



# MOLONG CENTRAL SCHOOL

KINDERGARTEN TO YEAR 12

A.B.N.: 46 346 191 747



## MOLONG CENTRAL SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Based on the requirements for student attendance as set out in the NSW Department of Education policy document PD/2005/0259/V07 – updated 06/04/2017.

### PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the duty of a parent, carer or legal guardian of a child of compulsory school age to cause the child to be enrolled in and to attend school on time on each and every day the school is open for instruction.

Parents, carers and/or legal guardians are required to explain the absences of their children from school to the school promptly and within seven (7) days of the absence occurring.

### SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

Principals are required to:

- maintain an attendance register in a form approved by the Minister
- provide clear information to parents and students regarding attendance requirements
- Inform parents and students of the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance
- ensure the school has effective measures in place to monitor and follow up student absences
- take reasonable measures to contact parents promptly and within two (2) school days of an absence being unexplained (4:2:3 An absence is unexplained if the parents have failed to provide an explanation to the school within seven (7) days). Principals may delegate this responsibility
- ensure that, for students with attendance concerns, the learning and support needs of those students are addressed in consultation with the parents
- ensure that, when frequent illnesses are explained as being due to illness, that:
  - parents are consulted regarding the health care needs of the student
  - medical certificates are sought
  - approval to contact medical services providers is sought
  - strategies for developing and maintaining regular school attendance are in place
- ensure school staff are provided with information on attendance requirements and their obligation to monitor and promote regular attendance

- consider referring students via the Mandatory Reporter Guide to the Child Wellbeing Unit for Educational Neglect if their absences total 30 days or more within 100 consecutive school days

## **COMING TO AND LEAVING SCHOOL- PRIMARY**

### **Bell Times:**

- No supervision is provided for students prior to 8:30am
- **8.30am to 8.55am** – Before class playtime
- **8.55am to 10.50am** – Session 1
- **10.50am to 11.10am** – Recess
- **11.10am to 12.50pm** – Session 2
- **12.50pm to 1.00pm** – Eating Time
- **1.00pm to 1.20pm** – First Half Lunch
- **1.20pm to 1.40pm** – Second Half Lunch
- **1.40pm to 3.00pm** – Session 3
- **3.00pm** – School concludes for that day

### **Before School Supervision:**

Student supervision at MCS K-6 by staff commences at **8.30am**. Parents are advised that, where possible, students should arrive between **8.40am and 8.50am**. If it is necessary for students to arrive at school before **8.55am**, they are all required to place their bags outside their classrooms and are then then to move promptly to the **Primary Playground or Primary COLA**. At 8.55am music sounds. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays all students, K-6 will line up for a short morning assembly under the COLA. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, students are to walk straight to class.

### **Morning Bus Transported Students:**

Students are to walk independently from the bus drop off point in Phillip St to the Primary area.

### **During Class time:**

At MCS it is an expectation that all students will be At school, In class, On time, Every day. However, due to unforeseen circumstances or issues including unavoidable appointment times, it may be necessary for some students to occasionally arrive at school late, depart for a period of time before returning or leave school early for the day. In order for MCS to fulfil its **Duty-of-Care** requirements, the following routines must be followed:

### **Late Arrivals:**

Students who arrive at school after **8.55am** must proceed directly to the main office accompanied by a parent, carer or responsible adult, who will provide the office staff with an explanation for the partial absence. The student's absence will be recorded by staff directly into the Sentral roll and the student will be provided with a **late pass**. The student will then

move promptly to class and hand the late pass to his or her classroom teacher. The adult accompanying the student is not required to escort them to the classroom.

### **Periodic Departures:**

Students who, for justifiable reasons, need to leave school for a period of time during the day and intend returning to school before 3.00pm, must not leave the school grounds unless accompanied by a parent, carer or responsible adult.

While it would be greatly appreciated if adult/s supervising students during periodic absences could inform the main office or the student's teacher before the event, an explanation immediately prior to the absence will suffice.

The adult/s supervising the student/s during the periodic absence must proceed directly to the main office and inform office staff of the nature and duration of the absence. The office staff is advised to enquire as to whether the student will return or not, if such information is not offered by the adult/s, and enter the information as a comment, including the estimated time of return, into the Sentral roll.

If the school has been informed of the absence beforehand, staff will endeavour to have the student waiting in the main foyer. If staff is unaware of the absence prior to the student's departure, the adult/s will be provided with a Student Early Departure pass and may then proceed directly to the student's classroom where they will hand the pass to the student's teacher before departing with the student in question. If students are not in class, school staff will locate them and direct them to the main office.

Upon returning to the school, the adult/s must follow the routine for **Late Arrival** at school. While the absence should have been explained before the student left, office staff must update the details of the absence on the Sentral roll, including any relevant additional information, as soon as the student is returned.

### **Walking Permission:**

In order for students to participate in activities which require them leaving the school grounds and walking to venues within walking distance from the school, parents and/or carers are asked to sign a General Permission Note annually which covers all excursions for the year. Students are not permitted to participate in walking excursions without signed consent from parents and/or carers.

### **Early Departures:**

Students who, for justifiable reasons, need to leave school early for that day, must not leave the school grounds unless accompanied by a parent, carer or responsible adult.

The adult/s supervising the student/s during the absence must proceed directly to the main office and inform office staff of the nature of the absence. The office staff will then enter the information directly into the Sentral roll.

If the school has been informed of the absence beforehand, or the student has presented sick to the office and needs to be collected, staff will endeavour to have the student waiting in the main foyer. However, if required, the adult/s will be provided with a Student Early Departure pass and may then proceed directly to the student's classroom where they will

hand the pass to the student's teacher before departing with the student in question. If students are not in class, school staff will locate them and direct them to the main office.

### **At the end of the day:**

All classroom teachers at MCS have routines for preparing students to leave the school on time each day. At 3.00pm, it is anticipated that students will depart school promptly.

### **Afternoon Bus Transported Students:**

One staff member is rostered to support K-6 students catching buses each afternoon. The students are required to sit undercover in the COLA area until their bus arrives. Each group of travellers is then escorted to their bus in orderly lines.

## **MAINTAINING ATTENDANCE DATA**

### **Whole Day Absences:**

MCS accepts that students may need to be absent from school for justifiable reasons including illness or misadventure from time to time. If students are unable to attend school for the whole day, they must have their absence explained by a parent, carer or responsible adult within seven (7) school days of the absence occurring.

If an absence remains unexplained beyond seven (7) school days, it will be recorded as unexplained. The principal, or delegate, will then attempt to contact the home to seek an explanation. If the principal or delegate has made reasonable attempts to contact the home and is unable to gain a justifiable explanation for the absence within two (2) school days, the absence will be recorded as unjustified.

At the start of each term/year, the school will advise parents and carers of their responsibilities and will define the term acceptable explanations.

The principal or delegate will then reserve the right to reject any explanation for an absence if he or she considers the explanation unacceptable in accordance with DoE guidelines as communicated to parents and Care givers. If this is the case, the absence will be recorded as unjustified and the parent, carer or responsible adult will be informed in writing of the principal or delegate's decision.

### **The Processing of Explanations for Whole Day Absences:**

MCS accepts a range of media for the explanation of student absences. Parents, carers or responsible adults may explain student absences:

- Verbally in person or by phone
- By letter or note
- By email to the school's email address
- Via text message once a notification has been sent out

All notes or letters containing explanations for absences after the date should be handed to the student's classroom teacher each morning.

Classroom teachers must read and use professional judgement to annotate the note or letter, classifying the absence in accordance with the DoE 2015 attendance register codes.

They must then sign and date the note or letter and submit it in the class envelope provided to the main office for processing.

If classroom teachers or office staff is made aware of potential absences, either verbally or in writing, prior to the absence occurring, the staff member receiving the information should update the student's information on the Sentral roll as soon as possible.

**Please note:** Justifiable explanations must be succinct and specific. For example, "family business/matters" is not a justifiable explanation. If a classroom teacher is unsure about an explanation, they are advised to discuss the explanation with their supervisor for clarification.

Family Holidays during the school term are no longer considered for exemption. If a family explains an absence as a holiday after the event, the absence will be recorded as Leave for the purpose of travel. Any family considering a family holiday during a school term should be directed in the first instance to the principal or delegate so provisions can be discussed for the continuance of the education of any students involved.

Any parent, carer or responsible adult requesting an exemption from enrolment or attendance should be directed in the first instance to the principal.

All written explanations for absences will be collected by the main office each term and will be stored for a period no less than two (2) years from date of receipt. Information pertaining to student absences will be kept a further seven (7) years beyond the last day of attendance. Finally, for students who become the subject of an accident report whilst at school, information pertaining to absences will be kept until individual students reach the age of twenty-five (25) years.

### **Monitoring Attendance:**

While parents and/or carers are responsible for guaranteeing students' attendance at school, it is the school's responsibility to monitor the attendance of students in our care during school hours. In the first instance, classroom teachers are delegated the responsibility for monitoring the attendance of students in their classes.

### **Roll Marking:**

Classroom teachers must make every attempt to record daily student attendance and submit absence explanation notes by **9:30am** each morning. Where a teacher is absent, the casual teacher will make every attempt to record daily absence by 9:30am each morning using either their own access to the electronic roll or the hard copy roll provided to them by the casual teacher coordinator. If the class is split, the staff member in charge of organising the split will mark the roll, either electronically or on a hard copy. The hard copy will then be handed to the office staff. A class list of the students' current locations will also be provided to the office staff.

Students who are representing MCS at school sanctioned events including excursions, PSSA sport and cultural events should not be marked absent. The names of all students in actual attendance of an event which inhibits their classroom teacher from accurately recording student attendance before 9:30am must be submitted to the main office on the

day in question. The office staff will then update student information on the Sentral roll and record the event as "B" School business. This may have been done in advance. If a child has a 'B' and they attend school, the teacher will be responsible for adjusting the role to reflect this. Please refer to MCS's excursion procedures for further information.

If a student is absent from school for two (2) consecutive days and/or the classroom teacher is aware that the student is developing an absence pattern or he or she holds a concern for the wellbeing of the student, the classroom teacher should attempt to contact the parent and/or carer and record the process/information in Sentral or raise the issue with their immediate supervisor.

### **Student Attendance Concerns:**

Classroom teachers should inform the principal or delegate if they have any concerns regarding the attendance of students in their class and be prepared to refer the student to and attend Learning Support Team (LST) meetings to discuss their concerns.

The principal or delegate has the responsibility of monitoring whole school attendance. In doing so, he or she may recognise the need to:

- Discuss with classroom teachers attendance concerns relating to specific students
- Discuss with parents and/or carers any issues which may be affecting the attendance of students and offer assistance where appropriate
- Discuss the importance of regular school attendance with students
- Develop Personalised Attendance Plans (PAP)
- Refer students to the Home School Liaison Program
- Make notifications to the Child Wellbeing Unit and FACS for Educational Neglect

The main office may generate an electronic fortnightly attendance report from which students with unexplained absences are identified, before generating letters to parents and/or carers informing them of the absences and requesting explanations. Copies of letters are stored in Pupil Record Cards (PRC).

### **Special Circumstances:**

On some occasions, due to unforeseen circumstances that inhibit or prevent students from attending school, it may be necessary for the school to record student attendance in a Special Circumstances Register. On such occasions, the principal or delegate will coordinate the recording of student attendance on the Special Circumstances Register. The principal or delegate will then coordinate the collection of registers which will be stored with the hard copy of the roll.

### **The Maintenance of the Roll:**

MCS uses Sentral, which is a third party attendance register. However, Sentral is not the official roll and, at set times, usually no longer than 7 days apart, Sentral attendance data must be exported directly into EBS4.

### **Truancing:**

MCS expects all students to be at school on time in class every day that the school is open for instruction. Students are truancing if they choose to be absent from class and/or school without their parent and/or carer's knowledge or permission. In order for MCS to fulfil its

**Duty-of-Care** requirements, any student recognised as not being in class as expected must be immediately reported to the principal or delegate.

The principal or delegate will:

- Conduct a thorough search of the school and immediate surroundings. When located, the absent student will be returned to class and parents and/or carers contacted.

If the student cannot be located:

- The parents and/or carers will be contacted and notified immediately. If no contact with the parents and/or carers can be made and/or messages have been left, the principal or delegate will contact the student's emergency contact person. Should the principal or delegate be unsuccessful in making contact with either parents and/or carers or the emergency contact person, and the parents and/or carers have failed to respond to messages within 30 minutes, the principal or delegate will notify the police.

If it is discovered that a student or students have engaged in truancy for a whole day, the principal or delegate will:

- Notify the parents and/or carers
- Investigate possible contributing factors which may have resulted in the student or students truanting, either willingly or as a result of duress
- Report repeated truancy to the HSLP, the Child Wellbeing Unit, FACS and/or the police as appropriate.

This document is reviewed yearly and should be read in conjunction with:

**School Attendance in Government Schools: Procedures**  
**School Attendance Policy PD 2005 0259**  
**Learning and Engagement Directorate**  
**2015**