



Attendance and Absence Policy

Rationale:

At Catherine McAuley College, as a Mercy School living in the Spirit of Catherine McAuley and following the model of Jesus are dedicated to our Touchstone Statement.

'Inspiring members of our community to be learners impelled to thrive and serve'

Catherine McAuley College expects that all student attend school each day, participate in all classes and remain on the property for the duration of the day. Catherine McAuley College has a legal responsibility to account for the presence of student at school and in each class.

The purpose of this policy is to outline Catherine McAuley College's obligations and to assist students to achieve their personal, social and academic potential through high levels of daily attendance at school.

Definition:

This policy applies to:

- **Staff:** All Catherine McAuley College staff including teachers and support staff
- **Student:** A student of Catherine McAuley College
- **Parents/Carers:** Includes the natural biological parents, carers or legal guardians of a student
- **Student Services:** Staff who manage the day to day administration of students at Catherine McAuley College
- **Unauthorised School Non-Attendance:** When there is no satisfactory excuse or exemption for a student's non-attendance

Policy Statement:

Schooling is compulsory for children and young people aged from 6 -17 years unless an exemption from attendance or enrolments has been granted. Daily school attendance is important for all children and young people to succeed in education and to ensure they don't fall behind both socially and developmentally.

(source: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/attendance.aspx>)

It is the policy of Catherine McAuley College:

- To ensure that all students reach their personal, social and academic potential through high levels of daily school attendance
- To ensure that students enrolled at Catherine McAuley College attend full-time unless there is an exemption for a child
- Monitor student attendance at least twice a day and in accordance with legislative requirements
- Record the reason for a student's absence
- Enact the Attendance Improvement Procedure should a student's attendance become unsatisfactory

1.1 Authorised Absence from Class

In considering regular attendance, the following reasons will be deemed as an authorised absence and therefore will not contribute to the attendance requirement:

- Compulsory Activities: camps, retreats, VET courses, work experience, College liturgies, subject based excursions and timetable classes at VCE level
- Non-compulsory Activities: SRC Commitments, College representative sport, College debating, College representative performing arts
- Serious illness with a medical certificate
- Bereavement

1.2 Unauthorised Absence from Class

In considering regular attendance, the following reasons will be deemed as an unauthorised absence and therefore will contribute to the attendance requirement:

- No Parental/Guardian notification of absence
- In the case of a Parent/Carer notified absence it must be able to determine from the records, that the given excuse is reasonable in nature
- Late arrival/early departure without exemption or notification
- Optional external commitments (e.g. performing arts, sport, debating, music, debutante balls preparation, etc.)

1.3 Unwell Students

Should a student become unwell at school during class or breaks, on an excursion or offsite activity, they are to report to their teacher, a staff member or the General Office who will then contact a Parent/Carer.

1.4 Prolonged Absences – Authorised and Unauthorised

Where a student's absence is prolonged (1 week) and is either authorised (Parent/Carer has notified the College) or unauthorised (no notification given), the Parent/Carer must be contacted as a matter of wellbeing. Where prior has been given (e.g. a family holiday) a Parent/Carer is required to complete an 'acknowledgement of a student absence' form.

1.5 VCE/VET/VCAL Attendance

VCE/VET students are expected to attend all scheduled classes. If a student has attendance below 90% as reported in SIMON, the teacher will contact the family advising of the attendance concern. Attendance below this threshold may result in a "Not Satisfactory" result in that Unit **as there is an 80% attendance requirement for satisfactory completion of a Unit** (Refer to Student VCE and student VCAL Guide Books for further information).

1.6 Pastoral Provision

Pastoral Provision for personal circumstances may be granted at the discretion of a member of the College Leadership Team.

1.7 College Special Activities

As per our 'enrolment policy' it is expected that Parents/Carers will support the College in the Catholic Education of their children. Special activities (such as Mercy Day, sport carnivals, liturgies, retreats, encounter and reflection days, etc.) form part of the curriculum and as such are normal school days. Attendance is compulsory unless exemption is sought prior to the day or a medical certificate is produced to support the non-attendance.

1.8 Student Leadership Opportunities

Students who have a pattern of unauthorised school non-attendance, particularly on days where there are College special activities (e.g. College sports carnivals, liturgies, Mercy Day, etc.) may be ineligible to apply for College Leadership Positions.

1.9 Extra-Curricular Attendance

To develop the whole person, the College's academic program is enhanced by a wide range of extracurricular activities, and students are encouraged to participate. However, such participation should not jeopardise the required attendance for all academic classes or academic performances.

1.10 Absences as a Result of Holidays Taken During the School Term

At times students or their families seek to take holidays during the school term. When a student begins to select VCE/VET or VCAL-based subjects there are clear attendance expectations which are required by the VCAA. The College is not able to make allowances for students seeking to miss school for a family holiday or attendance at a single day non-school-based activity. Students who elect to participate in a holiday while undertaking VCE or VCAL studies (including VET), place themselves at considerable risk of failing VCE subjects they are undertaking.

A student missing a school day to attend an event (e.g. a concert in Melbourne) cannot request that school-assessed coursework (SAC) be rescheduled, which will result in the student not being scored for this SAC.

For a student undertaking an extended family holiday in Year 7-10, the College does not provide an individual learning program as part of the student's absence.

Duty of Care

Catherine McAuley College is a Child Safe School. We owe all students a duty of care to take reasonable measures to protect them from risks of injury that should have been reasonably foreseen. All on and off-site activities require appropriate supervision and greater measures may need to be taken for younger students or students with disabilities to meet this duty of care. The College's risk assessment procedures and emergency management plan provide the processes for ensuring the above is achieved.

Minimum Standards

The College monitors its compliance with the minimum standards in line with Ministerial Order 870 in an ongoing manner.

Legislation:

This Policy is mandated by:

- Victorian Registrations and Qualifications Authority

- Mercy Education
- Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority

Related Policies, Procedures and Forms:

- Enrolment Policy
- Catherine McAuley College Vision & Mission Statement
- Monitoring and Recording Student Attendance Procedure
- Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited - [Duty of Care Framework](#)
- Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited - [Duty of Care Delegations Manual](#)

Date Last Reviewed:	June 2021
Policies folder	Care, Safety and Welfare of Students/Attendance and Absence Policy
Staff Handbook Section	Pastoral Care/Intervention and Managing Behaviour – sub-heading Student Behaviour Policies