MANDURAH CATHOLIC COLLEGE
UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF THE HOLY FAMILY

STUDENT ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

CECWA POLICY: **Community**
EXECUTIVE DIRECTIVE: **Student Safety, Wellbeing and Behaviour**
COLLEGE GUIDELINES: **Student Attendance**
REVIEWED: **2023**
NEXT REVIEW: **2024**

"Mandurah Catholic College is a learning community seeking truth by living out the Gospel values through the Catholic faith and by promoting the holistic and optimal development of each student."

School-based Procedures are not variations to CEWA Executive Directives. They enact contextual decisions; they have the legal obligation of CECWA policy for people acting under the authority of the Principal.

Scope
These procedures apply to all members of the Mandurah Catholic College community and are informed by CEWA's Directives, guidelines and processes.

Procedures
Parent/Guardian Responsibilities
- Parents/guardians must provide an explanation for any absence their child has and work in partnership with the College to support attendance. Parents/guardians are required to:
  o ensure the child attends school at all times when the school is open for instruction; and
  o provide an explanation for any absence their child has within three (3) days.
- Parents/guardians must contact the Attendance Officer and their child's Head of Year/Classroom Teacher if their child will not be attending school for an extended period due to medical reasons. The Head of Year/Classroom Teacher will arrange for work to be provided.
- Parents/guardians need to notify the Deputy of Teaching and Learning/Assistant Head of Primary for long absences due to holidays and will have to complete a request form. It is the student's responsibility to approach the teachers for work to be provided while away. The Attendance Officer will notify the Head of Year, the teachers and the parents of the outcome of the leave request via a SEQTA note.

College Responsibilities
- The College will keep accurate attendance records for all students.
- Attendance records will include:
  o if the student was physically present or not;
  o if the student was attending a different approved activity (the teacher running that activity must also record attendance;
  o any reasons given for an absence;
  o if the reason for the absence is reasonable (see examples);
  o a flag for unexplained absences (removed if a reason is given later);
  o information about any unsatisfactory attendance at school or classes; and
  o a mark for half-day attendance if the student is present for at least two hours of instruction.

Attendance Recording Procedures (Primary School)
- Attendance will be taken at the commencement of each day prior to 9:00am (to cater for the morning session) and before 1:30pm (to cater for the afternoon session). Attendance is marked in half day increments, these increments being before and after 12:45pm.
- Attendance notifications must be recorded using SEQTA.
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Attendance Recording Procedures (Secondary School)
- Attendance will be taken in the first 10 minutes of every period.
- Attendance notifications must be recorded using SEQTA.

Accepted forms of resolved non-attendance reasoning
The following methods of non-attendance reasoning will be accepted by the Attendance Officer:
- An email sent to the Attendance Officer prior to 9:00am. This must contain the responsible person's full name, date, and a reason for the absence. (**This is the preferred method**)
- A note sent to the College signed by a parent or legal guardian containing responsible person's full name, date, and a reason for the absence;
- By direct contact, eg, telephone call from a parent or legal guardian to the Attendance Officer. However, this should be followed up with a note signed by a parent or legal guardian or a medical certificate.

Late Arrivals
- Any student who arrives at school after 8:30am (after Homeroom) must present to Student Reception and obtain a late note. If students are late to Homeroom, the Homeroom tutor is required to make a late entry in SEQTA.
- The cut off time for late to class is 5 minutes.
- The cut off time for teachers to have the role completed on SEQTA is 10 minutes into the period.
- Heads of House send SMS messages to parents/guardians for students who arrive late to Homeroom. This is done after 11:30am.

Approved (explained) Absences
The College will record an absence as 'Approved' if there has been a reasonable explanation for a student's absence. A reasonable excuse for the purposes of explaining a school absence can include:
- medical or dental appointments;
- bereavement or attending a funeral (including Sorry Business);
- illnesses and accidents;
- unforeseen and unexplained circumstances;
- if the absence was a result of complying with another law;
- the child is receiving distance education through a registered school;
- the child is undertaking approved education, training and/or employment;
- the child has been suspended; or
- the child is attending or observing a religious event, cultural observance or obligation.

Unresolved (unexplained) Absences
- The College will record an absence as 'Unresolved' when there has been no reasonable explanation provided for the absence.
- If a reason is given to the Principal and it is not approved, then the College will notify the parent/carer in writing.
- If no reason is provided for an absence, the Attendance Officer and Heads of Year are required to follow up with parents or guardians on the reasons according to the accepted forms outlined above.
- The inability of parents to provide a suitable reason for absence must be noted for future reference by the Attendance Officer.

In general, it is expected that these absences would not be excused:

- the parent did not seek approval beforehand, or in accordance with school procedures;
- the student was absent due to leisure or social activities without approval;
- the conditions of an authorised absence was not met eg, a student absence learning plan during a family holiday was not completed; or
- the parent has provided no explanation for the absence.

Non-attendance

In the event of student non-attendance, the College will follow the CEWA Student Non-Attendance Flow Chart (see Appendix 1).

At approximately 9:15am, the Attendance Officer starts reviewing each classroom attendance register to ensure that all have been completed and any late students have been entered as 'present'.

If attendance has not been completed by a teacher, a request is made by the Attendance Officer directly to the teacher to complete the roll.

For any Secondary Student who is on the list as "Absent" (ie, absent without notification) a text message is sent to parents to inform them that their child has been marked as absent. The text reads "MCC records show **XXX** is absent from school **DAY**, **DATE**. Please contact the Attendance Officer on 9531 9524." If the text is not responded to, a follow up email is sent the following day.

As parents respond, the SEQTA roll is changed according to how the response is made.

If the Attendance Officer notices a pattern of absence for any student, the Head of Year, Assistant Principal, Dean of Education and Dean of Students is notified.

Students at Educational Risk

Attendance is measured as the number of actual full-time equivalent student days attended by full-time students as a percentage of the total number of possible student days.
Educational risk is defined as falling below 90%.

If a student is identified as being at educational risk, the College will adopt a solution-focused case management approach that involves key stakeholders (ie, school, family, and where appropriate, outside agencies) to support school re-engagement.

Heads of Year
- Heads of Year can access cumulative attendance data on SEQTA. This data includes the number of absences due to lateness, explained absence, unexplained absence, work experience and excursions.
- Heads of Year will identify those students who need follow-up.
- If poor attendance continues, the matter is to be forwarded to the Deans and/or Deputy Principal of Community. Information regarding these follow-ups will be emailed to the Attendance Officer, Deputy Principal Community and Deputy Principal Teaching and Learning and recorded on SEQTA.

Extreme Absence
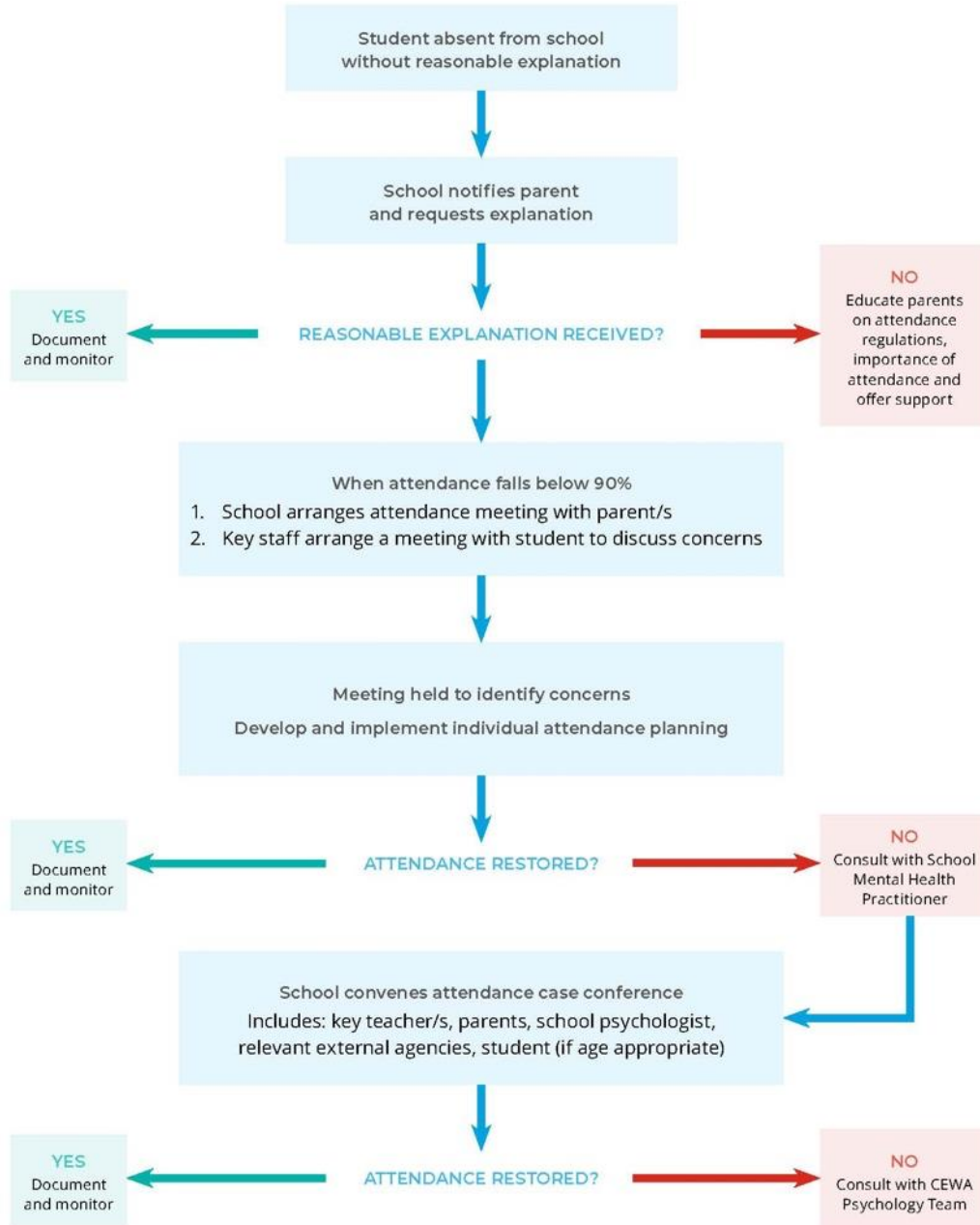- Parents/guardians will be called in for a meeting according to the Flowchart below, where attempts will be made to restore attendance.
- If there is no improvement, cases of extreme absence – students 16 years old and over – will be reported to the Participation Team or to outside agencies.

The College may refer to the *CEWA Student Attendance Resources* to support them in documenting a student attendance issue.

Appendix 1: Student Non-Attendance Flow Chart

CATHOLIC EDUCATION
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Student Non-Attendance Flow Chart

Student absent from school
without reasonable explanation

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School notifies parent
and requests explanation

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REASONABLE EXPLANATION RECEIVED?

YES
Document
and monitor

NO
Educate parents
on attendance
regulations,
importance of
attendance and
offer support

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When attendance falls below 90%
1. School arranges attendance meeting with parent/s
2. Key staff arrange a meeting with student to discuss concerns

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Meeting held to identify concerns

Develop and implement individual attendance planning

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ATTENDANCE RESTORED?

YES
Document
and monitor

NO
Consult with School
Mental Health
Practitioner

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School convenes attendance case conference
Includes: key teacher/s, parents, school psychologist,
relevant external agencies, student (if age appropriate)

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ATTENDANCE RESTORED?

YES
Document
and monitor

NO
Consult with CEWA
Psychology Team

Appendix 2: Mandurah Catholic College Student Non-Attendance Flow Chart

ATTENDANCE CONCERNS FLOWCHART

Situation	Time	Action	Documentation	Staff Member Involved
Attendance below 80%	Week 5 Friday	Attendance Officer sends attendance percentage list to PA to CLT, cc Heads of Year Heads of Year call home for particular circumstances **Send Letter 1**	Record on SEQTA	Attendance Officer Personal Assistant to CLT Head of Year
Attendance below 90%	**Two** weeks after Letter 1	**Send Letter 2** Phone call home to parents Speak to student	Causes of Non-Attendance Checklist Analysing Student Non-Attendance Push and Pull factors Record and file on SEQTA	Head of Year
Absenteeism continues	**One** week after phone call	**Meeting 1** Attendance Improvement Plan	Student Attendance Improvement Plan Checklist for Managing Non-Attendance Minutes of Meeting (HOY) Record and file on SEQTA (HOY)	Head of Year Dean of Education
Absenteeism continues	**Two** weeks after Meeting 1	**Send Letter 3** **Meeting 2** Possible Home Visit Advice from CEWA Psychologist/other parties	Student Attendance Improvement Plan Checklist for Managing Non-Attendance Minutes of Meeting (HOY) Record and file on SEQTA (HOY)	Head of Year Dean of Education Dean of Students College Psychologist
Absenteeism continues	**Two** weeks after Meeting 2	**Send Letter 4** **Meeting 3**	Student Attendance Improvement Plan Checklist for Managing Non-Attendance Minutes of Meeting (HOY) Record and file on SEQTA (HOY)	Head of Year Deputy Principal Teaching & Learning Deputy Principal Community College Psychologist