



Attendance Policy



Updated: 2025

Endorsed by: Claire Slater (Principal)

Mount Helena Primary School is governed by the Department of Education, Student Attendance in Public Schools Policy, July 2021.

Overview

In accordance with the Department of Education, Mount Helena Primary School monitors student attendance and works with other agencies and service providers to maximise student engagement with learning. It does this in a way that builds shared responsibility for student attendance between schools, students, parents and the broader community.

Purpose

School attendance is an indicator of student safety, belonging, achievement and competence. School connectedness is a protective factor for student wellbeing. A genuine connection to school provides opportunity for student voice to be heard and for all students to feel valued and to be recognised as a valuable member of the school community.

Student attendance is strengthened by environments which:

- create cultural safety,
- develop a sense of belonging,
- empower student voice,
- create an intellectually stimulating environment,
- establish an orderly and accessible learning environment and
- create classrooms that support learning.

Procedures

In line with the Department of Education, Student Attendance in Public Schools Procedures, July 2021, Mount Helena Primary School will:

- Promote the importance of regular attendance with parents/caregivers and the wider community;
- Build and strengthen relationships with students, parents/caregivers, communities, government and non-government agencies;
- Ensure the curriculum is tailored to address all students' needs;
- Provide safe and welcoming learning environments;
- Develop plans in partnership with students, families, communities and other agencies to improve student attendance;
- Maintain accurate attendance records;
- Respond to Department requests for reporting and disclosure of attendance data; and
- Manage alternative attendance arrangements where these are in the best interests of the student.

The following guiding principles will be considered when addressing attendance concerns:

- It is in the best interest of the student, parent and school that connectedness and positive relationships are nurtured and preserved.
- The reasons for non-attendance are explored and addressed.
- Thorough documentation is maintained.
- A case management approach is used incorporating monitoring, planning and review.



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Monitoring

Mount Helena Primary School will utilise the following to monitor student attendance:

- Student Attendance Reporting (Via the DoE portal),
- Regular Class Attendance Analysis Report (via Compass),
- Percentage Attendance Report (via Student Attendance Reporting and Compass)
- At the completion of each Term: Attendance Summary Report, Unexplained Absentees Report and Longitudinal Attendance Report
- Parents /caregivers will be contacted by email if their child's attendance falls below 90%-80% (per term).
- An Attendance Plan will be put into place if a student's attendance falls below 80% (per semester).
- Staff and the School Community will be given regular updates on Whole School Attendance Data.

Parent / Caregiver roles and responsibilities

Student is unwell or has an appointment	<p>It is the parent/caregiver's responsibility to notify the school of the reason for absence. Written/verbal explanation of child's absence can be done through;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compass app• School website: www.mounthelenaps.wa.edu.au• Email to school: mounthelena.ps@education.wa.edu.au• Phone call to the school: 9573 0000• Note or verbal communication to the teacher, or administration staff• Email directly to classroom teacher, via Compass
Student arrives late to school	<p>Late arrival is arriving after 8:45am siren. Student is to present to front reception where they will receive a 'Late Pass' to hand to the classroom teacher.</p>
Planned Leave and Vacation Leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All planned leave needs to be in writing to the Principal. Principal will enter the relevant coding into Compass.• Families taking Vacation Leave during school terms is discouraged.• Vacations will be assessed according to the circumstances for the holiday.• Teachers are not obliged to provide work to students on unapproved leave. Teachers will provide students with a journal to complete if the leave is authorised.
Illness/Health Conditions	<p>Where a student has a mental or physical illness and/or health care needs which may impact on their ability to attend the usual school site, the Principal will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inform the parent/caregiver of a student under the age of 18 and the student of the student's right to an educational program and actively engage the parent and the student in negotiating access to a relevant program.• Arrange access to an educational program for a student who has a physical and/or mental health condition and/or health care needs and who cannot attend the regular site.• Follow the procedures described in School of Special Educational Needs: Medical and Mental Health (SSEN:M&MH).



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Staff Roles and responsibilities

Class Teachers	Front Office Staff	SAER Coordinator
Record attendance in Compass 8:45am and 12pm daily.	Record late arrivals into Compass for all students arriving after 8:45am (code L).	Provide regular parent/caregiver information on attendance.
Update Compass attendance when provided with explanation from parent/caregiver (using 'Add note' feature).	Provide student with 'Late to school' pass, which is handed to class teacher.	Whole school attendance percentage figures provided to staff twice per term (Week 4 and 8)
Teacher must be handed a 'Permission to take home slip' prior to releasing a child early to a parent/caregiver.	Record all reasons provided by parents/caregivers that are received through email or via phone. Initial information.	Provide parents/caregivers with letters attendance category and percentage through Compass each term.
Phone call / email follow-up when a student is absent from school for more than two consecutive days without explanation.	Provide parents/caregivers with letters outlining unexplained absences each fortnight Wk 2, 4, 6, 8, through Compass.	Identify 'at risk' students and implement attendance support plan as required, and in-line with DoE guidelines, in consultation with Principal. Use Attendance Toolkit via IKON.
Refer to SAER DP where student has frequent/repeated absences and/or late arrivals.	Early leavers to be signed out via front reception. Parent/caregiver to be provided with 'Permission to take home' slip.	Promote student attendance through positive reminders across the school communication platforms including website, app, Compass and newsletters.
Phone call / email follow-up for students who are consistently late.		



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Attendance Targets School Focus Strategic Targets

- Whole school attendance to be at or above 92%
- To outperform 'like schools' in both the Regular Attendance and Overall Attendance Categories.

Students 'at risk'

Indicated Risk Category 80% - 90%

- Teachers to be in regular contact with parents/caregivers of students in this category.
- Attendance to be closely monitored by the classroom teacher.
- Where the teacher has concerns regarding student progress, teacher to complete referral for administrative management via a case management approach, using 'Request for Attendance Support' (SAER referral form).
- Establish Attendance IEP with support of Deputy Principal, including liaison with parent/caregiver regarding possible home incentives.
- Email / letter sent home to parents informing of attendance % and the impact this can have on progress.
- Link with School Psychologist or Chaplain as required, with parental/caregiver support.

Moderate at Risk Category 60% - 80%

- If attendance falls to below 80% Principal will make contact with the family to identify student's attendance concerns.
- Where medical reasons are the cause, medical certificate to be requested, as evidence for transparency.
- Principal to be notified.
- An Attendance Plan will be in place as required.
- Participation and Engagement Team, North Metropolitan Education Regional Office, to be notified.

Severe at Risk Category <60%

- Principal to conduct case management approach with parents to address identified attendance concerns. Link into additional services as required.
- Where medical reasons are the cause, medical certificate to be requested, as evidence for transparency.
- Principal to work with Participation and Engagement Team, North Metropolitan Education Regional Office.

References:

Student Attendance in Public Schools Policy, 2021

Student Attendance in Public Schools Procedures, 2021

