



**MARY MACKILLOP
COLLEGE**

Mary MacKillop College Attendance Policy And Procedures



Mary MacKillop College is committed to providing a safe, challenging and supportive learning environment for all students, to enhance their learning needs and develop resilience.

PROCEDURE: Student Attendance

Our College is committed to the dignity of the whole person, equality of opportunities and engaging in purposeful learning experiences.

MOTTO

My Faith is My Light

VISION

We are an interconnected, joy-filled, contemporary Catholic learning community, inspired by the Josephite traditions to be people achieving our potential.

MISSION

We forge a culture of **creativity, excellence, justice and compassion** as we **nurture, challenge, education and empower** one another.

VALUES

We uphold **SPIRIT, WISDOM, INTEGRITY, COURAGE, UNITY** and **SERVICE**
To guide our thoughts, words and actions
to **live principled lives together.**

MMC Learners are **Curious, Creative, Self-directed, and Resilient.**

MMC Learning Analogy – Stuck, Seek, Strive, Soar

MacKillop Women Shine

PROCEDURE: Student Attendance

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to describe Brisbane Catholic Education's (BCE) approach to ensuring that every student attends school on every day, for the education program in which the student is enrolled.

This procedure is read in conjunction with: Student Attendance policy; Student Attendance procedure templates for P-12 and secondary and primary schools and the Student Wellbeing policy.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 General requirements

Student attendance is everyone's responsibility. A positive school culture is developed by a welcoming, safe, inclusive, and supportive school environment that promotes student engagement with learning, student wellbeing and positive relationships. Positive attendance habits are set in the early years of schooling. Schools celebrate and acknowledge high attendance i.e. above 95% and support and reengage students with attendance below 90%.

The procedure is read in conjunction with the school's local student attendance procedure. Both procedures provide essential information to school staff on processes to manage student attendance, including data entry requirements for eMinerva. The focus of this procedure is on providing staff with information on the practical management of student absences.

Diagram: Process



For details of this process see section 3 below.

2.2 Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Principal (or delegate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote a positive school culture • inform parents of their legal obligations about student attendance • ensure attendance marking is completed in accordance with the school's local student attendance procedure • monitor student absences and identify when absences are of concern • keep records of all contact, or attempts to make contact, with the student's family in Engage Student Support System • maintain documentation of all attempted and implemented intervention strategies aimed at restoring a student's attendance in Engage Student Support System

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Role	Responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure attendance records and notes are managed in accordance with current BCE recommendations ensure the school has published and communicated on the staff portal the school's local student attendance procedure using the BCE approved procedure template. assists to celebrate and acknowledge high attendance.
School staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure data is entered in eMinerva in an accurate and timely manner, at least twice per day inform the Principal or delegate of unexplained or 3 or more days of absence manage student attendance and absence in accordance with this procedure and the school's local student attendance procedure. records any attendance concerns and contact in Engage Student Support System.

3. PROCEDURE

3.1 Identify

School identifies unexplained or unsatisfactory absences or patterns of absences, for example:

- when a student is absent for three or more consecutive school days
- where there is a persistent pattern of unexplained absences or absences without reasonable excuses
- where a student's attendance is reasonably considered unsatisfactory by the Principal, for e.g. 80-90% attendance (for pastoral intervention) and under 80% (for personalised supports) as shown in the BI Tool.

The Principal or delegate confirms that the student is obliged to attend and that no circumstances exist where the parent/legal guardian's obligation does not apply.

Schools are to track individual students over time to monitor their academic progress and attendance, to identify 'at-risk' students and intervene early.

3.2 Contact

Principal or delegate makes reasonable attempts to contact the parent/legal guardian and determine if there is a reasonable excuse for not ensuring the student is attending school.

3.3 Respond and report

Schools follow up initial contact with the parent/legal guardian and offer support and interventions to ensure a student's attendance improves. Scripts, letters, and other resources for staff are provided on [Spire](#). A [return to school plan](#) or [attendance improvement plan](#) can support a student's successful transition back to school and considers the needs of students, families, and staff members.

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Schools consider student protection risks when managing unexplained absences and when considering cancelling a student's enrolment. If the school believes there could be an issue, contact should be made with BCE Student Protection.

3.4 Record

All efforts to improve student attendance are recorded in Engage Student Support System. This includes, but is not limited to, records of meetings and conversations e.g. phone calls, letters, the return to school plan, contact with BCE Student Protection, referral to Guidance Counsellor or external agency.

3.5 Other circumstances

The Principal or delegate considers whether an [exemption](#) from schooling, flexible arrangement or alteration to a student's educational program is appropriate and required. For approved exemptions or alterations to an educational program, parents or guardians are invited to the school to plan for the student's return to school.

It is important to clarify and understand the multifaceted nature of school absences and to differentiate the different motivators and behaviours in the following categories: absenteeism; school refusal; truancy and school withdrawal.

3.6 Actions

School monitors and tracks student absences. If emerging absenteeism is noted, initial contact with parent/legal guardian is made and individualised support is offered.

Letter 1: Failure to attend

If the student is still not attending regularly after two weeks (10 school days) of the first attempt to contact the parent/legal guardian, the Principal or delegate sends by registered post, [Letter 1 – Failure to Attend](#) to the parent/legal guardian outlining the legal obligations and inviting the parent/legal guardian to attend a meeting to discuss the situation.

The school keeps a signed copy of the letter (Letter 1) and records date, time and by whom letter was posted in Engage Student Support System.

Letter 2: Warning notice

If, after sending Letter 1:

- a meeting occurred with the parent/legal guardian, but there is no change in circumstances within one week (5 school days) of the support meeting or;
- a meeting did not occur with the parent/legal guardian, and there is no change in circumstances within one week (5 school days) of sending the letter.

The Principal or delegate sends [Letter 2: Warning Notice – Failure to Attend](#) by registered post advising the parent/legal guardian of legal obligations and offering a meeting to discuss supports available to address failure to attend.

The school keeps a signed copy of the Letter 2 - Warning Notice and records date, time and by whom letter was posted in Engage Student Support System.

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3.7 Check enrolment

If there is no change in attendance a week (5 school days) after Letter 2: Warning Notice was sent, the Principal or delegate investigates if there has been a change in enrolment to another BCE school (eMinerva), or to a registered training provider.

3.8 Cancelling a student's enrolment

Cancellation of enrolment will be considered only as a last resort. The school is required to demonstrate that they have made all efforts to identify and address the causes of the non-attendance and have a clearly documented and recorded range of intervention strategies and contact attempts.

If there is still no response received and the student has not attended school for a significant period, the Principal or delegate considers the following actions:

- consultation with the Senior Leader, Learning and Identity to assess the course of action.
- consultation with Student Protection Officers where the attendance issues relate to student protection concerns relevant to parent/legal guardian action or inaction such as neglect or parental abuse or domestic violence, and Student Wellbeing staff and, if necessary, with BCE Legal Counsel.
- in cases where a cancellation of enrolment from a BCE school is being considered, the circumstance requires that emphasis be given to all aspects of student protection risk and procedural fairness before completing the cancellation of enrolment. Once cancellation has occurred, if the destination of the student is known this should be documented.

4. PERFORMANCE

Review procedures on a high-level check of this procedure annually and a detailed review at least every two years.

5. REFERENCES AND DEFINITIONS

5.1 References

- Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld) (ss.176 and 239)
- Student Attendance policy
- Student Attendance procedure template (P-12 and secondary)
- Student Attendance procedure template (primary).

5.2 Definitions

Absenteeism	Any form of absence from school or class
Alternation to program	In some instances (such as for students experiencing long-term illness, elite sportspeople, young carers, pregnant and parenting students, and students employed in the entertainment industry), a student's educational program may be altered so that they can remain enrolled in the school but do not attend the same hours as their peers.

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Parent or legal guardian obligation	In Queensland, the law requires parents to ensure their compulsory school aged student is enrolled at school and attends school for the educational program on every school day. Compulsory school age starts when a student is at least 6 years of age and finishes when the student turns 16 years of age or completes year 10 whichever is sooner.
Exemption from schooling	An exemption from compulsory schooling or the compulsory participation phase is available when a student or a young person cannot attend or it would be unreasonable in all the circumstances to require them to attend school or participate in an eligible option for a period of more than 10 consecutive school days.
Flexible arrangement	A flexible arrangement allows for all or part of a student's educational program to be delivered by an alternative education provider, where it is in the best educational interest of the student.
Reasonable excuse	Parents/legal guardians have a reasonable excuse if, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the student (or student in question) resides with parent 1, and parent 2 (who does not reside with the student) believes, on reasonable grounds, that parent 1 is complying with the obligation to have their student or student enrolled and attending school. Parent 2 has a reasonable excuse the parents/legal guardians are not reasonably able to control the student's behaviour to the extent necessary to comply with their obligation to have their student enrolled, attending or participating the parents/legal guardians are unable to comply with their obligation because of ill health or a disability the student in question is considered to be independent, and is no longer practically subject to the parental authority of the parents/legal guardian the student's non-attendance or non-participation was due to an accident or unforeseen event that the parent/legal guardian could not prevent. Evidence must be provided e.g. certificate signed by medical/health professional in case of medical event.
School refusal	When a student refuses to attend school and/or has problems remaining in class for an entire day and is anxiety based e.g. separation, generalized or social anxiety.
School local student attendance procedure	The school's local student attendance procedure complements and assists in implementing this procedure. The school's local student attendance procedure and this procedure work in tandem to provide staff with the mandatory rules and steps that

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	<p>must be followed.</p> <p>Schools must publish to the staff portal the school's local student attendance procedure using the BCE approved student attendance procedure template. The templates are available on the BCE intranet under Policies and procedures. The procedure template has been designed to align with BCE's Student Attendance policy and this procedure.</p> <p>Schools must ensure attendance processes align to the policy, this procedure and the school's local student attendance procedure.</p>
School withdrawal	When a parent/legal guardian deliberately keeps a student away from school for various reasons including family illness, parental conflict or family holidays.
Truancy	Concealed absences by the student, without parent/legal guardian knowledge.