at 2.50pm each afternoon.

Where possible, students should not arrive at school before 8.00am when there are teaching staff on duty. Students should not be in the College grounds after 3.30pm without the direct supervision of staff or parents in the Library, OOSH, or extra/co-curricular activities by special arrangement. The College Administration Office and Library close at 4:00pm.

Roll Marking

JS Rolls are marked each day by 8:30am.

SS teachers are responsible for marking the class roll by 8:30am each day.

SS Students will have the roll taken in their first class of the day. SS Students who fail to be marked on the roll are marked as absent. Students not marked as present by 8.30am must sign in at Student Services. A parent can phone or email the Student Services Office as soon as possible to explain the absence or send a note of explanation on the students' next day of attendance.

SS subject teachers are responsible for marking the roll at the beginning of each lesson and reporting any anomalies to Student Services.

Per NESA requirements, absence notes are archived until a given child reaches the age of 25.

Absences

A parent can phone, or email Student Services or the College Administration Office as soon as possible to explain any absence or send a note of explanation on the student's next day of attendance.

Unexplained absences are not acceptable and will be monitored by the Class or Homeroom teacher and referred to the relevant House Leader .

JS/SS hardcopy notes and/or notes provided by email are to be collected by the Class/Homeroom Teacher or other supervising teacher and given/forwarded to the Student Services office for SEQTA entry and archiving.

Unexcused Absences

Any unexcused absence from school or a class period/activity is recorded and monitored. Parents will be notified initially by text and then through proforma letters generated by the Student Services Office.

Excursions/Camps

Students attending excursions or camps arranged by the College are regarded as present at school. The Supervising teacher will mark the SEQTA roll prior to leaving and the Student Services office will mark the student present for the remaining time of the excursion.

Teachers who are unable to mark the roll electronically must call the Student Services office before 9:15 am on the day of departure to report any absences.

Lateness

Junior School Students arriving at school after 8:20am must come to the Student Services Office to gain a late pass. Parents are required to provide a reason for their child's lateness.

Senior School students arriving at school at or after 8:20am are to go immediately to the Student Services Office to gain a late pass.

A parent can phone or email the Administration Office as soon as possible to explain the lateness or send a note of explanation on the student's next day of attendance.

Parents will be contacted if lateness is habitual.

(See documentation from AIS - Guide to School Attendance Requirements and Attendance Improvement Planning)

Leaving Grounds Early

Junior School

Students are only permitted to leave the College grounds in the company of a parent or guardian. The parent or guardian is requested to notify student services prior to arriving on campus of their intention to pick up their young person. A staff member from student services will collect the student and walk them to front reception where they will wait for their parent or guardian to pick them up. The College must have a note of permission given to them if any other caregiver is picking up the child.

Senior School

Senior Students are not permitted to leave the College campus during school hours without written permission or a phone call from a parent or guardian. Students being picked up before the end of school must bring a note from a parent giving consent to leave early and the time they are leaving. Senior School students must go to the Student Services office to provide the note and receive an early leave pass before leaving the campus. Alternatively, a parent must come to the Student Services office (SS) to sign out their child.

Year 12 students who have finished all classes before the end of school, and have signed and handed in the early leave form, may leave after signing out at the Student Services office. However, there is no allowance for senior students arriving late or leaving and returning during the school day.

Students are not to arrange being picked up by using their personal phone. All calls need to be made through Student Services.

Sports Carnivals

Sports carnivals are a programmed part of the College activities with all students required to attend.

‘Other Activity’ Rolls

Students in sick bay or visiting a College counsellor are marked present by the relevant staff member. Senior School students attending music lessons are marked by the tutor as present. Music tutors have ‘Late Notes’ and will give one to Senior students if they are returning to class mid period. The note will have the student’s name, date and time they had their lesson and will be signed as ‘Music Lesson’. Teaching staff will then adjust the returning student as late on their roll.

Unacceptable Patterns of Attendance

If a pattern of poor attendance becomes apparent to the class or roll teacher, parents will be contacted by the Class Teacher or Year Advisor to address the problem. In some cases, the AIS will be notified and the school will work with parents and agencies on an attendance plan for the student. Students and parents/carers will be reminded of the legal obligation for students to be attending school unless there is an acceptable reason for being absent.

(See Appendix A: The Management of Habitual and Chronic Non-Attendance).

Exemptions

Students who will be absent from school for long periods due to reasons other than illness, can apply for an exemption. An exemption prevents the absence from being counted in their tally of absences for the year. The Principal will only approve the absence as an exemption if set criteria is met. If approved as an exemption, the absence is then noted as an exemption on the roll. Parents need to discuss potential exemptions with the Principal prior to applying.

(See Appendix B – Exemption from School).

Attendance Procedures

Teacher Responsibilities

Class Teacher

The Class teacher is responsible for marking rolls and monitoring issues of lateness and absence.

Key Tasks

- Mark the SEQTA roll each morning for JS and each class for SS.
- Collect any absence and late notes and forward to or communicate with the Student Services. (Student Services staff will amend the roll to account for unexplained absences and tidy up issues of lateness and early leave from the previous day.)
- Forward absent notes to Student Services for archiving at the end of each term.
- Regularly audit the class roll looking for patterns of absence or lateness. Ongoing unexplained absence and lateness followed up by the Class Teacher or House Leader with the respective parents.

Subject Teacher/Activity Supervisor

- Mark the SEQTA roll each class.

Appendix A - Management of Student Absences

If students are absent from school for one or more days, parents may respond to the SMS sent out from MC. Alternatively, they can bring a note of explanation from their parent/guardian on the first day they return to school. Notes must include the name of the student, the date of the day/s absent, an explanation for the absence and the name and signature of the parent/guardian. If a note is not submitted to the school within 7 days of returning to school, the absence must be recorded as “Unexplained” on the Class Roll.

All student attendance data is maintained on the school’s SEQTA database which links to Student Reports and other academic records.

The following process is to be followed regarding notification of student absences from school:

Junior School	Senior School
House Leader ((JS) to receive a list of students from Student Services each Monday. House Leader (JS) to review consecutive or habitual absence by Tuesday PM and add to shared Absenteeism google doc for Wellbeing/Counsellors/Principals to view.	House Leader (SS) to get a list of students from the Student Services office each Monday. House Leader (SS) to review consecutive or habitual absence by Tuesday PM and add to shared Absenteeism google doc for House Leader/Counsellors/Principals to view.

Up to 5 Consecutive or Habitual Days

Junior School	Senior School
Classroom teachers to contact parent/guardian when absences are between 3-5 days either consecutive or habitual. Notes recorded on SEQTA regarding conversation and anticipated return date to school.	Homeroom teachers to contact parents/guardian when absences are between 3-5 days either consecutive or habitual. Notes recorded on SEQTA regarding conversation and suspected return date to school.

Up to 10 Consecutive or Habitual Days

Junior School	Senior School
House Leader (JS) to make phone contact with parents to discuss absence either consecutive or habitual. Notes made on SEQTA regarding conversation and return to school dates. At any stage if concerns around Child Protection exist, please refer to Child Protection Guidelines. Attendance Letter No 1 mailed home.	House Leader (SS) to make phone contact with parents to discuss absence either consecutive or habitual. Notes made on SEQTA regarding conversation and return to school dates. At any stage if concerns around Child Protection exist, please refer to Child Protection Guidelines. Attendance Letter No 1, mailed home.

Up to 15 Consecutive or Habitual Days

Junior School	Senior School
House leader to complete <i>Form A</i> and pass on to the Counselling team who will contact and meet with parents/carers. MC Return-to-School Action	House leader to complete <i>Form A</i> and pass on to the Counselling team who will contact and meet with parents/carers. MC Return-to-School Action

<p>Plan discussed and completed with parent/s including proactive/supportive strategies considering the specific wellbeing needs of the given child. In doing so the following must be addressed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are their wellbeing related reasons for non-attendance? 2. Counsellor to provide support and/or connection to external agencies as appropriate. 3. MC Wellbeing Plan created/implemented and attached to child's file on SEQTA. 4. MC Return-to-School Action Plan attached to child's file on SEQTA. <p>Attendance Letter No 2 and Back-to-School Plan mailed home to parents/carers.</p>	<p>Plan discussed and completed with parent/s including proactive/supportive strategies considering the specific wellbeing needs of the given child. In doing so the following must be addressed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are their wellbeing related reasons for non-attendance? 2. Counsellor to provide support and/or connection to external agencies as appropriate. 3. MC Wellbeing Plan created/implemented and attached to child's file on SEQTA. 4. MC Return-to-School Action Plan attached to child's file on SEQTA. <p>Attendance Letter No 2 and Back-to-School Plan mailed home to parents/carers.</p>
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20 Consecutive or Habitual Days

Junior School	Senior School
<p>Meeting with the Assistant Principal (Student Wellbeing) to discuss attendance at school and how to move forward.</p> <p>Attendance letter No 3, mailed home.</p> <p>MC Wellbeing Plan updated/implemented and attached to child's file on SEQTA.</p> <p>Family Referral Service notified</p> <p>School Liaison Officer Notified</p>	<p>Meeting with the Assistant Principal (Student Wellbeing) to discuss attendance at school and how to move forward.</p> <p>Attendance letter No 3, mailed home.</p> <p>MC Wellbeing Plan updated/implemented and attached to child's file on SEQTA.</p> <p>Family Referral Service notified.</p> <p>School Liaison Officer Notified.</p>

30 Consecutive or Habitual Days*

Junior School	Senior School
<p>Police Liaison Officer notified by Assistant Principal (Student Wellbeing) with a visit to follow.</p> <p>AIS notified by Assistant Principal (Student Wellbeing).</p> <p>Attendance Letter No 4 mailed to family.</p> <p>MC Wellbeing Plan updated/implemented and attached to child's file on SEQTA.</p>	<p>Police Liaison Officer notified by Assistant Principal (Student Wellbeing) with a visit to follow.</p> <p>AIS notified by Assistant Principal (Student Wellbeing).</p> <p>Attendance Letter No 4 mailed to family.</p> <p>MC Wellbeing Plan updated/implemented and attached to child's file on SEQTA.</p>

40 DAYS

Junior School	Senior School
<p>DCJ report made at 40 days.</p> <p>Letter posted to family on behalf of the Principal.</p> <p>MC Wellbeing Plan updated/implemented and attached to child's file on SEQTA.</p>	<p>DCJ report made at 40 days.</p> <p>Letter posted to family on behalf of the Principal.</p> <p>MC Wellbeing Plan updated/implemented and attached to child's file on SEQTA.</p>

Attendance Improvement Plan Strategies

Parents	School	Student
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Purchase alarm clock - Get child up early - Change bedtime routine - Do not book holidays - Provide rewards for improved attendance - Assist in getting to school - Deliver child to nominated person in school - Let school know in advance if child is distressed - Explain any absences promptly - Supply medical certificate if requested - Make sure that contact details are up to date - Make sure child is ready when the bus arrives - Submit application for exemption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Daily attendance report - Mentor/buddy in school - Agreed time out space - Special responsibility - Discuss workload with class teacher - Modification of program for short term - Change of class - Targeted absence response - Rewards/incentives for improved attendance - Arrange a bus pass - Negotiate special conditions with teachers such as not reading aloud, reduced workload for a period, etc. - Lunch time activities or responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make sure you are ready for school - Attend breakfast club - Prepare bag/uniform etc the night before - Complete your own attendance chart - Meet with nominated school person as planned - Keep a diary that notes any issues with schoolwork, peers, etc - Let nominated person know if there is anything you are worried about - Talk to your parent about school

Where absences occur at a habitual level*, the following processes are to be followed by the applicable Assistant Principal, or their delegate:

In the first instance, report the habitual absence to the local NSW Police (Senior Constable Nathan Johns - Youth Engagement Officer – (office) 4922 8899 (Mobile) 0437 778 812 for attention/action.

For further assistance/guidance, the support of the AISNSW Student Service Team (office) 02 9299 2845 may also be sought.

The following documents, located in the MC Student Attendance folder in the **Confluence** portal, are also intended to support school staff in the management of student attendance.

- Compulsory School Attendance (NSW 2014)
- Exemption from School Attendance and Enrolment (NSW 2014)

*Habitually absent is a minimum of 30 days absence within the past 100 school days. However, this is context/age dependent (A range of contextual factors may impact the level of risk and these factors are not necessarily quantifiable. It is not necessary to wait 30 days if the context suggests a more immediate response). (NSW Mandatory Reporters Guide 2013)

Appendix B: Application for extended school absence (Section 25 of the NSW Education Act 1990)

Students may also be approved, in writing, for a period of extended school absence, per Section 25 of the NSW Education Act (1990) by the Principal.

An approval of an extended absence from school must be in response to a written application from a parent/approved carer. Such approval would cover an absence exceeding 10 school days for matters including, but not limited to:

- Working in the entertainment industry
- Participating in Elite Sport/Art
- A Public Health Declaration
- Exceptional circumstances (such as the health of the student).

Any such written approval by the Principal must include a commencement and expiry date for the period of approved absence.

In circumstances where the period of intended school absence exceeds a school term, consideration should be given to other options for education, such as enrolment in Distance Education.

Leaving School Under 17 Years of Age

As of January 2010, New South Wales have a new school leaving age, meaning students will complete Year 10 and then have a number of options in which to participate until at least age 17.

The options are:

- *Attend a school or be registered for home schooling*
- *Be in approved training or education*
- *In full time paid employment for over 25 hours per week*

Upon deregistering as a student from Macquarie College, the destination of the given student/s will be recorded on the school's deregistration forms.

Where the destination of a student below 17 years of age is unknown, the Deputy Principal or their delegate, will notify an NSW Department of Education Officer with home school liaison responsibilities of the following details pertaining to that student/s:

- Full name and date of birth
- Last known address
- Last date of attendance
- Parents' names and contact details
- An indication of a possible destination
- Known risks associated with contacting the parents/student
- Any other information that may assist the officers to locate the student

Evaluation

These guidelines will be reviewed as part of a three-year college review cycle.

Adopted by the MCC / /
Signed
(MCC Chairperson)
Date for review / /