

Student Attendance Policy



NSW Department of Education Policy

Attendance at school is a legal requirement of both parents and students. (Section 22 of the Education Act, 1990). The expected DoE rate of attendance is over 95%.

Regular attendance at school for every student is essential if students are to achieve their potential and increase their career and life options. Schools in partnerships with parents are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, school staff, as part of their duty of care, record and monitor part and whole day absences. Schools, in providing a caring teaching and learning environment, which addresses the learning and support needs of students, including those with additional learning and support needs or complex health conditions, foster students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the school community (DoE, 2015)

Melonba High school will:

- Provide a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the school community.
- Promote regular attendance at school through teaching and learning activities that acknowledge the learning and support needs of students.
- Maintain accurate records of student attendance.
- Alert the principal, or staff member responsible for monitoring attendance, when a student's pattern of attendance is of concern, or if no explanation is received from the parent or carer within required timeframes.
- When nominated by the principal, liaise with external agencies, arrange referrals and coordinate involvement of the school with other services and agencies working with students.
- If they have concerns about the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child or young person, report their concerns to the principal.



School practice

Absences

- School attendance rolls are marked every school day, firstly during Check In at the beginning of the day and then every period thereafter and recorded in the SENTRAL roll marking system. If a student is absent at the beginning of the day, parents will be notified through the Sentral for Parents App
- Parents are required to inform the school of the reason for any absence. This may be done by responding to a notification in the Sentral for Parents App, or by bringing a note on the first day a student returns from absence.
- If within 7 days of the first day of any period of absence an explanation has not been received and no contact has been made with parents, the school will ensure parents are contacted within the next 2 school days.
- Students who are intending to be absent for an extended period for reasons such as overseas travel – parents should request an 'Extended Leave' form from the school to request leave and explain the circumstances. If leave is granted by the Principal, the leave will be recorded as 'explained' and students are to organise plans for missed work with individual teachers.
- The Telephone Interpreter Service and translated materials, including letters can be used as required when communicating with parents from language backgrounds other than English if an explanation for absence has not been received.

Late to school

- Students arriving at school after the start of the school day (8.40am) must go the front office student counter. Students need to provide an explanation for their lateness via a written note or verbal authority from a parent/carer. Students late to school without a note from a parent may be issued with a school detention.
- Students will be issued with an electronic slip recording school, name, date and time of arrival and reason for being late.
- Students show the slip to their classroom teacher on arrival at their lesson.
- Students with a frequency of unexplained late arrivals will be counselled by the Head Teacher Administration and/or Deputy Principal to establish strategies to promote punctuality. Parents may be contacted and/or required to attend a meeting at the school in this instance.
- Melonba High School has the expectation that parents supply written notification/verbal confirmation from parent/carer for absence, late arrival or request for early departure. This can be also be done through the Sentral for Parents App
- If a student needs to leave school early for a specific reason, they must bring a letter from a parent to their Deputy Principal for approval. The student then takes the approved letter to the Student Reception for processing. An electronic slip recording school, name, photo, date and time of departure is issued to the student to show their teacher that they have permission to leave at the designated time.

The school communicates issues of attendance, punctuality, and truancy via the following:

- Daily notifications to parents of absent students through the 'Sentral for Parents' app (Available in the Apple and Android App store)
- SENTRAL Notifications of absences
- Parent/Teacher Events
- Letters emailed home regarding persistent or ongoing attendance and/or lateness concerns
- Interviews – Teacher/parent, Year Adviser and/or Deputy Principal

Attendance Rewards

Students who have outstanding attendance will receive awards through the school's RISE awards scheme.