



Attendance Requirements:

(Excerpts as outlined in the DET Student Attendance Guidelines)
<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/attendance/guidance>

Schools must record student attendance twice per day in primary schools and record, in writing, the reason given for each absence. This is necessary to:

- meet legislative requirements.
- discharge schools' duty of care for all students.
- assist calculation of the school's funding.
- enable school councils to report on student attendance annually.

All students enrolled in the school must have their attendance recorded, even if they only attend the school premises part time.

Each class teacher (as the principal's nominee) must record:

- student attendance twice per day in primary schools for every student enrolled at the school including any reason given or apparent for a student's absence.
- whether the reason for the absence is a reasonable excuse for non-attendance within the meaning of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006.
- on the student's file, information about the student's unsatisfactory attendance at school or classes.
- an absence as unexplained if no excuse has been given and change the attendance record once an excuse is provided or established.
- a student is present for a half day when the student has attended at least two hours of instruction.

To meet duty of care responsibilities, the school attendance records should indicate whether the student was physically present in a classroom, or not present but attending a school-approved activity. In the latter situation, the teacher or staff member in charge of the activity should record attendance and ensure parents are notified of any absences in the same manner as for regular absences from school.

Attendance for the times the student is not expected to attend should be recorded so it does not count towards the absences for the school (government schools should use "Exempt" in Compass or code 802 in CASES21).

The attendance of students at curriculum programs outside school premises needs to be recorded by the provider and reported back and recorded by the school. Schools manage absences in conjunction with the provider of re-engagement programs or the approved education provider.

Managing Absences

At Moonee Ponds Primary School, we use a school management system called Compass to collect attendance data for all students each day.

PLEASE ENSURE THAT BOTH THE AM and PM ATTENDANCE ROLL IS COMPLETED EVERY DAY!

Teachers (classroom & specialist) should complete the roll within the first hour of the day and update it again before lunch (12:30pm – 1:30pm). Specialist teachers will also complete their own attendance records.

Attendance in Compass is marked as "Present", "Not Present" or "Late". Parents and carers will provide a reason for the absence through Compass. Compass will automatically generate the CASES21 code based on the reason provided. For information on how to mark the roll or make an attendance note, please log in to <https://mpp-vic.compass.education> and search "attendance" in the Knowledge Base menu in the Compass portal.

Included in this document is a list of the attendance codes to ensure correct information regarding absences is collected. Please read through this information to ensure it is understood and completed accurately.

Please let the Principal or Office Administration Staff know if you are having issues with attendance or the Compass School Management System.

MANAGING STUDENT ABSENCES

The following flow chart outlines the attendance process at MPPS and the actions required at each stage of the process. If you are unsure or have any questions please speak with your Team Leader or the Assistant Principal/Principal to clarify.



There should be minimal "unexplained" absences!

Please follow up all unexplained absences with parents so absences are accurately recorded in Compass.

Student Absences – Parent Expectations:

As part of school communication, the following information is included in the newsletter and shared through the family handbook each year:

A reminder to parents that if your child is sick or absent, you are required to notify their school as soon as possible on the day of absence using one of the following methods:

- Compass: completing an 'Absence Note' via the app or online. See the brochure on our website for how to complete this- www.mpp.vic.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/ParentBrochure-1.pdf
- Telephone: the school office and let the staff know your child's name, class, date of absences and reason.
- Email: the school and provide the staff with your child's name, class, date of absences and reason.

Notifying the school of your child's absence either prior to, or on the day that they will be away, helps ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and will fulfil your legal responsibility.

Why do I need to notify the school if my child is absent?

Schools need to know when and why a child is absent and you need to know if your child isn't at school.

All Victorian government schools are required to contact parents/carers as soon as practicable on the same day of an unexplained student absence. If your child is absent on a particular day and you have not contacted the school to explain why, the absence will be marked as unexplained.

This system also promotes daily school attendance. Going to school every day is the single most important part of your child's education, they learn new things every day – missing school puts them behind.

What is your responsibility?

You are legally required to ensure your child attends school every day or you must provide an explanation for their absence. You should let the school know in advance of any upcoming absences or let them know by 9am in the morning if your child won't be at school. In order for schools to implement the same day notification requirement, it's essential that you provide the school with your most up-to-date contact details.

Generally one notification will be sent per family. Should there be circumstances that require both parents and carers to be notified, please contact the school to make the necessary arrangements.

What is the school's responsibility?

The school must notify you of an unexplained absence in relation to your child as soon as practicable on the same day. Schools will let you know by Compass (push notification message or email)

For further information, the School Attendance Policy and Attendance Procedures are now available on the school website at: <http://www.mpp.vic.edu.au/school-council/school-policies/>

Early Leave

Prep to Year 6 Students are expected to attend for the full day unless permission to leave early is requested. A 'Permission to Leave Early Form' must be filled out using the Compass Kiosk at the General Office and taken to the class teacher. This is a safety precaution for your children.

Late Arrival

All students who arrive late are required to go directly to the general office to collect a late arrival form from the Compass Kiosk before going to their classroom. They will then give this late arrival slip to the teacher when entering their class. This will ensure the teacher knows the student has been recorded as present and that parents are not sent an absence notification via Compass.

Resources:

For further details regarding attendance, see the DET School Attendance Guidelines at: <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/attendance/guidance>

CASES21 Absence Codes

The student absence module in CASES21 enables schools to categorise different reasons for absences. Compass will automatically generate the CASES21 absence code based on teacher or parent/carer reason for absence. Compass will then automatically write-back attendance data into CASES21 via the school administrative systems.

A description of the CASES21 codes for recording the different types of absences are outlined in the table below.

^^ Counted - shows whether this type of absence will be included as student absence for accountability and benchmarking purposes.

** Means parent, guardian or carer provided note, had phone contact, or face-to-face conversation with school approving the absence and school has retained documentary evidence of approval. As per the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, the term "parent" when used in relation to attendance means "in relation to a child, includes a guardian and every person who has parental responsibility for the child including parental responsibility under the Family Law Act of the Commonwealth and any person with whom a child normally or regularly resides".

Indicates whether this explanation can be considered a reasonable excuse in terms of a parent meeting their obligations under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* to ensure their child attends school at all times, or if it requires principal approval to become a reasonable excuse.

Yes indicates explanation is clearly specified as a reasonable excuse in the Education and Training Reform Act 2006.

No - indicates explanation is not a reasonable excuse.

Principal approval - indicates that the principal needs to confirm that explanation is considered a reasonable excuse as this type of absence is not explicitly specified in ETR Act.

N/A used for absence types which are not counted.

A student is considered to be in attendance in the morning (or afternoon) if they have been present for two hours before noon (or afternoon).

| Code | Description | Counted^^ | Further details of types of absence included | Reasonable Excuse ## |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------|--|----------------------|
| Late arrival/early departure | | | | |
| 111 | Late arrival at School | No | Arrived late with parent approval** | N/A |
| 112 | Early departure from School | No | Departed early with parent approval** | N/A |
| 113 | Late arrival unexplained | No | Arrived late without parent approval. | N/A |
| 114 | Early departure unexplained | No | Departed early without parent approval** | N/A |
| 116 | Late arrival to class | No | Late arrival to class with parent approval** | N/A |
| 117 | Early leaver from Class | No | Departed early from class with parent approval** | N/A |
| 118 | Late class unexplained | No | Late arrival to class without parent approval. | N/A |

| Educational | | | | |
|-------------|----------------------------|----|---|-----|
| 600 | Educational | No | Students attending an educational activity organised by the school. Includes: Alternate setting, language centre, social adjustment centre, Year 12 students attending classes at university, music class, Brain Gym, attending a poetry competition, external examinations, driver education organised by the school. | N/A |
| 601 | Group Activity | No | Group activity which is curriculum related. | N/A |
| 602 | Community Service | No | Includes: Year 9 class doing an elective called Community Service. | N/A |
| 603 | Duty Student | No | Student provides assistance in school somewhere, such as in office. Includes: ground monitors. | N/A |
| 604 | Excursion | No | Excursion which is curriculum related. | N/A |
| 605 | Special Event | No | Includes: special school students attending Variety Club event. | N/A |
| 606 | Camp | No | Camp which is curriculum or school related. | N/A |
| 607 | Other Educational Activity | No | Includes: orientation day (e.g. Yr 6 students attending sec school), exchange program/student, transition days. | N/A |
| 608 | TAFE | No | Includes: attendance at TAFE, VET classes at TAFE, VET work placements, school based apprenticeships, traineeships. | N/A |
| 609 | Work Experience | No | Students attending school authorised Work Experience. | N/A |
| 610 | School Production | No | Includes: school play, school choir. | N/A |
| 611 | Sports | No | Includes: sporting activity out of school, sports day, training for sports day. | N/A |
| 612 | Study Leave | No | Includes: VCE students given study leave, spares, no timetabled classes and student either stays on school site or leaves, no classes and students are supposed to study, private study, study pass, study periods. | N/A |
| 613 | Re-engagement Program | No | Attending a re-engagement program/alternative setting (for students at risk of disengaging from school) external to the school site. | N/A |
| 802 | Exempt | No | Includes: End of year and some students (e.g. Yr 11 & 12) permitted to leave school early, Prep attendance not required, Prep transition start, student is part-time and therefore not required to be there some of the time (e.g. home schooling student with partial enrolment at school, part-time at a special school and part-time at a regular school, member of school community dies and students told can stay home or attend funeral as they wish, transition to adult setting, approved exemption for short-term employment in the entertainment industry under Min Order 411. | N/A |

| School decision | | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|-----|---|-----------------------------|
| 901 | Industrial Action | No | Taken by school staff affecting students being able to attend school | N/A |
| 902 | Facility Damage | No | Includes: power was going off for a day and students told to stay home. Damage from Storms etc. | N/A |
| 903 | Weather | No | Extreme weather conditions | N/A |
| 904 | Staff Meeting | No | Includes: curriculum day, planning day, student free day, report writing day, parent teacher interviews, prep interviewing/testing day | N/A |
| 910 | Natural Disaster - Bushfire | No | Bushfire | N/A |
| 911 | Natural Disaster - Flood | no | Flood | N/A |
| 912 | Natural Disaster - Earthquake | No | Earthquake | N/A |
| 919 | Natural Disaster - Other | No | Other Natural Disaster | N/A |
| 920 | Pandemic - H1N1 | No | H1N1 Pandemic | N/A |
| 921 | Pandemic - SARS | No | SARS Pandemic | N/A |
| 929 | Pandemic - Other | No | Other Pandemic | N/A |
| Health & Wellbeing related | | | | |
| 200 | Medical | Yes | Parent approved** and gave this health related reason | Principal approval required |
| 201 | Illness | Yes | Parent approved** and gave this health related reason. Includes: sent home unwell, sports injuries | Yes |
| 202 | Accident | Yes | Parent approved** and gave this health related reason Includes: injury at school | Yes |
| 203 | Counselling | Yes | Parent approved** and gave this health related reason Student receiving counselling externally. | Principal approval required |
| 204 | Sick Bay | No | Student in sick bay. | N/A |
| 205 | Medical Appointment | Yes | Parent approved** and gave this health related reason. Includes: speech pathologist, optometrist. | Principal approval required |
| 206 | Hospitalised | Yes | Parent approved** and gave this health related reason. | Yes |
| 207 | Quarantine | Yes | Parent approved** and gave this health related reason. Includes: school sores, head lice, chicken pox. | Yes |
| 208 | Refusal | Yes | Parent approved** and gave this reason. Use when parent is working with the school to address the issue underlying the school refusal. | Principal approval required |
| 209 | Dentist | Yes | Parent approved** and gave this health related reason; Includes: orthodontist. | Principal approval required |
| 210 | Medical /Welfare | Yes | Includes: welfare activities, custody problem, DHS intervention, foster care, court attendance. Note: Possible overlap with 200 Medical and 203 Counselling. | Yes |

| | | | | |
|----------------------|--|-----|--|---------------------------------------|
| 211 | Bereavement | Yes | Includes: funeral, death in family, absence due to a death. Guidelines specify that principals should usually approve these absences. | Principal approval required |
| Unauthorised absence | | | | |
| 300 | Truancy | Yes | Parent knows about absence but doesn't approve, parent doesn't know about absence. | Yes |
| 500 | Unexplained | Yes | No parent approval** and no reason from parent or student. May be used on first day of absence and changed once explanation is provided. Unexplained is the default absence code when marking attendance in CASES21. | No |
| Discipline | | | | |
| 400 | Suspension - in-school/internal | No | Suspension which is internal only (usually student is sent out of class, but is still at school). | N/A |
| 401 | Suspension - External | Yes | Suspended and not permitted to attend school. Includes: Expulsion is in progress. | Yes |
| Exited/transferred | | | | |
| 701 | Exit | No | Student is exiting, but until paper work is processed, any absences recorded under Exit. | Yes |
| 702 | Transferred | No | Student is transferring to another school, but until paper work is processed, any absence is recorded under Transferred. Also student is transferring in to school. | Yes |
| Parental choice | | | | |
| 804 | Extended Family Holidays | Yes | Parent approved** and gave this reason. Used where parent has requested approval and principal has granted. If this process is not followed, then record under Parent Choice Unauthorised. Includes: student is taken out of school during term to go on a family holiday. | Principal approval required |
| 805 | Religious / Cultural Observance | Yes | Parent approved** and gave this reason Includes: student is kept away from school for a religious or cultural observance reason. | Yes – but Principal approval required |
| 806 | Parent Choice Unauthorised (Unexcused) | Yes | Includes where : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the parent has provided no explanation for the absence the student was absent due to participating in leisure or social activities (such as a shopping trip, or visiting friends or relatives) approval had not been sought in advance or in accordance with school policy the conditions of approval have not been met (e.g. Student Absence Learning Plan for a family holiday not completed). | No |
| 807 | Parent Choice School Approved | Yes | Parent approved** gave a reason that is not health related, or religious/cultural observance, or family holiday and sought approval from the principal. Includes: special circumstances, unavoidable cause, unforeseen circumstances, and family member ill. | Yes – but Principal approval required |

The table below provides examples of common reasons for absences and general advice for principals (and teachers as the principal nominee).

| COMMON REASONS FOR ABSENCE | Parent approval required | School required to confirm reason is authentic | Reasonable excuse for parent | General Advice for principals | Basis in ETR Act for reasonable excuse | Follow up required |
|--|--------------------------|--|-------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Illness or accident | Yes | No | Yes | N/A | 2.1.3(a)(i) | No |
| Medical/dental appointment | Yes | Yes | Yes | Approve if an out of hours appointment is not possible or not appropriate | 2.1.3(fa) | No, unless absences become excessive |
| Attending or observing a religious event or obligation | Yes | No | Yes | N/A | 2.1.3(f) | No |
| Suspended | No | Yes | Yes | N/A | 2.1.3(d) | Yes (suspension guide lines) |
| Bereavement such as a death of a family member, attendance at a funeral and/ or related mourning activities (sorry business) | Yes | Yes | Requires principal to approve | Approve | 2.1.3(fa) | Offer and provide support as required |
| Truancy | No | Yes | Yes | N/A | 2.1.3(e) | Meetings, Attendance Improvement Plan |
| School refusal | Yes | Yes | Requires principal to approve | Approve if parents and school are working on plan to address cause | 2.1.3(fa) | Yes - meetings to identify and address the cause |
| Family holiday | Yes | Yes | Requires principal to approve | Approve if parents notify in advance School policy should be developed for long or frequent/ repeated holidays | 2.1.3(fa) | Student Absence Learning Plans developed in conjunction with classroom teachers |
| Required to comply with another law | Yes | No | Yes | N/A | 2.1.3(a)(ii) | No, unless absences become excessive. Offer and provide support as required |
| Cultural observance | Yes | Yes | Requires principal to approve | Approve if parent notifies in advance | 2.1.3(fa) | No |
| Leisure or social activities | Yes | Yes | Requires principal to approve | Approve if | 2.1.3(fa) | No |
| Unforeseen event | Yes | Yes | Yes | Approve if satisfied event was unforeseen and prevented attendance | 2.1.3(a)(i) | No |

| COMMON REASONS FOR ABSENCE | Parent approval required | School required to confirm reason is authentic | Reasonable excuse for parent | General Advice for principles | Basis in ETR Act for reasonable excuse | Follow up required |
|---|--------------------------|--|-------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Unavoidable cause | Yes | Yes | Yes | Approve if satisfied cause was unavoidable and prevented attendance | 2.1.3(a)(i) | No |
| Other – special event or participation in elite sporting event/training | Yes | Yes | Requires principal to approve | Case-by-case basis | 2.1.3(fa) | No |
| Exemption | No | No | Yes | | 2.1.3 (g) | Ensure any conditions of exemption are met. Monitor attendance at other provider |
| Employment in the entertainment industry | Yes | Yes (through approving exemption) | Yes | N/A | 2.1.3(g) | Yes, to ensure conditions of exemption are complied with |