



# Marian Catholic College Kenthurst

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE PROCEDURES



In NSW school attendance is compulsory for children over the age of six years until the age of 17 years. Students must complete Year 10 and after Year 10, until they turn 17 years of age, students must be:

- In school or registered for home schooling, or
- In approved education or training (e.g. TAFE, traineeship, apprenticeship)
- In full-time, paid employment (average 25 hours per week) or in a combination of work, education and/or training

Schools in partnerships with parents/carers are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents/carers are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, school staff, as part of their duty of care, play a vital role in promoting daily attendance, recording and monitoring absences and preventing the establishment of absenteeism. A shared approach to school attendance between students, parents/carers, schools, system learning and CEDP will maximise the opportunity for every learner every day.

***There is a direct link between school attendance and academic achievement.*** Each day, our students are building on learning from the day before, which means that every day away from school makes it harder to catch up and can impact everyone in the classroom. Attendance has a strong relationship with student outcomes as measured by NAPLAN scores. Each percentage point increase in attendance is related to higher student outcomes by an average of 2-3 NAPLAN scale score points in numeracy, reading, spelling, writing and grammar and punctuation.

***Poor school attendance doesn't just impact student learning.*** Attending school every day helps students to build resilience, develop important connections and establish healthy habits that will follow them into work and life.

***Good Habits are formed early.*** Just one or two days absent a month can add up to nearly four weeks of a school year. That's a whole year of lost learning from Kindergarten to Year 10.

Marian Catholic College recognises the vital role that student attendance plays in maximising student learning. It is through partnership with parents/caregivers and students that students are best able to maintain good attendance patterns.

Compulsory Attendance Guidelines from the NSW Department of Education, apply to all Parramatta Diocesan Schools. Attendance is important for success at school – **every day counts!**

Students are required to be at school from 9:00am to 3:18pm every school day. Supervision will be provided from 8:30 am onwards for those students arriving early. The College and Administration reception are open between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm each day. Student Reception is open 8:30 am and 3:30 pm each day.

Student attendance is formally recorded in Homeroom and continually recorded by classroom teachers for every lesson during the school day.

It is a requirement that all absences partial and/or whole day are adequately explained in writing or by responding to the SMS message on the day it is sent.

### **Responsibilities of parents**

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Enrolling their children of compulsory school age in a government or registered nongovernment school or registering them with the NSW Educational Standards Authority (NESAs) for home schooling.
- Explaining the absences of their children from school promptly by means such as a telephone call, written note, text message or email to the school within seven days from the first day of any period of absence.
- Working in partnership with the school to plan and implement strategies to support regular attendance at school, including communicating with the school if they are aware of issues impacting on their child's attendance or engagement with school.

### **Explaining Short Absences (fewer than two days)**

A text message will be sent to the parent/caregiver when the student is absent or late to school. If a reply to this message is sent then a note to explain the absence or the lateness **will not** be required. This text message reply service can only be used when a text message has been generated from the school on the day of absence or lateness. It cannot be used to clarify an unexplained absence or lateness that is outstanding for a few days. In this regard, a written note would then be required and must be given to the child's Homeroom teacher on the day they return to school.

When replying to the text message, it is important that the **child's name** and the **reason for the absence/lateness** are clearly stated. Messages cannot be applied to the absence unless the correct information is received. This all needs

to be written **in one sentence without pushing return**, otherwise the whole message cannot be viewed.

Reply messages with reasons such as 'running late', 'at home' or 'away' are not acceptable reasons, more details are required.

### **Longer Absences (two days or more due to illness)**

If an absence will exceed two days due to illness parents/caregivers should contact the Homeroom teacher or Year Leader of Learning. A Doctor's Certificate is required to be given to the Homeroom teacher when the student returns to school.

The College, in partnership with parents and Health Professionals (including Doctor's) will work together in situations where long term illness affects student attendance.

Homeroom teachers will be contacting parents/caregivers for any unexplained absences of 3 or more days.

**As is policy in all Schools, please be aware that if no reply text or note to explain an absence is received after 7 days, the absence is recorded as 'Absent without explanation'. A summary of absences, whole and partial, explained and unexplained are recorded on both Semester Reports for every year group.**

### **Planned Leave**

#### ***(less than 5 days)***

A letter outlining the time and reason for leave should be submitted to the Leader of Learning – Pastoral Care at least six weeks prior to the planned leave.

#### ***(5 days or more)***

Application for extended leave form A.1 or Application for Exemption from Attendance at School is to be completed for Principal's approval at least six weeks prior to planned leave. (See the College website for the appropriate forms.)

***As a general rule, family holidays during school time are strongly discouraged, particularly in Years 10, 11 and 12, because they impact on Board of Studies mandatory requirements. The school is unable to accept responsibility for the work students miss while taking holidays during term time.***

It is not appropriate for students to be missing school time for holidays. The school is unable to accept responsibility for the work students miss while taking holidays during term time, except in the case of emergencies or for other pastoral reasons. It is not reasonable for parents to expect that student learning will not be impacted by this absence nor that teachers have the time to prepare work in advance for these students when they are preparing lessons and resources for classes. All students must meet Board of Studies requirements

regarding course completion and attendance. Students in Years 10, 11 and 12 must also complete RoSA and Higher School Certificate Assessment Tasks during the school day and at the same time they are held for their class. Students who miss tasks are not given any marks for the task unless they present a Doctor's Certificate dated the day of the task to certify that they were too ill to sit for the task. If some personal or family emergency prevents a student from attending school for a task and advises the College of this on the day, the Leader of Learning - Curriculum reviews the situation in consultation with the relevant KLA and Year Leaders of Learning and makes a recommendation to the Principal. The Principal makes a final decision regarding the task.

### **Early Departure**

Parents / guardians are encouraged to make medical appointments outside school hours whenever possible or for part of the school day. It should not be necessary to be absent for the entire day. It would be appreciated if departures could be scheduled at recess, lunch or between lessons so that learning is not interrupted.

If a student needs to leave school before the end of the school day they must obtain a note from their parent/caregiver.

The note must;

- Be dated.
- Have child's full name and homeroom listed.
- Clearly identify time and **reason** for departure.

Students are to present the note for approval to the Leader of Learning – Pastoral Care in the office in Student Foyer at any of the following times;

- Before school - from 8.30am.
- During homeroom (after obtaining permission from the homeroom teacher).
- At recess - 11:15am - 11:45am.

If the Leader of Learning – Pastoral Care is not available, a Year Leader of Learning will approve the note. **Every endeavour by parents/caregivers should be made to make appointments outside school hours.**

Parents/caregivers are asked not to email requests for early departure. Urgent requests should be made by contacting the front office on 9654 6700. Parents/caregivers are asked not to call or text their son/daughter to meet them at the front office. These requests must be made by contacting the front office on 9654 6700.

Students will present the approved note at Student Foyer at the time of departure and be officially signed out for the day.

### **Late Arrival**

Students arriving to school after 9:03am must go directly to Student Foyer and sign in. A note of explanation from parent/caregiver must be provided.

Senior students who have a flexible timetable must always sign in and sign out. If senior students have not completed the required documentation and are signing in late or out early they will incur a consequence.

### **Sick Bay**

Students who feel ill during the school day must notify a member of staff first.

The student will then be given permission to go to sick bay. Office staff will notify the parent/caregiver.

Parents/caregivers are asked to ensure their contact details are up to date.

Parents/caregivers are reminded that any communication regarding the illness of their son/daughter should be done through the front office on 9654 6700.

***Parents/caregivers are asked to respect the school procedures regarding these matters and not contact their son/daughter or any siblings directly via text messages or calls to their mobiles.***

Students are also asked to respect these procedures and not contact parents directly when they are feeling unwell.

### **Truancy / Fractional Truancy**

Any students who deliberately truant for the whole or part of a day will make up for lost time outside of school hours. This may mean a series of out of school detentions. Out of school detentions are an hour in duration.

### **Leave from Class**

Students are to attend all classes timetabled for each day. If it is necessary for students to be out of class for any reason, they will be provided with a note signed by the teacher conducting the lesson being missed.