Mid North Education Centre

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Attendance Procedure

Purpose

Mid North Education Centre is committed to supporting every student to attend school regularly, arrive on time, and participate in learning to the best of their ability.

Regular attendance supports student learning, wellbeing, safety, engagement and connection to school. This procedure outlines local expectations and processes for attendance in line with Department for Education requirements.

Scope

This procedure applies to:

- all students enrolled at Mid North Education Centre
- parents/carers
- all staff with responsibilities for student attendance, supervision, communication and record keeping

This procedure should be read in conjunction with relevant Department for Education policies and procedures, including:

- Attendance policy
- Attendance at school procedure
- Exemption from school procedure
- Late arrivals and early departures guidance
- other related wellbeing, child protection and duty of care requirements

Attendance Expectations

All students are expected to attend school on every day that instruction is provided unless there is an approved reason for absence.

Attendance Includes:

- being at school every day instruction is provided, unless there is an approved reason
- arriving on time
- remaining at school until dismissal time unless collected early for an approved reason
- participating in the educational program offered

School hours:

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday
8:45am to 3:15pm
Tuesday
8:45am to 2:00pm

Students should not arrive before supervision begins unless alternative arrangements have been approved.

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Supervision, Arrival and Collection

Morning Supervision:

- Yard duty supervision begins at **8:30am**.
- Students may enter from **8:30am**.
- Personal cars and taxis may access the ramp before 8:30am, however students remain the responsibility of the parent/carer or transport provider until student entry and supervision commence.

Late Arrivals:

- A parent/carer or staff member must support the student to sign in at administration.
- Late arrival details must be recorded in accordance with school processes.

Early Departures:

- Students leaving before dismissal time must be signed out through administration by a parent/carer or other authorised person.
- Early departures must be recorded in accordance with school processes.

End of Day Collection:

- Parents/carers collecting students are required to come to the administration area.
- Staff will support students to transition safely to their parent/carer or transport provider.

Approved Reasons for Absence

Approved reasons for absence may include:

- illness or injury
- medical, therapy or specialist appointments
- cultural or religious obligations
- approved family circumstances
- department-approved exemptions
- other reasons approved by the Principal

A student must not be absent simply because of a perceived risk of illness unless this is supported under department requirements.

Where absence is ongoing, frequent or extended, the school may request further information or documentation to support attendance planning and record keeping.

Parent/Carer Responsibility for Notifying Absence

Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring their child attends school every day instruction is provided unless there is an approved reason for absence.

Parents/carers must:

- notify the school of an absence preferably on the same day
- provide a reason for absence within 3 days at the latest
- advise the school in advance where a planned absence is known
- provide relevant medical or supporting documentation when reasonably requested for prolonged, frequent or unclear absences
- inform transport providers, where relevant, when a student will be absent

Absences can be reported by calling the school on 8632 1091.

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Recording Attendance

Mid North Education Centre will maintain accurate attendance records in accordance with Department for Education requirements.

The school will ensure:

- attendance is marked daily
- unexplained absences are identified promptly
- written explanations, medical certificates and other relevant attendance records are maintained appropriately

Leaders will ensure staff understand their responsibilities for marking rolls and recording attendance.

Response to Unexplained Absence

Where no reason for absence has been received:

- the school will make reasonable efforts to contact parents/carers as soon as practicable
- the absence will be recorded as unexplained until a reason is established
- unexplained absences will be followed up and updated in school records
- leadership will ensure follow-up occurs within 3 days

Timely contact with families supports student safety and wellbeing and helps the school respond appropriately.

Support for Attendance Concerns

Mid North Education Centre recognises that some students may experience significant barriers to attendance due to disability, medical needs, mental health, trauma, family circumstances or other complex factors.

The school will work collaboratively with families, relevant staff and external agencies where appropriate to support attendance and participation.

Support strategies may include:

- family contact and problem-solving
- individual attendance planning
- wellbeing support
- reasonable adjustments
- health support planning
- gradual return-to-school planning
- negotiated short-term adjustments in line with department requirements
- referral for additional departmental advice or support where appropriate

Any modified attendance arrangements, exemptions or adjusted programs must be implemented in line with Department for Education procedures and approval requirements.

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Attendance Concern Thresholds and School Response

The school will monitor attendance patterns and respond early to concerns.

Under department procedure:

- Habitual non-attendance means 5 to 9 absences in a term
- Chronic non-attendance means 10 or more absences in a term

Local Response Guide

Strong attendance / no immediate concerns

- Continue positive communication with family
- Encourage ongoing regular attendance and punctuality

Emerging attendance concerns

- Monitor attendance pattern
- Make contact with family to discuss barriers and supports
- Reinforce expectations for regular attendance and punctuality

Habitual non-attendance (5 to 9 absences in a term)

- Teacher and/or leadership contact family
- Review reasons for absence
- Consider support strategies and reasonable adjustments where relevant
- Document agreed actions

Chronic non-attendance (10 or more absences in a term)

- Leadership-led attendance review
- Attendance Improvement Plan or other documented support plan considered
- Further departmental advice, Attendance Hub or Attendance Officer referral considered where appropriate
- Additional safeguarding or wellbeing action taken where required

The school may also respond to patterns of:

- repeated lateness
- frequent early departure
- recurring partial attendance
- repeated illness absence without adequate explanation
- unexplained absence

Exemptions

Where appropriate, parents/carers may be required to apply for an exemption when seeking to take their child out of school, such as for family travel or holiday.

Exemptions must be managed in line with the Exemption from school procedure.

The Principal may approve exemptions only within delegated authority. Longer or specific exemption types may require further approval under department procedure.

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Students with Disability, Health or Complex Needs

Mid North Education Centre is committed to inclusive attendance practices.

Where attendance is affected by disability, medical needs, mental health or other significant barriers, the school may work with parents/carers, health professionals and relevant department staff to develop:

- an individual attendance plan
- a health support agreement
- a gradual return-to-school plan
- adjusted attendance arrangements consistent with department procedures
- an exemption where approved

The school will seek to maximise each student's attendance, participation, health, safety and wellbeing.

Responsibilities

School leaders

School leaders will:

- promote regular attendance and punctuality
- ensure attendance is recorded accurately and on time
- ensure unexplained absences are followed up
- support staff to implement attendance procedures consistently
- work with families where attendance concerns arise
- monitor students at risk of habitual or chronic non-attendance
- seek additional advice or support where appropriate

Staff

Staff will:

- mark attendance accurately in line with school processes
- follow up attendance concerns with leadership as required
- support students to engage positively in learning
- communicate concerns about attendance, lateness or early departures
- contribute to support planning where needed

Parents/carers

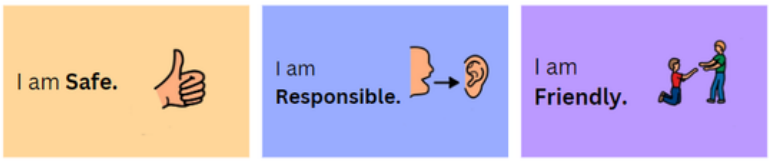
Parents/carers are expected to:

- ensure their child attends punctually on every day the program is offered
- notify the school of absence preferably on the same day and within 3 days at the latest
- provide relevant information that supports attendance planning
- work with the school to address barriers to attendance
- apply for an exemption where appropriate

Students

Students are expected to:

- attend school every day the program is offered unless there is an approved reason
- arrive on time
- participate in learning to the best of their ability with the support provided
- remain at school until dismissal unless an approved early departure is arranged
- follow school values:



Communication with Families

The school will provide regular information to families about attendance expectations and the importance of everyday attendance.

Families are encouraged to contact the school if they need support with:

- attendance concerns
- medical or wellbeing barriers
- transport issues
- anxiety, disability or mental health needs
- planned absences
- re-engagement following extended absence

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