



# Our Lady of Mt Carmel School Mullewa

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## Attendance Guidelines and Procedures

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Created: 2016 Revised: 2017 Revised: 2020 Revised: 2021 Revised: 2026

### **RATIONALE**

The Mandate Letter of the Bishops of Western Australia requires that education be made available to all Catholic children in so far as this is possible.

At Our Lady of Mount Carmel, we believe that for a child to develop to their full potential, we will monitor and manage student attendance data to maximise each individual's opportunities to learn.

School attendance is compulsory from the calendar year in which a child begins Pre-Primary. The correct recording of student attendance is a legal requirement for teachers in schools in Western Australia.

### **EXPECTATIONS**

Parents and guardians are required to meet the following expectations:

- Ensure that their child attends school when required
- Promote and provide organisational support to their child for full attendance and participation at the school on all designated school days
- Ensure that their child arrives at school each day on time
- Notify the school of their child's absence as soon as possible on the first day of the child's absence
- Notify the school in advance if an absence of any period is planned
- Work cooperatively and collaboratively with the school to develop and implement improvement strategies when attendance has been inconsistent
- Work cooperatively with the school in supporting the child to return to school and reintegrate after prolonged absence
- Ensure that contact details for the child are correct and up to date.

## PROCEDURES

At Our Lady of Mount Carmel School, attendance records of students will be taken at the commencement of each day and after lunch. Attendance is marked in half-day increments. These increments; 8:50am to 12:40pm and from 12.40pm to 3:10pm.

In the case of illness or an unexpected absence we request that parents / carers notify the school by 9.00am.

Attendance events must be recorded using the online Attendance portal provided through the Catholic Education of WA's system wide preferred method through SEQTA.

Office staff will contact parents via SMS at 9.30am if a child is recorded absent and there is no information regarding a reason. If there is no response within one hour, office personnel will endeavour to speak with the parent or carer to determine the reason for absence. If they are unable to make contact, the next person listed as contact is to be called. If there is still no response verbally, via text, email or note, this will be recorded as an absence in SEQTA. Follow up letters are sent out for any unresolved absences. If the child is absent with no confirmation from a legal guardian, the Principal is to be informed and further investigation is required, whether a home visit or contacting other agencies to determine a child's whereabouts. This is to be recorded in SEQTA.

Attendance will be recorded as authorised or unauthorised. A request for a verbal explanation, a written note or email must be provided to the school, stating the date/s of absence and reason.

Late students who arrive to school after the school bell at 8.50am must be processed through the front office. The parent/guardian will need to complete the Student Sign In/Out Register in the administration office. The student will be entered as late into SEQTA.

Students who leave school early must be processed through the front office. The parent/guardian will need to complete the Student Sign In/Out Register in the administration office.

If a student has 2 unexplained days absent with no contact with school our Health and Wellbeing officer will follow the unexplained absentee Flow Chart (attached below)

Where a student's attendance is below 90% or is identified as a concern, the Principal will:

- investigate the reasons for the student's absence.
- organise a parent/teacher meeting and/or case conference at the earliest opportunity to identify issues concerning the student's absence; plan improvement strategies; and
- include identified attendance improvement strategies in a within the Pastoral care section of SEQTA.

When a student has been absent for up to ten consecutive days and no contact has been received from parents or caregivers Administration staff or the Principal (whoever is deemed most appropriate in the situation) will attempt to contact parents/caregivers in the first instance, and then other known familiar family members to attempt to ascertain the whereabouts of the student, and encourage their return to school. When the situation arises that a student has had a prolonged absence of fifteen consecutive days and when parents or caregiver cannot be contacted, then the support of outside agencies including the Catholic Education Office and possibly the Department of Child Protection will be involved to assist the school and family to address the situation

## PERSISTENT STUDENT ABSENCE

The principal will develop and implement an attendance improvement plan consisting of:

- a consultation phase;
- a formal meeting phase if attendance is not successfully restored through actions taken as a result of consultation; and
- a process to monitor and review engagement with any plan or agreement developed in the formal meeting.

The principal will document all intervention strategies used to address a student's absence, so that, should it become necessary to proceed to prosecution, it can be clearly established that all reasonably practicable steps to restore attendance have been taken.

### 3.4.1 MISSING STUDENTS – STUDENTS WHOSE WHEREABOUTS ARE UNKNOWN (SWU)

If a student cannot be located within 15 days of the start of an absence, and their parent/s cannot be contacted, the principal or delegated person will:

Refer to the Student Tracking System document located at [..\..\STUDENT\Students Whose Whereabouts are Unknown\Student Tracking Information Package - 2008\[1\]\(1\).pdf](#)

- phone the District Education Office in Geraldton to see if the student has been enrolled at another school. **MidWest DEO 9956 1600** PO Box 63, Geraldton WA 6530
- complete an SWU Request form and email it to the Student Tracking Coordinator at [Student.Tracking@education.wa.edu.au](mailto:Student.Tracking@education.wa.edu.au); this can be filled out on the computer. Place a copy of completed form in the students file, pastoral care section of SEQTA and in Admin Confidential.
- retain the student on the school's current enrolment register until email notification is received from the Student Tracking Coordinator that the student has been placed on the SWU list.
- Register can be checked on the Directors Line.

#### **Guidance**

- *The School Education Act 1999 requires that an explanation of a student's absence is provided within three school days from the start of the absence.*
- *For procedures which apply for students who cannot be contacted or located refer to Section 3.4.1 Missing Students - Students Whose Whereabouts are Unknown.*
- *Principals should request a medical certificate for prolonged absences that are due to sickness or injury.*
- *A student can be regarded as 'missing' when, within 15 days of the start of an absence, they cannot be located, their parent/s cannot be contacted, and the school has not received advice that the student is being educated elsewhere.*
- *The Student Tracking Coordinator processes the request and informs the school by email within 15 school days of receiving the request.*

In accordance with the School Education Regulations 2000 the school will retain all attendance records and contact and intervention strategies implemented in addressing a student's absence.

***OLMC Student Unexplained Absentee Flow Chart***

2 unexplained days absent/No contact with school

Note: SMS sent out from Admin via SEQTA @ 0930 daily

Phone call to guardian-Document correspondence in SEQTA

No answer- no response

Phone call daily- SEQTA entry

Admin will email student tracking post 15 consecutive absent days  
student.tracking@education.wa.edu.au

Student has not been sighted in the community-Notify Jill. Whereabouts Unknown

Discuss entering a Notice of Concern. <https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/department-of-communities/concerns-the-safety-or-wellbeing-of-child-or-young-person>

Liaise with The Department of Communities

Attendance Plan with student and family if deemed appropriate.

Referral to School Psychologist if social/emotional factors identified by staff.

Note: Continue to nurture connections and relationships with all families.