

Student Attendance Policy and Procedures 2023

Attendance and Exemptions Policy

The Principal of Manning Valley Anglican College maintains a register, in a form approved by the Minister, of the enrolments and daily attendances of all children at the school, which includes information for each student as required by Section 3.8 of the NESA *Registered and Accredited Individual Non-Government Schools (NSW) Manual*.

Where the parents of a student of compulsory school age seeks an exemption from attendance at school or an exemption from enrolment, the principal will process the parent's application in accordance with the guidelines from NSW Department of Education.

The Principal may exercise the Minister's delegation under Section 25 of the Education Act in relation to granting and cancelling a certificate of exemption from being enrolled and attending school in certain prescribed circumstances.

Procedures

Register of enrolments

The School's registrar is responsible for the entry and maintenance of student records on the school's administration package, TASS (The Alpha School System). The registrar enters data upon enrolment and updates information as required.

Enrolment information includes:

1. The student's name, age and address.
2. The name and contact telephone number of parent(s)/guardian(s).
3. Date of enrolment and, where appropriate, the date of leaving the school and the student's destination
4. Information on previous school / pre-enrolment for a student older than 6years.
5. where the destination of a student below seventeen (17) years of age is unknown, evidence that the Department of Education has been notified (using the form Student Enrolment Destination Unknown, downloaded from RANGS, customised with school letterhead and emailed to attendance@det.nsw.edu.au). The following details will be provided:

- student's full name
- date of birth
- last known address
- last date of attendance
- parents' names and contact details
- an indication of possible destination
- what efforts the school has made to locate the child
- other information that may assist officers to locate the student
- any known work health and safety risks associated with contacting the parents or student.

6. MCEECDYA background information.

The Register of Enrolments will be retained for a minimum of five years before archiving.

Register of daily attendance

The School monitors the daily attendance and absence of students in the School by maintaining a daily register for each class of students using the electronic student administration package TASS which records information using codes approved by the Minister for Education. The register contains the following information:

- Daily attendance, which is done by recording daily absences
- Absences
- Reason for absence
- Documentation to substantiate reason for absence is retained in the student file.

The register of daily attendance is retained for at least 7 years after the last entry was made.

Monitoring and following up attendance

Daily attendance

Absences are recorded at the start of each day by classroom teachers using the Teacher Kiosk module of TASS.

Late students

- Students who arrive late must go to reception to receive a late slip. If they have an explanatory note for lateness, it is then given to the receptionist.

Students departing early

- Students who need to depart early must report to the office immediately before they leave.
- Students may leave early if they have written permission from their parent or guardian, or if they are collected in person by their parent or guardian. If these conditions are not satisfied (for example a family friend has come to pick the student up), the receptionist will contact the student's parents before the student can leave. If there is any doubt about the validity of a note, or if the receptionist is unsure, they will immediately refer the matter to the relevant Director.
- Before departure students will 'sign out' at the office.
- The administration staff record the early departure on TASS.
- Students being collected as a result of sickness or injury through the day are also signed out in the above manner.

Contacting the School

- Parents are encouraged to telephone the school each morning before 9am to inform the school that their child is going to be away. Parents are requested to leave their name, their child's name, their child's year and the reason for their child's absence. There is also the facility via the school's Digistorm App as well as an email to the teacher/school office.
- At the commencement of each day, the receptionists review the calls and update TASS to indicate that a parent has phoned. If parents supply the required information, then the child's attendance record is updated accordingly to reflect the reason for the child's absence. If the caller does not supply the required information, then the attendance record is listed as 'unexplained'.

- If the receptionist has any concern about the validity of a call, then the matter is referred to the relevant Director.

Follow up on students who are away on the day

- After roll call the School Receptionists create and print an attendance listing for evacuation purposes and if a child is away without an explanation, Emails are sent to parents (utilising the TASS email facility) requesting that they contact the school to notify the reason for absence. Parents not on the email list are contacted by phone.

3. Unexplained absences

Follow up on unexplained absences

- Each day an automated email is sent to parents who still have unexplained for 3 days and sends a reminder email to parents about the matter.
- If no explanation is received by parents, then the absence remains listed as 'unexplained'.

4. Poor attendance

If a student's attendance or punctuality to school becomes of concern to any member of staff, they should refer the matter to the Head of Primary (for students in K-6) or Deputy Principal (for students in 7-12).

Attendance Reports

Each week, automatic attendance reports are generated for the Head of Primary (K-6) and the Deputy Principal (7-12) for follow up.

The reports highlight:

- Students who have unexplained absences from school for more than 10% of the time expected to be at school.
- Students who have been late for more than 10% of the time expected to be at school.
- Students who have more than 20 days' absences from school in the year.

The receptionists will also highlight any other concerns to the Head of Primary (K-6) and the Deputy Principal (7-12) that they may be aware of.

If attendance or punctuality is of concern, the Head of Primary (K-6) or the Deputy Principal (7- 12) will follow up with the family and put in place any necessary procedures to try and rectify the situation. All telephone conversations with parents are reported on TASS Pastoral Care.

If necessary, an Attendance Improvement Plan will be put in place. This will involve a meeting with the parent/s or carers, the student and any relevant external agency or other professional, such as a psychologist. In extreme circumstances, an application to the Children's Court could be made for a Compulsory Schooling Order.

Continual Lateness

Parents are also notified by email if their child is highlighted as being continually late on the Attendance Report. A sample letter follows:

Dear Parent/Caregiver

I am writing as I am concerned about the number of late arrivals to school by NAME since the start of the year.

Our records indicate that NAME has been late for 4 days out of 15 school days on the following occasions:

30/01/2019 Arrived at 09:03 (18 minutes late)

31/01/2019 Arrived at 09:36 (51 minutes late)

03/02/2019 Arrived at 09:06 (21 minutes late)

04/02/2019 Arrived at 09:18 (33 minutes late)

The school day commences at 9:00 and it is important that all students arrive on time. Could you please address this matter with NAME. If you have any questions or concerns about the above details, please contact reception on 0265538844.

Regards Andrew Jones Deputy Principal

Excessive Absences

The Head of Primary and Deputy Principal will inform the Principal if any student's absences extend beyond 30 days in the year.

Where a student is absent for 30 days, the Principal should access the Mandatory Reporter Guide (MRG) to determine whether a report is required.

5. Maintenance of records

All paper documents are filed in reception and later archived at the end of each year. These include:

- Sign-in and sign-out sheets.
- Parent notes regarding absences.
- Phone message records regarding absences.
- Explanatory notes sent from parents via email. These are printed and collated with other parent notes. Electronic records are backed up on a daily basis and copies are stored off-site at regular intervals.

Exemption from attendance

- Parents submit the application for exemption from attendance and supporting documentation, where requested, to the school principal, prior to the proposed period of exemption.
- Applications for exemption from attendance for a total of under 100 days in a twelve-month period will be considered by the principal, in accordance with the criteria in the guidelines from the NSW Department of Education.

- Where the application is supported, the principal will inform the parents and provide the original exemption certificate to the parent/s.
- Where the application is not supported, the principal will notify the parents in writing of the unsuccessful outcome.
- An application for exemption from attendance for a total of 100 days or more in a twelvemonth period will be considered for recommendation by the principal, who will send it to the AIS Division Head, Education Regulations and Program Implementation, for further referral to the Minister's delegate in the NSW Department of Education.
- In all cases, copies of applications, exemption certificates, notifications or letters resulting from applications for exemption from attendance will be kept in the student's file
- Copies of relevant documentation, including the Minister's delegation and exemption certificate, are retained in the school files/attendance records.

Exemption from enrolment

- Parents submit the application for exemption from enrolment and supporting documentation, where requested, to the school principal, prior to the proposed period of exemption.
- In the case of:
 - applications for exemption from enrolment for students who have completed Year 9, for completion of education under special circumstances (through apprenticeship or traineeship):
 - the principal will consider the application, for approval, in accordance with the criteria in the guidelines from the NSW Department of Education.
 - Where the application is supported, the principal will notify the parents and provide them with the original exemption certificate.
 - Where the application is not supported, the principal will notify the parents in writing of the unsuccessful outcome.
- In cases of:
 - exemption from enrolment for completion of education under special circumstances (through apprenticeship or traineeship) for a student who has not completed Year 9, or
 - exemption from enrolment due to circumstances including a delayed start to school, health, learning or social disadvantage
 - the principal will consider applications for recommendation, and will send applications to the AIS Division Head, Education Regulations and Program Implementation, for further referral to the Minister's delegate in the NSW Department of Education.

- In the case of:
 - exemption from enrolment for completion of education under special circumstances in any other cases, including where there is no apprenticeship or traineeship
 - the principal will consider the application for recommendation and will mail the appropriate NESA form (Application to complete education under special circumstances (other than an apprenticeship or traineeship)) to NESA at the address noted on that form.

- In all cases, copies of applications, exemption certificates, notifications or letters resulting from applications for exemption from enrolment will be kept in the student’s file

- Copies of relevant documentation, including the Minister’s delegation and exemption certificate, are retained in the school files/enrolment records.

1 Policy Governance

Tier	1
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Policy Owner	Deputy Principal
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