



Maitland High School

Procedures

Student Attendance



Education

Purpose

This document outlines the school's process in place to monitor student absences and to follow up student absences on the same day or following day and effectively documents that the follow up has occurred. It also outlines how any matter relating to school attendance and where safety, welfare or wellbeing concerns arise for any student, is addressed through processes in place to ensure that mandatory reporting requirements. Encouraging and supporting student attendance improvement processes are also outlined.

Applicability

This procedure applies to:

- Staff
- Students

Staff responsible

Leading: Melissa Schatz, Deputy Principal

Managing: Megan Elliott, HT Attendance & Engagement

Implementing: All Staff

Procedures

Engagement with parents/carers

All parents, carers and students are provided with clear information regarding attendance requirements:

- On our school website
<https://maitland-h.schools.nsw.gov.au/about-our-school/attendance-and-absence.html>
- School newsletter/Sentral Parent Portal at the start of each school year
- By email Weeks 5 and 10 of every term (attendance snapshots tailored to their child's attendance tier).
- Week 5 every term, students in Tier 1 are identified and contacted by their rollcall teacher to follow up on unexplained absences and to encourage families to improve attendance where appropriate (e.g. unjustified leave).
- Students with over 90% attendance by Week 5 each term receive a post card.
- Students with 100% attendance receive a postcard and an SMS of congratulations.
- By the schools Facebook page during attendance week once per term.
- Information is communicated as needed to update parents on school policy.
- Feedback is gathered informally in learning support team meetings and attendance improvement meetings along with responses to our regular communications.

The school has an effective process in place to follow up student absences on the same day or following day and effectively documents that the follow up has occurred. SMS messages are sent to parents every day that a child is absent, SASS staff record responses and update the rolls accordingly. The school has also

communicated with parents in how to access the Sentral Parent Portal, so they are able to easily update their child's attendance.

Monitoring Absences

Maitland High School follows Department of Education policy for managing and monitoring attendance.

Whole day attendance

For our school context, data is drawn every 4 weeks to identify students who have fallen into tier 3 (less than 50% attendance). From this data pool:

- a shared document is created for the Principal, Deputy Principals, and HT Wellbeing to share information and interventions, this aims to streamline the approach to contacting home and ensures all students are adequately supported.
- contact is established with the parents to seek information and offer appropriate supports and pathways.
- students who have not attended for 20 days require a CWU educational neglect to be submitted.
- students who have not engaged with school-based supports are referred to HSLO

Partial Attendance

Students arriving at school late are required to sign in at the front office, their time is registered, and an SMS generated to be sent home.

Students who are absent from lessons throughout the day are marked absent by their class teacher. If these students are involved in school business such as Small Group Tuition etc., a roll will be taken and submitted to SASS staff. The roll is updated by 3:30pm to reflect these absences. At 3:30pm the Head teacher Attendance & Engagement (HT A&E) draws PxP data and identifies students who have been marked absent from class and have not been marked as attending a school business activity.

An SMS is generated and sent to parent/carers. Parent responses are collated, and the roll adjusted accordingly. Students who are identified as having a pattern of truancy are interviewed by the DP or HT A&E. The reasons for missing class are discussed. Students may be placed on an attendance support card for accountability of class attendance. HT A&E and Deputy Principals run manual checks and issue attendance support cards to students with a pattern of class truancy.

Responses from parents are registered and the roll updated appropriately. Based on follow-up with parents, students are absent for a range of reasons from personal illness, illness in the family, medical appointments, family events, mental health and school refusal. Late students are often impacted by transport or morning appointments.

Parent feedback indicates that they appreciate early notice of daily absences and truancy from class. Parents have also expressed frustration at the use of attendance codes. Office staff have developed a script to speak to parents regarding this and more complex conversations referred to HT A&E.

Attendance Follow Up

Data for students with less than 80% attendance is drawn fortnightly. Students of concern in Tier 2 are discussed at the appropriate Year group LST meeting and allocated to members of the Wellbeing team. These staff members work to identify barriers to attendance and set goals for improvements. Students requiring more intensive support are referred to HT A&E, HT WB or Deputy Principal. Contact is recorded in Wellbeing LSTM notes and in Sentral under Whole School Attendance – Tier 2. From Term 4 2024 students will complete a Student Led attendance management plan with their year advisor to set goals to improve attendance.

Data is drawn weekly for students in Tier 3 (Less than 50% attendance). Parents of these students are sent an SMS (first instance) encouraging them to contact the school for support or phoned (second instance) to set up an LST meeting to implement an attendance improvement plan. These students are monitored regularly and connected to supports to assist them to attend school regularly or to support their transition to alternative settings as appropriate. An allocated SASS staff member contacts parents of students with 3 unexplained absences in a row.

SSU staff call each day a student is absent. If absences are consecutive or of concern HT SSU will follow up, then liaise with DP IS and HT A&E for support strategies.

Wellbeing Concerns and Mandatory Reporting

For any matter relating to school attendance and where safety, welfare or wellbeing concerns arise for any student, there are processes in place to ensure that mandatory reporting requirements are adhered to. Mandatory annual Child Protection Training is completed by end of February each year for all permanent and temporary staff including nonteaching staff.

Students identified to have missed 20 school days or have other wellbeing concerns are run on the MRG decision tree. Educational Neglect, Nonattendance is lodged for these students. If all contacts have been tried unsuccessfully and the student has not been in attendance for a period of time HSLO- Destination Unknown process is started to locate the student.

Staff Training

All school staff, including new staff and casual teachers, are provided with information on attendance requirements and their obligation to monitor and promote regular attendance at school.

All school staff, including new staff and casual teachers, undertake annual training in roll marking, including the correct use of absence codes. Reminders and updates are sent to staff and addressed at staff meetings as required.

Data is drawn daily for roll marking completion and reminders sent to staff and their HT when rolls are unmarked. Support is offered when staff do not understand roll marking procedures.

Supporting complex student attendance

Students identified to be in Tier 3 / critical non-attenders are channelled to a range of options. An LST meeting is organised and barriers to attendance are discussed. Depending on the student age and information gathered from the LST, a range of options are available.

- Part day exemption
- Work experience
- In school support eg PCYC Perfect Presence, Small group supports.
- Access request for Distance Education
- Referral to Catholic Care
- Referral to Nova Skill get back in the Game
- Referral to Maiwel Transition to work
- Discussion around alternate school setting eg- ALESCO and Indie School.

Resources & support documents

[Compulsory student attendance information](#)

[School Attendance procedures](#)

[School Procedures Process Maps](#)

[Procedures- FAQs](#)

[Supporting school attendance](#)

[Individual roles of students, staff and parents](#)

[Supporting student attendance eLearning](#)

[Attendance Register codes](#)

[Recording absence explanation process map](#)

[Attendance Communication Toolkit](#)

[Educational Neglect factsheet](#)

[School Refusal Support Guide for schools](#)

Policy:

[School Attendance Policy](#)

Contacts: Written by Paula Graham, Principal and
Megan Elliott, HT A&E 13 February 2024

Review Date: February 2025

Further Information

Ph: +61 2 49337933

maitland-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au

© November 2015
NSW Department of Education