

Muhammadiyah Australia College

ATTENDANCE POLICY



Endorsed on:	April 2026
Endorsed by:	Board of Directors
Next Review:	April 2028

Purpose

To ensure Muhammadiyah Australia College:

- ensures every child is accounted for every school day
- maintains accurate attendance records for all students enrolled at the College
- implements mandated procedures for the recording and reporting of non-attendance and reasons for non-attendance.

Scope

This policy applies to all students enrolled at the College, their parents, guardians or carers, and all staff responsible for monitoring, recording, and supporting student attendance.

Principles

At Muhammadiyah Australia College we believe that attendance is a significant factor in students' success and learning achievement. Students need to attend school regularly to participate fully and gain maximum benefit from their school.

Daily attending at school enables students to participate in the College's educational program and is integral to ensuring students develop their social skills, peer friendships and support networks. Regular attendance means the College can:

- plan an organised educational program that is delivered in a consistent way and has continuity
- facilitate shared student learning experiences that support the educational program
- monitor student progress and adjust the educational program to meet student needs.

The College Attendance Policy provides a quality assurance procedure to ensure that students are always supervised, accounted for, and cared for, during school hours. The policy also provides the means for managing student attendance so that the learning progression for all students remains satisfactory.

Roles and Responsibilities

Students

Each student is responsible for:

- Attending school every required day attending all timetabled classes/school events punctually.
- Showing an explanatory note or medical certificate to their Homeroom teacher or the Administration Office the day after an absence has occurred, unless parents/carers have notified the College in advance by SMS, email or telephone.
- Advising their Homeroom teacher in advance of any known possible reason for future absence. (e.g. medical procedure, sporting requirements, in-term holidays).
- Reporting to the Administration Office when arriving late (after 9 am). An email, SMS, or note from a parent/carer detailing the reason for late arrival is required.

Parents /Guardians/Carers

As the primary educators of students, parents/guardians/carers must:

- Take all reasonable steps to ensure the student attends school each day.
- Avoid making non-essential appointments during the school day.
- Keep the College updated regarding parent/carer contact details.
- Inform the College of a student's absence prior to 9.00am on the day of the absence.
- Notify the College by email or in writing if a student is to be collected earlier than the designated school finishing time. If a student needs to be collected unexpectedly during the day, the parent/carer needs to complete an 'Early Leave Pass' at the Administration Office before leaving with the student.
- Communicate with the Homeroom teacher if, for any reason, the student is reluctant to return to school.
- Avoid arranging family holidays during the school term wherever possible. Where unavoidable, and the absence is for 5 days or more, notification of the absence should be given at least 2 weeks prior to the Homeroom teacher/Administration Office and the 'Student Leave Request Form' needs to be completed for approval. Negotiations with teachers may need to take place in order for work to be provided while away.

Teachers (Homeroom teachers and Specialist Teachers)

The Homeroom teachers are the first point of contact for students at the beginning of the day. They are responsible for:

- recording student attendance at least twice daily (Period 1 and Period 5)
- communicating with parents/carers about unexplained, ongoing or excessive absences
- contacting parent/carer if a student is absent for the 2nd day and contact has not been made by the parent to determine the reason for absence.
- ensuring all notes brought by students to explain absence are delivered to the Administration Office for recording purposes.
- noting the date(s) and reason of a student's proposed future absence and forwarding on to the Administration Office for recording.
- monitoring student absences and counselling students with ongoing attendance issues/concerns.
- liaising with parents/guardians/carers of students with ongoing attendance issues.
- alerting the sub-school leader or the College Principal if attendance becomes a concern.

Specialist teachers are responsible for recording attendance for each class and reporting to the Homeroom teacher, sub-school leaders or the Principal if there is any student missing from their class.

Sub-School Leader/Principal

The College Principal is responsible for overseeing the student attendance at Muhammadiyah Australia College. The Principal may delegate this responsibility to the Sub-School Leaders or a Vice Principal who will:

- Work in collaboration with homeroom teachers to respond to chronic absenteeism or school refusal issues.
- Determine the cause(s) of absenteeism or school refusal and develop strategies to expedite the students return to school.
- Organise parent meetings to determine causes of non-attendance.
- Liaise with Wellbeing staff and engage with family.

Monitoring Attendance

Daily Attendance

Muhammadiyah Australia College has implemented the following systems and procedures in order to monitor the daily attendance of students and identify absences from school or class:

- Homeroom teachers take the class roll promptly at the commencement of the school day (8.50am). All absences are recorded using an electronic attendance register.
- The admin officer will generate a report by 9.30 am and cross check against the absentee notifications that have been provided to the College for that day.
- For any unexplained absence, the Administration Office notifies the parents via SMS no later than 10 am.
- The second attendance is taken at the commencement of period 5, any missing student is reported to the admin officer and the Sub-School Leaders.
- The Sub-School Leaders will verify the student's absence and contact the parent immediately by SMS keeping evidence on the student file.

Excursions, special events

Where a student is absent from class, or absent, such for reasons of participating in a music program or participating in an excursion, the College Staff member responsible for supervising students on that excursion:

- informs College Staff at a College morning Staff Briefing on the day, as well as prior to the day if possible
- liaises with the Homeroom teacher to ensure that absence is appropriately recorded on the appropriate College Weekly Attendance Register
- maintains a separate attendance register for that excursion and special event, and file it in the staff member's personal records
- follows up with the Homeroom teacher any unexplained absences from the excursion and amend the College Weekly Attendance Register accordingly.

Reasonable Excuse

A record of the reason given for each absence will be retained by the College and the Principal will determine if the explanation provided is a 'reasonable excuse' for the purposes of the parents, carers or guardians meeting their responsibilities under the *Education Training Reform Act 2006* and this Attendance Policy.

The College understands that there will be occasions when students are unable to attend and have a reasonable excuse for that absence. Examples of a reasonable excuse may include but are not limited to:

- Illness, injury or medical event (a medical certificate required);
- Medical/dental appointment where out of hours appointments are not possible, (medical certificate required);
- Student involved in an accident, supported by medical certificate or note from parent, carer or guardian, as applicable;
- Observance of a religious or cultural event, supported by note from parent, carer or guardian;
- Student required to comply with another law, supported by note from parent, carer or guardian;
- Bereavement or attendance at a funeral of a relative or friend, supported by note from parent, carer or guardian.

The Principal may consider other reasons for absence provided on a case by case basis to determine if they constitute a 'reasonable excuse'.

If the College determines that a reasonable excuse has been provided, the absence will be marked as an 'approved absence'. If no explanation is provided by the parent, carer or guardian within five (5) school days of an absence, it will be recorded as an 'unapproved absence' and recorded on the student's file.

Approved Absences

If the College considers that the parent, carer or guardian has provided a reasonable excuse for the student's absence, the absence will be marked as an 'approved absence'. The Principal has the discretion to accept a reason given by a parent, carer or guardian for a student's absence.

If no explanation is provided by the parent, carer or guardian within five (5) school days of an absence, it will be recorded as an 'unapproved absence' and recorded on the student's file.

Unapproved Absences

The College considers the following examples of excuses which may be considered unapproved absences:

- Missing class school due to lateness i.e. sleeping in, missing bus or train
- Attending an event or activity which is not approved by the College in advance
- Extended holidays or absences without explanation
- Socialising with friends during school hours.

The assessment what constitutes an unapproved absence is at the discretion of the Principal.

Notification of Unsatisfactory Attendance

Where a student's attendance is unsatisfactory, the Homeroom teacher or the Student Wellbeing/Welfare Officer will contact the parents, carers and guardians directly to seek an explanation and to remind them of the obligation for the student to attend College daily. Where a student attendance is of concern, the College will work with the parent/student to complete the Attendance Improvement Plan (refer to appendix II).

Where parents, carers or guardians repeatedly fail to inform the College of absences the Principal will contact them directly seeking an explanation and to remind them of their obligation to report. Parents, carers or guardians will be regularly reminded to ensure that any changes to their contact details are communicated to the College.

Managing Non-attendance and Supporting Student Engagement

Where absences are of concern due to their nature or frequency, or where a student has been absent for more than five (5) days, the College will work collaboratively with parents, carers and guardians, the student, and other professionals, where appropriate, to develop strategies to improve attendance.

Strategies may include implementing an attendance plan, establishing a Student Support Group facilitated by the Student Wellbeing Officer, arranging support from relevant College wellbeing staff and/or referral to medical, mental health or allied health professionals for specialist support.

The College understands that some students may need additional support and assistance from time to time and will work with the student and the family to provide this support when it is required.

Attendance Register

Muhammadiyah Australia College keeps a register of the attendance of all students at the College in electronic form. The register of attendance records the following information for each student:

- the twice daily attendance checks
- absences
- reason for absence
- documentation to substantiate the reason for absence

The register is retained indefinitely and copies of information in the register are stored off-site at regular intervals.

Communication

This policy will be communicated to the College community via the College website and will be referenced in the Parent and Student Handbook. This policy will be included in the staff induction pack.

Related policies

- Child Safety Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Enrolment Policy
- Student Behaviour Management Policy

Appendix II: Attendance Improvement Plan

An Attendance Improvement Plan should be implemented for a student where their attendance is of concern. This Plan (using the template below) should be developed with the student, so they have ownership over the plan, together with the student's parent and any support worker where appropriate.

Student Name:	Class Group:	Date of Meeting
Attendees at meeting:		
Objectives of meeting:		
E.g. to support student to improve their school attendance		
Background – attendance data		
E.g. Over the past month/term the student has missed x days of school		
Analyse the student data and investigate relationship to such factors as day of the week, time of day, class/subject/timetable, gender/cultural groups, family obligations/commitments/issues		
The following areas are strengths and interests of the student.		
Outline the student's strengths and interests so that the plan can use these as a means of engaging the student		
The reasons the student finds it hard to get to school		
The following is an assessment of the student's work habits.		
Effort in class:	Initiative in class:	Class behaviour:
The student's attendance goals are (for example):		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To attend three days a week for the rest of term 2 2. To increase my attendance from 55% to 75% by the end of the term. 		
Ensure the student's goals are SMART goals – specific, measurable, achievable, timely & realistic		

The student will take the following actions to achieve their goal

Amongst other things, consider:

- Morning and bedtime routines to enable to get to class on time each morning at 9.30am.
- Technology in the bedroom

Staff will take the following actions to help the student achieve these goals

Amongst other things, consider:

- Adjustments to curriculum e.g. concentrating on core or favourite subjects for a period of time e.g. providing additional scaffolds
- A staged return or temporary part time attendance
- Referrals to community agencies/supports
- Identifying a school-based support person and/or student support group
- A referral to the Careers and Pathways Advisor

The student's parent will take the following actions to help the student achieve these goals

Amongst other things, consider:

- Morning and bedtime routines
- Technology in the bedroom
- Communication with the College
- Accessing support from community agencies
- A visit to the family GP for a check-up

The plan will be monitored in the following way:

Amongst other things, consider:

- Attendance data
- Tasks completed
- Participation in class
- Student observations
- Parent observations
- College observations from teaching and youth support workers

Implementation start date:

Review date:

Student/Parent Signature:

Principal/Teacher Signature: