

Attendance and Exemption Policy

Purpose

Montessori International College values working with our families to support high attendance for our children. Regular school attendance is not only an essential and required aspect for meeting regulatory requirements but is essential to the child's coverage of the curriculum, their learning and development. Effective teaching and learning are dependent upon regular student attendance.

Under [s176 of the Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006](#), the parents of a child or young person who is of compulsory school age must ensure they are enrolled at a school and that they attend every school day for the educational program in which they are enrolled, unless the parent has a reasonable excuse.

Scope

Montessori International College's staff, students and parents/carers.

References

Legislation:

- [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006](#)
- [Education \(Accreditation of Non-State Schools\) Act 2001 \(Qld\)](#) [Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010](#)
- [Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 \(ACECQA\)](#):
- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) – www.acecqa.gov.au [Link to National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety](#)

Related Policies

- Delivery and Collection of Children Policy
- Enrolment Policy

Supersedes: N/A

Authorised by: Principal

Date of Authorisation: June 2025

Review Date: Every two years or when there are changes to relevant legislation.

Next Review Date: June 2027

Policy Owner: Principal

Definitions

Parent (from [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 s10](#))

- 1) A parent, of a child, is any of the following persons—
 - a) the child's mother;
 - b) the child's father;
 - c) a person who exercises parental responsibility for the child.
- 2) However, a person standing in the place of a parent of a child on a temporary basis is not a parent of the child.
- 3) A parent of an Aboriginal child includes a person who, under Aboriginal tradition, is regarded as a parent of the child.
- 4) A parent of a Torres Strait Islander child includes a person who, under Island custom, is regarded as a parent of the child.
- 5) Despite subsections (1), (3) and (4), if—
 - a) a person is granted guardianship of a child under the Child Protection Act 1999; or
 - b) a person otherwise exercises parental responsibility for a child under a decision or order of a federal court or a court of a State; then a reference in this Act to a parent of a child is a reference only to a person mentioned in paragraph (a) or (b).

Compulsory school age (from [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 s9](#))

- 1) A child is of compulsory school age if the child is at least 6 years and 6 months, and less than 16 years.
- 2) However, a child is no longer of compulsory school age if the child has completed year 10.

Compulsory participation phase (from [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 s231](#)) A young person's *compulsory participation phase* -

- 1) starts when they stop being of compulsory school age (i.e. turns 16 or completes Year 10 whichever comes first); and
- ends when the person -*
- 2) gains a Certificate of Achievement, Senior Statement, Certificate III or Certificate IV; or
 - 3) has participated in eligible options for 2 years after the person stopped being of compulsory school age; or
 - 4) turns 17.

Eligible option (from [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 s232](#))

An eligible option is a recognised education or training program or course, offered by a recognised provider, which will enable a young person to gain a Certificate of Achievement, Senior Statement and/or a Certificate III or IV. Eligible options and providers are listed in the following table:

Eligible Option	Provider
An educational program provided under the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld)	a State school
An educational program provided under the Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2001 (Qld)	a non-State school
A course of study under the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (Cwlth)	a registered higher education provider
A VET course under the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 (Cwlth)	a registered training organisation
An apprenticeship or traineeship under the Further Education and Training Act 2014 (Qld)	a registered training organisation
A departmental employment skills development program under the Further Education and Training Act 2014 (Qld)	the chief executive administering the Further Education and Training Act 2014

Exemptions and exceptions

For exemptions and exceptions from compliance with the compulsory schooling requirement, see [Chapter 9 part 3 and part 4 of the Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006](#).

Prep Enrolments

- 1) Prep is the first year of compulsory schooling. It is compulsory for Queensland children to undertake Prep prior to Year 1. Prep is a full-time program in primary schools, has a defined curriculum and an expected attendance of Monday to Friday, generally from 9am to 3pm.
- 2) Prep eligibility for children is from the beginning of the school year in which they will reach the age of 5 years by 30 June. Parents can use the Federal government's [online calculator](#) to see when your child should start Prep. Simply select your child's month and year of birth.
- 3) At Montessori International College, students are expected to begin the Montessori program from 3 years of age, with attendance from 8.00 am to 3.00 pm (Early Years) and 2.45 pm (Prep).
- 4) In our Montessori program, your prep-aged child will participate in one of our

Prep classrooms. The only changes that occur from the Early Years program are to the fee structure, CCS entitlements and reporting requirements.

Enrolment age variations

Parents enrolling their child in school have the option of an early or delayed start. Enrolment age variations may be due to a child's development and readiness, and could improve their ability to learn. Read more about early and delayed entry to Prep (Qld government information source). At MIC, it is expected that children begin our Montessori program at 3 years of age.

Delayed start to Prep

It is not compulsory for children to attend the Prep year as soon as they are old enough - 5 by 30 June in the year they enrol. Parents/carers can delay their entry by one year if they feel they are not ready, but when they start school, they should still start in the Prep year. Children can commence Prep at the beginning of the school year in which they turn compulsory school age (6 years and 6 months). If you would like to delay your child's entry into Prep, please contact the Principal/delegate before they are due to start their Prep year.

Procedures

Maintaining Rolls

- 1) The Enrolment Coordinator maintains a register of enrolments, electronically on FACTS, for compulsory school-aged children/adolescents (Prep, Junior Primary, Senior Primary and Adolescent Program students).
- 2) The Early Years Administration Assistant monitors and maintains early childhood education and care student (Early Years and OSHC) enrolments through Kangaroo Time.
- 3) Prior to enrolment, student information, which includes name, age, address and contact details, parent/carer details, health, previous school (where applicable), date of enrolment, etc. is collected from families on the Application for Enrolment form for compulsory school aged students and Early Years children, entered into FACTS and maintained by the Enrolments Coordinator.
- 4) For Early Years families, student information, which includes name, age, address and contact details, parent/carer details, health, previous school (where applicable), date of enrolment, etc. is also entered by the Early Years Administration Assistant into Kangaroo Time and is overseen by the same staff member and platform. The procedure is the same for families using the college's Session B, after-school hours program.

Procedure for Reporting Absence

- 1) Parents/carers are to report planned daily or partial absences, such as doctor appointments, to reception (Round House for EY, Prep and Primary and Adolescent Admin Office for Adolescents) and the Guide in advance. This is

done via the age-relevant School Stream App or by phoning 07 5442 3807 for EY, Prep and Primary or 07 5442 2452 for the Adolescent Program and for effective communication, it is strongly recommended that parents/carers email their child's Guide, as well. [Click here](#) for Early Years and Primary Absentee Form. [Click here](#) for the Adolescent Absentee Form

- 2) Parents/carers must report unplanned absences to reception no later than 8.00 am on the first day of absence and on each day the child is absent (via the School Stream App or by phoning 07 5442 3807 for EY, Prep and Primary or 07 5442 2452 for the Adolescent Program) and the Guide by email. An extended absence can be advised on the first day of absence.
- 3) Application for leave during term time e.g. for extended travel, must be put in writing to the Principal in advance (see Appendix A: Exemption from Attendance Application) for Prep classes and older.

Procedure for monitoring absence

- 1) Class electronic attendance rolls are marked daily in the classroom – the Roll Marking in Schools Codes are applied to all rolls by Administration Staff, based on the information provided to reception and the Guide. Guides/Assistants complete the electronic attendance roll each morning by 9.00 am, including planned and unplanned absences, if known. Levels of attendance are checked throughout each term by the Enrolments Coordinator and then reported to the Principal and ultimately the College Board, on request.
- 2) Administration staff confirm all rolls are complete and send a text message from the college messaging system to parents/carers of children still absent at 9.00 am (sent out at 9.00 am) who have not notified the college. If there is no response from the parents/carers of a child by 9.30 am that day, an administration staff member makes a phone call to both parents/carers. The college will continue to follow up daily if the absence remains unexplained and contact relevant agencies if required. If a student has had three unexplained absences in a row, the Guide will reach out to the family initially. If they receive no response, this information is fed back to the office by the Guide for follow-up by the Deputy or Assistant Principal, depending on the age of the student. These processes enable the college to track absences and support the safety of our children.
- 3) Changes to a student's circumstances, such as address details, must be recorded in FACTS (compulsory-school-aged children) by the Enrolments Coordinator or entered by the Early Years Administration Assistant into Kangaroo Time for early childhood education and care students (Early Years and Session B students). Details of authorised persons for pick up are filed on the student's administration file. The Guide and Assistant will be informed of such changes by Administration.
- 4) At the end of each week, Early Years and Session B attendance data is electronically submitted through Kangaroo Time software by the Early Years Administration Assistant.

Partial Absences

- 1) Arrival to the college on time (school starts at 8.00 am for Early Years; and 8.15 am for Prep, Primary and Adolescent students) is essential, unless unavoidable due to an important appointment or other relevant reason. It ensures that students do not miss out on the important start-of-day classroom routines, information and activities and they develop good habits for future life.
- 2) Early Years, Prep and Primary children arriving late to the college (8.15 am or after) must report to Round House Reception and collect a late slip before heading to class. Adolescents arriving late to the college (8.15 am or after) must report to the Adolescent Admin Office and collect a late slip before heading to class.
- 3) This late arrival is recorded electronically in FACTS by administration staff and students then independently walk to class.
- 4) A parent/carer of a child/adolescent leaving class early, for planned or unplanned absences, is required to sign the student out from the Round House reception for EY, Prep and Primary students and from the Adolescent Admin Office for adolescent students. A record of this is recorded on FACTS. Administration staff will call over or message to the classroom to let the teacher know that the student is to come to the office for collection.

Poor Record of School Attendance (including Partial Absences) e.g. Lateness

- 1) The Deputy and Assistant Principals will receive a report from the Enrolments Coordinator after Week 3, Week 6 and Week 9 of each term to identify unsatisfactory attendance/punctuality. Unsatisfactory attendance/punctuality is determined when a student's attendance/punctuality rate falls below 90% within the current school year.
- 2) The Deputy or Assistant Principal, depending on the age of the student, will inform the relevant Class Guide about the student's unsatisfactory attendance/punctuality. The Guide will communicate with the parent/s of the student to notify them of the school's expectation of 90% attendance/punctuality. This will be done in an informal meeting.
- 3) If the student's attendance/punctuality does not meet the 90% expectation for a second time in a calendar year, the Guide will meet with the parent/s of the student to relay the school's concerns and work with the family to develop strategies to improve school attendance/punctuality and to enquire if there is any support required.
- 4) If the unsatisfactory attendance/punctuality continues, a formal meeting will be arranged between the parents/carers, Guide and Deputy or Assistant Principal, with ongoing support discussed and clear outcomes and expectations set. This meeting will be followed up with a formal letter outlining the meeting, which will be recorded in the student's file.

- 5) If, after the above steps, attendance/punctuality still does not improve, a meeting will be arranged between the parents/carers and Principal to discuss the concern and a 'Student Attendance Improvement Plan' (see Appendix B) will be formulated between the parents/carers, Principal, Guide, Deputy or Assistant Principal (and child/adolescent where appropriate). The plan will be regularly monitored, recorded in the student's file and shared with relevant agencies.

Exemption

An exemption from attendance excuses parents from their legal obligation under the Education General Provisions Act (EGPA) to ensure that their child:

- 1) is enrolled at or attends a school, if of compulsory school age; or
- 2) is participating full-time in an eligible option, if in the compulsory participation phase.

Exemptions may be granted by the Principal for absences of between 10 and 110 school days in a year (a cumulative total for the year).¹

An exemption from compulsory schooling or the compulsory participation phase should be sought by parents when a student cannot attend or it would be unreasonable in all the circumstances for them to attend school or participate in an eligible option, for a period of more than 10 consecutive school days, due to the circumstances outlined below.

Circumstances where an exemption from schooling for a child or young person may be appropriate include (but are not limited to):

- Diagnosis of terminal medical condition;
- Illness or hospitalisation for a prolonged period of time;
- 'Carer' responsibilities;
- Mental health condition;
- Extended travel;
- Cultural or religious reasons; and
- Family reasons.

Circumstances where an exemption from schooling for a child or young person may not be appropriate include (but are not limited to):

- Reluctance to attend school;
- Employment (for a compulsory school aged child) or desire to seek employment;
- Difficulty with the school curriculum; and
- Desire to become an apprentice or trainee, but without an established training contract with an employer.

A partial exemption may also be available if a student in the compulsory participation phase cannot participate at school on a full-time basis.

Applications for exemptions from Montessori International College can be accessed on our website, and the School Stream app or refer to Appendix A of this policy. Important Information: Permission for an exemption will not be granted during the Census period – 11 school days prior to Census dates (26 February 2021 (State) and 10 August 2021 (Commonwealth)) unless there are extenuating circumstances.

Withdrawals

The enrolment contract states that parents are required to give the Principal one full-term's notice in writing, when a student is to be withdrawn from school, either for a short-term withdrawal or for cancellation of enrolment.

¹The Montessori International College Board, as a governing body, must keep a record of each decision made by the Principal regarding an application for exemption for a period of at least 5 years


Appendices

Appendix A – Application for Exemption form

Appendix B – Student Attendance Improvement Plan Template

Appendix A

See the link to the Exemption Procedure below:

 [1._MIC_Absence_Management_MIC_Exemption_from_Compulsory_Schooling_...](#)

Appendix B

Student Attendance Improvement Plan Template

Strategies	Family/Student responsibilities	School responsibilities	Intended outcomes

Agreement:

Principal

Parent 1

Parent 2

Student (if applicable)