



ATTENDANCE AND LEAVE POLICY

POLICY TITLE	ATTENDANCE AND LEAVE POLICY
DATE POLICY RATIFIED BY BOARD	JUNE, 2015 (G. DANHER)
LEGAL ADVICE SOUGHT	Based on advice from AIS
DATE OF POLICY REVIEW	
PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR POLICY DISSEMINATION	Principal
PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTATION	Principal

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STATEMENT OF CONTEXT AND PURPOSE

Rationale

All students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and activities every day of the school term. It is important that children develop habits of regular attendance at an early age. School attendance is not only important for academic progress, it also helps children develop social skills, such as friendship building, teamwork, communication skills and healthy self-esteem. Students who regularly miss school are at risk of missing out on learning the basic building blocks of each subject and may experience long term difficulties with their learning. Research on student school attendance suggests that if a student misses as little as 8 days in a school term, by the end of Primary School/Secondary School, they will have missed over a year of school. Research also shows that one day of school missed takes four days of effort to catch up on.

Moama Anglican Grammar School is committed to working with the members of its community to ensure that students attend school regularly and make the most of the educational opportunities that the School offers.

The following policies and procedures will be applied in addressing student attendance and absence.

Attendance

- Attendance is to be regular and punctual. No student may leave during school hours without formal approval.
- Attendance at Home Group and weekly Chapel/Assembly is mandatory for all students.
- Attendance at designated co-curricular activities, whether of a sporting, cultural or service nature, or involving excursions and camps, is a condition of enrolment at the School.
- Attendance and extended leave procedures are found on the school website.

Absence

- There are legal requirements for the School staff to be aware of the location of students each day. Parents are requested to advise, either by telephone or email to reception@moamagrammar.nsw.edu.au, any absences prior to 9.00am on the day of absence. Emails from parents / guardians are deemed to be the required "written notification". Students absent from the School for one or more days are to bring written notification with them on their return, signed by a parent/guardian, if the School has not already received notification, via reply to the electronic documentation sent by the school or other written communications. i.e. Email or Absence slip or written explanation.
- Absence from co-curricular activities. Should a student be unable to attend such an activity, training or practice, they are to obtain leave from the teacher concerned, giving as much notice as possible (via written communication, email, phone communication or direct personal contact)
- Absence not owing to sickness. Should a parent require a student to keep a special appointment that would interfere with school work or a co-curricular activity, a written request is required. Such an application, however, does not warrant the assumption that permission will be granted.

Late Arrivals

Students who arrive late are required to report to the School Office to sign in the Student Late Arrival Register. Unexplained or regular lateness may result in disciplinary action.

Extended Leave (3 or more subsequent school days)

The School policy is that all students should attend the School during scheduled classes on those days as advertised in the Calendar as being in term time. The policy covers both the academic and co-curricular programs of the School.

The only exceptions to the above should be for urgent medical matters and for compelling or compassionate reasons. Except for illness, (where the School must be notified by 9.00am of each day of absence), permission for a student to be absent from school must be obtained beforehand. A written explanation from the parent or guardian is required for every absence from the School. Parents/Guardians requesting extended leave (being 3 or more subsequent school days) for their children are required to meet with the Principal (or delegate) to outline the reasons for the extended leave.

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It is expected that any end-of-term travel bookings and arrangements will be made to occur after the final day of term and Presentation Evening. Requests for early leave or late return, for exceptional circumstances should be addressed to the Principal well in advance.

In addition, the NSW Department of Education has introduced a requirement for parents to complete an Application for Exemption from School Attendance. This form will be provided to parents/guardians following the interview with the Principal (or delegate) if the reasons for the extended leave are justified according to BOSTES guidelines. Parents have a right to remove their children from the School, but in doing so they act contrary to the School's wishes. Where parents do take their children away during term time a special program of work will not be set. Students must find out about and catch up on any work missed. Parents must understand that their child may face consequences. Usually no make-up tasks will be allowed for missing assessment tasks, tests and the like (i.e. scoring 0 on the tasks). There can be no expectation of staff re-teaching academic work that was covered in the student's unauthorised absence.

PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED IN MONITORING AND SUPPORTING STUDENT ATTENDANCE

In order to monitor and support regular student attendance, these procedures will be followed:

ABSENCE DETAILS	ACTION/RESPONSIBILITY	FOLLOW UP
1 day of absence	Administrative Staff will send an electronic document request to parent/guardian for explanation of absence that day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administration Staff record information in relation to absence/ or Tutor to inform Administration staff of discussion and outcome If satisfactory explanations/documentation are received, no further action is required.
3 consecutive days of "unexplained absence"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative Staff will send an electronic document request to parent/guardian for explanation of absence the day after the student returns to school. ROC discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information passed to Assistant to Head of School/Head of School Administration Staff record information in relation to absence/ or Tutor to inform Administration staff of discussion and outcome If satisfactory explanations/documentation are received, no further action is required. If satisfactory explanation/documentation is NOT received, Administration staff alert Head of School. Head of School (or delegate) contacts family to discuss reasons for absence
5 days of "unexplained absence" in a Term (These do not have to be consecutive absences.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative Staff will send an electronic document request to parent/guardian for explanation of absence the day after the student returns to school. Attendance alert sent to the Assistant to Head of School and Head of School Assistant to HoS/HoS contacts family to discuss reasons for absences Request to parent/guardian for explanation of absence note/documentation to be communicated to School within 7 days of student's last day of absence ROC discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The electronic document will be sent to the HOS for approval: If satisfactory explanations/documentation are received, no further action is required. If satisfactory explanation/documentation is NOT received, Administration staff alert Head of School. Further discussions with student and family will be held. "It's Not Okay to Be Away" & "Compulsory School Attendance" pamphlets distributed to student and family (Appendices 1&2) Student eligibility for inclusion in co-curricular activities judged on a case-by-case basis by Head of School
8+ days of "unexplained or unreasonable absences" in a Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of School and Head of Pastoral Care (or delegate) requests a meeting with student's family to discuss reasons for absence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are placed on an "School Attendance Strategy", a plan developed in consultation with the Head of Pastoral Care, Head of School and student family

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request to parent/guardian for explanation of absence note/documentation to be communicated to School within 7 days of meeting with HoFs ROC discussions Head of Pastoral Care (or delegate) to attend the meeting to assist in developing a School Attendance Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student eligibility for inclusion in co-curricular activities judged on a case-by-case basis by Head of School
15 days of "unexplained absence" in a Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance Alert reported to Head of School Head of School, Deputy Principal and Head of Pastoral Care request a meeting with student's family to discuss reasons for continued absence Request to parent/guardian for explanation of absence note/documentation to be communicated to School within 7 days of meeting with HoFs Head of Pastoral Care to assist in developing/modifying a School Attendance Strategy ROC discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Letter of Concern' in Relation to Compulsory Student Attendance sent to family and placed on Student File. Legal requirements of Schools and Parents in relation to Compulsory School Attendance outlined Principal notified of 'Letter of Concern' Student eligibility for inclusion in co-curricular activities withdrawn by Head of School/Deputy Principal
20/25 days of "unexplained or unreasonable absence" in a Term/Semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance Alert reported to Head of School/Deputy Principal Head of School/Deputy Principal requests a meeting with student's family to discuss reasons for absence. Head of Pastoral Care to attend. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal requirements in relation to Compulsory Student Attendance of the School and Parents outlined. Formal letter of explanation of steps to be followed if absences reach 30+ days in 100.
30+ days in 100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance Alert reported to Head of School/Deputy Principal Principal alerted of student absence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data on absences, where a student is absent for 30 days, is presented to the Principal. The Principal should access the mandatory reporters section of the Keep Them Safe website www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au to determine whether a report is required. If a 'report' is indicated, Principal completes the necessary documentation. Principal to determine if the family are notified of report.

Appendix 1: Michael Grose Parenting Ideas "It's not okay to be away" PDF
https://www.gslc.qld.edu.au/pdf/Insights_Its_not_okay_to_be_away.pdf

Appendix 2: Compulsory School Attendance brochure
http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/schoolsweb/studentssupport/programs/attendance/attend_parents.pdf

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