Attendance Procedures

PROCEDURE: Student Attendance

Contents

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Student Attendance

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to describe Marymount College's approach to the consistent management of student attendance to meet legislative requirements and sector standards.

Marymount College recognises that every day of attendance in school contributes towards a student's learning and that maximising school attendance enhances academic outcomes. Research shows direct correlations between poor attendance and student disengagement, exposure to 'at risk' behaviours and poor academic, employment and social outcomes.

Student attendance is a shared responsibility of students, parents/legal guardians and the school. A positive school culture is developed by a welcoming, safe, inclusive, and supportive school environment that promotes student engagement with learning, student wellbeing and positive relationships.

Marymount College is committed to promoting the key messages of the 'Every Day Counts' campaign:

- • All children should be enrolled at school and attend school every day.
- • Schools should monitor, communicate and implement strategies to improve regular school attendance.
- • Truanting and chronic absenteeism can place a student in an unsafe situation and impact their future employability and life choices.
- • Attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community.

Our school has a responsibility to record student attendance and respond to instances of irregular attendance. Staff use the eMinerva system to record student attendance and absences. It is important for our school to investigate the patterns and underlying causes of non-attendance so that appropriate strategies addressing the specific type of absenteeism can be implemented.

Our school, and by virtue of their employment, our teachers, are legally required to monitor and record attendance of students in their care on a daily basis, whether absent or present in class, on excursion or at a school-based activity.

Student attendance goal

Students, legal guardians, and staff will work together to ensure all students meet the school expectation of 90% or above attendance and zero unexplained absences.

90% attendance equates to:

- 3 days absence per term
- 6 days absence per semester
- 12 days absence per year

Red	Chronic Absenteeism – below 90%
Light Green	Regular Attendance – Above 90%- below 95%
Dark Green	Aspirational Attendance – 95% and above

Acceptable reasons for student absences are:

- Illness
- Family trauma or bereavement
- Events of cultural significance
- Participation in school organised activities, e.g. work experience
- Representation in elite sporting or cultural activities e.g. South Coast Sporting Trials

Unacceptable reasons for absence are:

- Truancy
- Shopping expeditions with or without parent or carer
- Helping at home or at parent/caregiver's place of work
- Part-time or casual work (including travel to or from work)
- Appointments which could be made out of school hours (e.g. haircuts, driving lessons, dentist etc.)
- Staying home to study/complete assessment/homework
- Family holidays
- Birthdays

Attendance Matters

every student, on time, every day

Missing just 2 days a month from school amounts to 4 weeks of learning lost a year. That's a whole year of lost learning from Prep to Year 10! Monitor attendance trends regularly to make sure absences aren't adding up.

> Attendance records are required as part of a school's Workplace Health and Safety requirements and can be a critical factor in identifying serious student protection concerns.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

2.2 Roles and responsibilities

Our College has a responsibility to record student attendance and respond to instances of irregular attendance. It is important for our school to investigate the patterns and underlying causes of non-attendance so that appropriate strategies addressing the specific type of absenteeism can be implemented. Refer to document titled Marymount Attendance and Improvement Strategies.

Our College, and by virtue of their employment, our teachers, are legally required to monitor and record attendance of students in their care daily, whether absent or present in class, on excursion or at a school-based activity.

Legal guardians of children have a legal obligation, as set out in the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006, to ensure a child is enrolled at and attends school.

Class rolls, whether electronic or paper based, can be required as evidence in court and assist in establishing that a school has met their common law duty of care to students. Attendance records are required as part of a school's Workplace Health and Safety requirements and can be a critical factor in identifying serious student protection concerns. In addition, student attendance records are used for student reporting, fee allocation and government reporting.

2.21 Principals (or delegate) Responsibilities

BCE Require Principals (or delegates) to:
- Coordinate and implement this procedure
- Manage student attendance in consultation with the school community
- Engage with families to proactively promote high levels of student attendance
- Monitor non- attendance and re-engage students in partnership with legal guardians
- Ensure compliance of data entry in alignment with eMinerva requirements
- Ensure staff are made aware of the BCE student attendance policy and this procedure to ensure a copy of this procedure is provided to relief staff (i.e. Published on the school portal)
- Record and report attendance data in annual reviews
- Ensure relief staff are entered into WSS timesheets in order to gain access to eMinerva
- Ensure eMinerva training is part of the induction process for new staff and annual training for existing staff

2.22 Staff Roll-marking Responsibilities

BCE require ALL STAFF

- Ensure data is entered into eMinerva in an accurate and timely manner, at the beginning of Pastoral Care and each lesson/period and for activities (as per the flowcharts below)
- Follow up on eMinerva notifications of unexplained absences
- Inform Pastoral Leaders of 3+ days unexplained absence and 3+ unexplained consecutive lessons missed
- To ensure the Marymount College Attendance Policy and Procedures and Responding to Student attendance concerns are clearly communicated to all Legal Guardians and students via the College Website, assemblies, newsletters, enrolment package and Parent Portal
- To monitor student attendance through roll-marking and BI tool. Notify Pastoral Leaders of any concerns
- To maintain a welcoming, safe supportive school environment that promotes student engagement with learning, student wellbeing and positive relationships.
- When marking the roll, if teachers have received written information (note or email) from the legal guardian regarding a student's absence from school, the teacher will advise SAO and a Student Administration Officer will enter the details (including absence category) into a log in eMinerva.
- If a student has been previously marked 'present at school' but they are not in class (without permission), **the teacher is to email SBURstudentsafety@marymount.qld.edu.au that the student is not present.** A member of SAO or reception will then follow the 'Attendance Flowchart for missing students' to locate the missing student. The Student Behaviour Support Plan will be followed if necessary.

BCE require PASTORAL LEADERS

- To investigate the patterns and underlying causes of non-attendance so that appropriate support strategies can be implemented.
- To discuss individual attendance concerns with the student and/or Legal Guardian and offer support to Legal Guardian and student when attendance has fallen under expectation.
- To notify the relevant authorities if efforts to support the Legal Guardian and student to improve attendance has been unsuccessful.
- Pastoral Leader who receives communication from parents should advise SAO who will enter any information regarding future planned absences of students by entering a notified absence into eMinerva.
- Contact will be made by the Pastoral Leader if a student has frequent, but not consecutive absences.

BCE require SAO STAFF

- Any student absent from school without explanation requires same day follow up and reporting to legal guardians on the day of the absence. At Marymount College, this notification is made by SMS (if absent) to the student's main contact by the SAO.
- If the legal guardian has informed the student administration office of the absence, the Student Administration Officer will enter these details into a log in eMinerva.

- If there is no response from the initial parent/legal guardian (typically SMS) following notification of unexplained absence, schools are to follow up on the day of absence with the parent/legal guardian via a phone call
- If there is no response from the second attempt to contact the parent/legal guardian schools are to phone on the day of the absence another emergency contact listed on eMinerva to ask that person to notify the parent/legal guardian that the school is seeking a response
- If there continues to be no response from the parent/legal guardian to the unexplained absence, follow up is to continue each day until there is a parent/legal guardian response even if the student has returned to school

2.22 Staff Roll-marking Responsibilities

Role of the Pastoral Teacher: Attendance
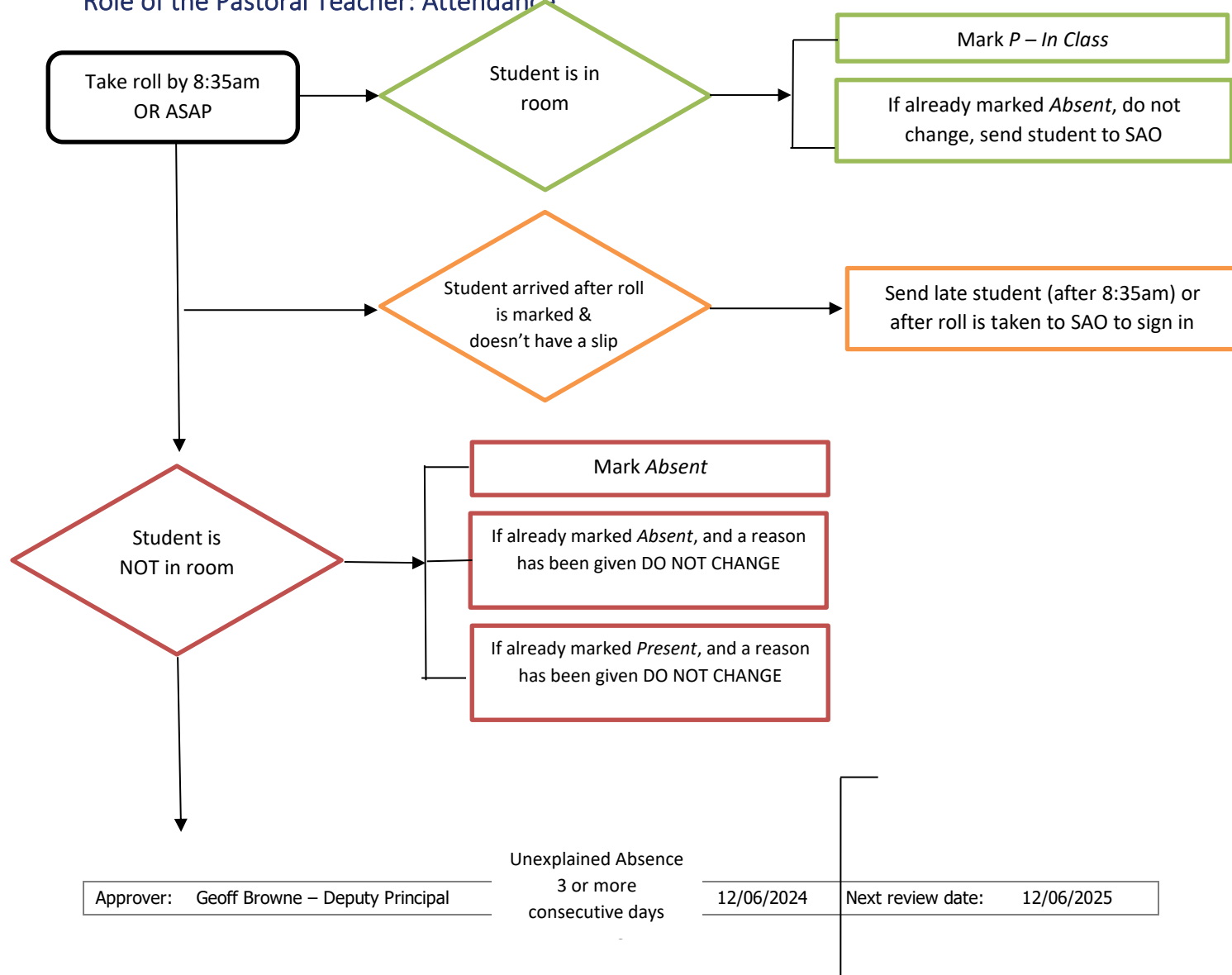
Role of Classroom Teacher: Attendance

Take roll in the first 10 minutes of class

Student is in room
- Mark P - *In Class*
- If marked *Absent* for any reason send student to SAO

Student arrived after roll is marked & doesn't have a slip
- Follow the RTP: Ask the question, give directions to be on time.
- Notify SAO that student has arrived so eMinerva can be adjusted.

Student is NOT in room
- Mark *Absent*
- If already marked *Absent*, and a reason has been given DO NOT CHANGE
- Phone/Email Main Contact
- If already marked *Present,* and a reason has been given DO NOT CHANGE
- If already marked P - *In Class* the teacher is to email SBURSAO@bne.catholic.edu.au and advise the student is not present.

Track Unexplained Absences

Frequent but not consecutive days of absence
- Pastoral Teacher notifies HOY
- HOY to make phone contact with Main Contact

Email/Note received for Unexplained Absence
- Pass on to SAO so eMinerva can be adjusted
- Email concerns to HOY

Role of Activity Teacher: Attendance

Take roll at the beginning of activity

Student is in activity
- Mark P – *and select correct activity (eg. Excursion/Camp, Sports/Art)*
- If marked *Absent* for any reason send student to SAO

Student arrived after roll is marked & doesn't have a slip
- Follow the RTP: Ask the question, give directions to be on time.
- Notify SAO that student has arrived so eMinerva can be adjusted.

Student is NOT in activity
- Mark *Absent - Unexplained*
- If already marked *Absent*, and a reason has been given DO NOT CHANGE
- If already marked *Present,* and a reason has been given DO NOT CHANGE
- If already marked P - *In Class* the teacher is to email SBURSAO@bne.catholic.edu.au and advise the student is not present.

Parents must seek approval from the Principal if your child is to be absent for an extended period (longer than three days of consecutive absence). (See page 19)

2.23 Legal Guardian Responsibilities

- To ensure your child is enrolled and attends school. This is a legal obligation, as set out in the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006.
- To make a written commitment to meet the Marymount College attendance goal upon enrolment of your child.
- To ensure your child attends school for the whole day on every scheduled school day unless:
  - Your child is too sick to leave the home or has an infectious disease or an injury preventing movement around the school.
  - A medical or dental appointment that could not occur out of school hours.
  - The College is provided with another genuine and acceptable reason preventing your child's attendance.
- To provide a satisfactory explanation for all absences on or before the morning of the day of absence.

- To ensure that your child attends compulsory school events including:
  - College Masses
  - Sporting carnivals
  - Camps
  - Retreats
  - Marymount Day
- To provide a prompt response to any text message, email or letter received regarding your child's absence from school, even if you think an error has been made.
- To seek approval from the Principal if your child is to be absent for an extended period (longer than three days of consecutive absence).
- To ensure that all student absences have been reported and explained to the school
- To contact school support staff (Pastoral Leader, Guidance Counsellors or Assistant Principal Pastoral) if your child is reluctant or refusing to attend school.
- To initiate or attend support meetings to improve your child's school attendance.
- To provide a dated and signed note, notify via Parent Portal attendance, BCE Connect Attendance explaining any reason for your child's late arrival at school.
  - To **not provide** your child with the username or password for accessing your parent portal.
- To provide a dated and signed note, notify via Parent Portal attendance, BCE Connect Attendance if your child is required to leave school early. (Please note that for student protection purposes, students in Year 7 – Year 9 require a Legal Guardian or Legal Guardian approved delegate to collect from outside Student Reception if their child is to leave school early.)

- To ensure that emergency contact information for your child is up-to-date.
- To plan holidays in school holiday time, not term time.

Providing Absence Notifications

This is important for the safety and wellbeing of all students. When a student cannot attend school for any reason, it is expected that the legal guardian will notify Student Reception by 8:00am on the day of absence.

It is College preference that ALL absence notifications are received by one of the methods below:

1. **Parent Portal**: Click on Report Student Absence
2. **BCE Connect App:** Absences
3. **In Person**: verbally or via a hand-written letter by the parent or carer. This may take the form of a medical certificate if the child has been absent for multiple days with illness.

Students must ensure days absent are explained by their Legal Guardian

2.24 Student Responsibilities

- ▢ To attend school for the whole school day, every day and be on time for all timetabled classes
- To not leave school during school hours without parent permission via the portal or a note and approval from their Pastoral Leader via their signature, and without obtaining an early departure slip from Student Administration Office (SAO).
- To always sing in at SAO if arriving to school later than 8:35am.
- To ensure work missed during any periods or days absent from school is completed.
- To monitor own attendance at the end of each term.
- To ensure days absent are explained by their Parent/Legal Guardian.
- To discuss day(s) absent with their class/Pastoral Care teacher if either attending regularly or getting your Parent/Legal Guardian's notification for an absence is difficult.

EXAM BLOCKS

- Students form Year 11 & 12 will only be at school for required exams throughout scheduled exam blocks and during the external assessment period.
- Students may have home study time when not attending for an exam or outstanding/incomplete assessment
- Students are not to be sighted in public areas (e.g. shopping centres) unless with a parent/guardian during school hours for the exam block.

3. PROCEDURE

- Attendance will be marked for all students each morning during Pastoral Care class by Pastoral Care teachers
- Attendance will be marked each lesson for all subject classes throughout the duration of the school day by subject teachers
- Attendance will be marked for all activities by the teacher responsible for the activity at its commencement
- Student Administration Officers will check this has been done for Pastoral Care classes at 9.00am.
- Assistant Principal will check subject classes have been marked daily
- Communication will be made to the Pastoral Care teacher by either SAO, Deputy Principal or Assistant Principal – Pastoral, if the Pastoral Care roll is not marked on time
- The Deputy Principal and Assistant Principal Pastoral will follow up with Subject teacher for a subject roll not marked
- The Deputy Principal will be advised of unmarked and incorrectly marked rolls
- Incorrectly marked rolls will be corrected by the teacher responsible for the class or on their behalf by a member of the Student Administration Team

3.1 Present categories in eMinerva

Students who are:	Will be marked:
In class	'Present – In Class'
Attending TAFE or work experience	'Present – Work/Study' by the VET Coordinator or a Career Development Officer
In Learning Support	*'Present* – Alternate Learning Activity'
In an alternate learning activity	'Present – Alternate Learning Activity'
With Guidance Counsellors	'Present – In-School Appointment'
In Sick Bay	'Present – In Sick Bay' by the Student Administration Officers
Participating in activities (excursion; camps etc.)	*'Present'* will be marked accordingly by the teacher responsible for the activity, who must select the appropriate category for the activity

Students will only be marked as 'Present – Not Required to Attend' upon instruction from College Leadership

3.2 Absent Categories in eMinerva

Students who are:	Will be marked:
Not in class, and notification has <u>not</u> been received from a legal guardian	'absent – unexplained'
Not in class, and notification has been received from a legal guardian to advise the student is unwell	'absent – illness'
Not in class, and notification has been received from a legal guardian to advise the student has an appointment	'absent – appointment'
Not in class, and notification has been received from a legal guardian to advise the student is absent for personal or family reasons	'absent – personal/family'

Students will only be marked as 'absent – not required to attend', 'absent – truant' or 'absent – internal suspension' upon instruction from College Leadership

All students arriving after 8:35am will sign in at SAO and will be given a late slip.

3.3 Unexplained Absences

An unexplained absence occurs when the student is not present at school and the Legal Guardian does not contact the school.

- A notification will be sent to the student's legal guardian by approximately 9.30 am each day. A school officer will follow up any unexplained absences by contacting the student's legal guardian.
- Past unexplained absences are indicated by the red unexplained absence alert icon on class rolls. When the Student Attendance Officer receives written explanation of the absence from the student's legal guardian, they will update the absence category and enter details into eMinerva.
- If a child protection order is in place, then the Child Safety Officer must be notified as well as the legal guardian.

3.4 Late Arrivals

A student is considered to have arrived late any time after the Pastoral Care Teacher has marked the morning roll.

- All students arriving after 8:35am will sign in at SAO and will be given a late slip. This slip needs to be presented to the teacher when arriving in class. If they do not have a late slip, they are to be sent to the student administration office (SAO) to sign in.
- If a student presents late to a subject class and does not have a:
  - late slip or
  - note from a teacher explaining why they are late or
  - signed Record Book
    they are to be sent to SAO to sign in.
- If pastoral care teachers observe a student has made a habit of arriving late, or is late for three consecutive days, they will contact the student's legal guardian as per this procedure. Pastoral Leader is advised outcome of the contact.

Students leaving early must be approved by a parent/legal guardian via the parent portal or provide a signed note
The Pastoral Leader will sign that they have sighted this note.

3.5 Early Departures

A student is considered to be leaving early any time before 2.57pm.

- All students leaving early must have a pre-entered notification on the Parent Portal or a parent/legal guardian signed and dated note. The Pastoral Leader will sign that they have sighted this note.
- Students must show their signed note to the class teacher when it is time to leave. Students will NOT be called to leave over the PA or collected by SAO staff.
- Only students who have notes signed by their Head of Year (or Deputy Principal/Assistant Principal Pastoral) or parental permission in the parent portal will be given permission to sign out in SAO.

3.6 SMS Messages

- Unexplained Absences: An SMS message will be sent to the student's legal guardian at approximately 9.30am each day advising of any 'Unexplained' absences.
- Any incorrect messages caused by incorrect roll-marking will be made known to the Deputy Principal.

3.7 Non-Marking of Electronic Roll

- If the school computer system is offline, hard copies of all Pastoral Care and class rolls will be provided by the Student Administration Officer. Once the system is online the Student Administration Officer will mark the roll so that the records are correct. This may be done the next day if necessary. Only administrators can amend marked rolls in consultation with the Deputy Principal/Assistant Principal Pastoral.
- During a lockdown or evacuation, the roll will not be marked. Students are head counted.

Red	Chronic Absenteeism – below 90%
Light Green	Regular Attendance – Above 90%- below 95%
Dark Green	Aspirational Attendance – 95% and above

3.8 Activities

- An activity will be entered into eMinerva for students attending excursions, camps and other school-based activities.
- **A yellow alert** will appear next to the student's name on class rolls to indicate the student has a timetable clash. The activity will be marked by the staff member responsible for the event, e.g. 'Present – Work Study'; 'Present – Excursion'. This attendance category will inherit through the rest of the student's timetable for the day.
- These attendance categories **must not be changed**, if the student is present at school send the student to SAO.

3.9 Attendance Marking Training

- School leadership will ensure all staff receive a written copy of the Attendance Policy and Procedures document and will review this document annually.
- A copy of the Attendance Policy and Procedures document will be included in Relief staff folders. School leadership will provide attendance marking training to teaching staff annually.

3.10 Relief and supervising staff

- Relief staff will have access to the school portal and eMinerva using their own BCE username and password and are to mark attendance in eMinerva for each class they are supervising.
- Teaching staff conducting supervision will mark attendance in eMinerva for the class they are supervising.

3.11 Part-time Students

- Part time students will sign in and out of SAO on arrival or departure as per arrangements made.

3.12 Mobile Attendance Application

- Teaching staff wishing to use this application can access it via their school portal and entering their BCE username and password. The User Guide – Mobile Attendance Application should be read prior to use.
- NB. Mobile Attendance Application is not to be used for marking the morning Pastoral Care roll.

3.13 Exam Block

- Students taking an exam will have their exams recorded as an activity and they will be marked when present for their exam.

Approver:	Geoff Browne – Deputy Principal	Issue date:	12/06/2024	Next review date:	12/06/2025

16

4. PERFORMANCE

The school will perform high-level checks of this procedure annually and a detailed review at least every two years.

5. LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

"Parents of children of compulsory school age have a legal obligation to ensure that their children are enrolled in school and attend for every day of the educational program in which they are enrolled.

Parents of students in the post compulsory phase have a legal obligation to ensure that these students participate full-time in an eligible option."

Compulsory Schooling and Compulsory Participation

The Queensland Government's education policy states that:

"Parents of children of compulsory school age have a legal obligation to ensure that their children are enrolled in school and attend for every day of the educational program in which they are enrolled.

Parents of students in the post compulsory phase have a legal obligation to ensure that these students participate full-time in an eligible option."

Students have two phases of schooling: The Compulsory Schooling Phase and The Compulsory Participation Phase.

The Compulsory Schooling Phase

- Starts the year a child turns 6 or starts Prep.
- Ends when the child turns 16 or finishes Year 10, whichever occurs first.
- During this phase, Legal Guardians have a legal obligation to ensure their child attends school every day.

The Compulsory Participation Phase

- Starts the year the child stops being of compulsory school age (i.e. reaches the age of 16 or completes Year 10)
- Ends when the child:
- Gains a Senior Certificate, Certificate III or Certificate IV; OR
- Has participated in eligible options for two years after the completion of the Compulsory Schooling Phase; OR
- Turns 17.
- During this phase, Legal Guardians have a legal obligation to ensure their child meets the attendance requirements of the eligible option of their choice.

6. Frequently Asked Questions

1. When a student has a discrepancy in their attendance or has a part day absence, Marymount College will take the following actions:

    - The student will be informed of the discrepancy or part day absence and will report to SAO or the relevant Pastoral Leader to explain the discrepancy or absence.
    - Where it is necessary for further clarification, the parent or carer will be contacted by the Head of Year (by email or telephone call) to determine if there is a reasonable excuse for the discrepancy or part day absence (Director General's Guidelines ss176 and 239 of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006).
    - Records of contact with parents and carers regarding absences will be recorded on Engage.

2. When a student is absent without explanation for a period between 1 to 3 days, Marymount College will take the following actions:

    - The Pastoral Care Teacher speak to the student and may contact home to investigate the reason for the student's absence and offer support if required.
    - The Pastoral Care Teacher will notify SAO to adjust the student's attendance records if required.
    - Records of contact with parents and carers regarding absences will be recorded in Engage.

3. When a student is absent for three or more days or when a pattern of absences has been identified, Marymount College will take the following actions:

    - The parent or carer will be contacted by the Pastoral Care Teacher (by telephone call) to
        - Determine if there is a reasonable excuse for the absence/s (Director General's Guidelines ss176 and 239 of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006.
    - If there is no reasonable excuse for the absence, the Pastoral Care Teacher will inform the Pastoral Leader to follow up.
    - The Pastoral Leader will make contact with the parents and request an intervention meeting. At this intervention meeting, support strategies to enhance attendance and engagement will be offered. These include but are not limited to:
        - Working with the student to track attendance
        - Applying a reward/incentive-based program for improved attendance
        - Work with the teachers of the student to implement engagement strategies.
        - Strategies outlined in the Attendance Improvement and Engagement Plan
    - If, after three weeks, a student is still not attending school regularly, the College will follow the processes for managing student absences as outlined in the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 – SMS-PR-043. This includes:
        - Sending a letter outlining attendance requirements and the student's attendance record.
        - Possibly reporting the persistent and/or unexplained absences to:
            - Queensland Police Service
            - Department of Child safety.
    - Records of contact with parents and carers regarding absences will be recorded in Engage.

> Marymount College does not support the practice of scheduling holidays during term time and does not consider the taking of a holiday during term time an authorised explanation of absence from school.

4. **When truancy has been identified, Marymount College will take the following actions:**

    - Parents will be contacted by the appropriate Pastoral Leader or member of the College Leadership Team to address the student's specific behaviour;
    - Marymount College will respond to the student's behaviour as outlined in its Student Behaviour Support Plan.

5. **Where there is prolonged absence due to illness or medical condition:**

    - In times of prolonged absence due to illness or a medical condition, academic support may be provided appropriate to the student's needs at the time. Students have a responsibility to request and complete any missed work and/or assessments once they have returned to school. Parents can request work from teachers to be completed at home by contacting:
        o Assistant Principal Senior Curriculum (Years 10-12)
        o Assistant Principal Junior Curriculum (Years 7-9)

6. **Where holidays are scheduled during term time:**

    Marymount College does not support the practice of scheduling holidays during term time and does not consider the taking of a holiday during term time an authorised explanation of absence from school.
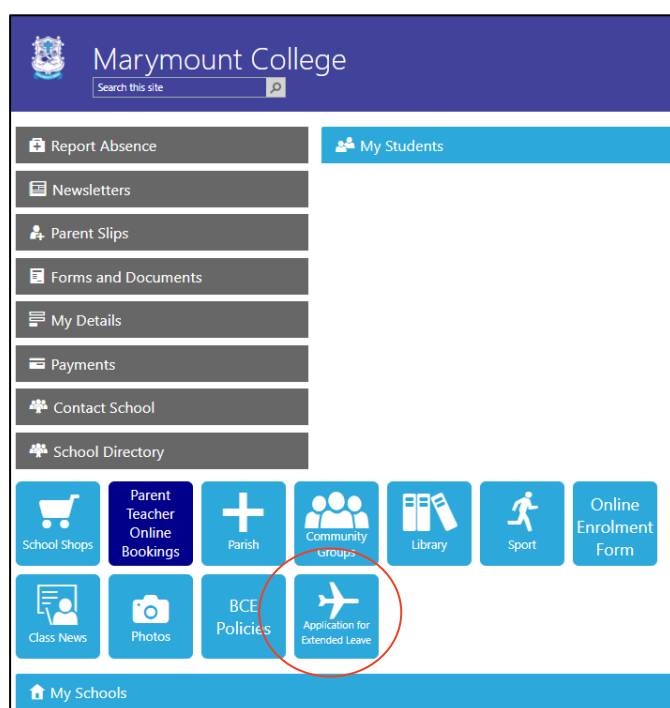
All requests for extended student absence must be made by a parent, two weeks in advance to the Principal.

1. Log into the Parent Portal
2. Select the 'Application for Extended Leave' icon
3. Complete the online form
4. You will receive an automatic email confirming your request has been received.

PROCEDURE:
Student Attendance

7. Can I check my child's attendance?

Parents can easily check their child's attendance in the Parent Portal

1. Log into the Parent Portal
2. Click on your child's photo
3. Select the heading 'Attendance'
4. The **Absences** tab will show percentages Hover over the blue pie chart for percentages
5. The **Absences-YTD** tab will show each lesson that your child has been marked absent
6. The **Absences by Month tab** will show absences each month for your child's entire enrolment at a BCE school