

ATTENDANCE POLICY



Need an English interpreter?

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Monash Children's Hospital School on 8572 3100.



Need an Auslan interpreter?

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Monash Children's Hospital School on 8572 3100.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to

- ensure all children of compulsory school age are enrolled in a registered school and attend school every day the school is open for instruction
- ensure students, staff and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school
- explain to school staff and parents the key practices and procedures Monash Children's Hospital School (MCHS) has in place to:
 - support, monitor and maintain student attendance
 - record, monitor and follow up student absences

PLEASE NOTE THAT MCHS DOES NOT OFFICIALLY ENROL STUDENTS. STUDENTS ARE ENROLLED AT THEIR BASE SCHOOL. MCHS ATTAINS CONSENT TO PROVIDE EDUCATION TO THE STUDENTS WHILE THEY ARE INPATIENTS OR OUTPATIENTS OF MONASH CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL, INCLUSIVE OF EARLY IN LIFE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all students at Monash Children's Hospital School (MCHS).

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Department of Education and Training's [School Attendance Guidelines](#). It does not replace or change the obligations of MCHS, parents and School Attendance Officers under legislation or the School Attendance Guidelines.



DEFINITION

Parent – includes a guardian and every person who has parental responsibility for the child, including parental responsibility under the *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth) and any person with whom a child normally or regularly resides.

POLICY

Schooling is compulsory for children and young people aged from 6 to 17 years (unless an exemption from attendance or enrolment has been granted).

Daily attendance is important for all children and young people to succeed in education and to ensure they do not fall behind both socially and developmentally. School participation maximises life opportunities for children and young people by providing them with education and support networks. School helps people to develop important skills, knowledge and values that set them up for further learning and participation in their community.

Students that meet the criteria for MCHS are strongly encouraged to participate in the teaching and learning program at MCHS. This is a personalised program for all students and usually aligns directly with the school work set by the student's base school. Students may not be involved in the MCHS program if they are exempted due to shortness of admission or if they are deemed too unwell by the medical/health staff. MCHS believes all students should engage in the school sessions while in the hospital if/when directed by medical teams. MCHS is committed to working with base schools and community agencies to encourage and support school attendance.

Our school will identify individual students or cohorts who are vulnerable and whose attendance at their school is at risk and/or declining and will work with these students, their parents and their school to improve their attendance through a range of interventions and supports.

Parents may communicate with the relevant staff at MCHS about any issues affecting their child's attendance.

Supporting and promoting attendance

MCHS's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* supports student attendance.

Recording attendance

MCHS records attendance and commentary about a student on the student management system – Compass. The administration team creates a student profile on Compass when a family / child provides consent to be involved in the school program.



From here, the student is then allocated a key teacher, however will be supported by as many teachers as required to best support the student's learning. On the date a student engages in a learning session (either individual or group), the teacher enters a chronicle in Compass to mark the young person's attendance in that session which also includes notes on the following:

- Learning Intention and Success Criteria
- Learning Task Outline
- Learning Session Comment
- Notes for the next session

Recording absences

The Principal has the discretion to accept a reason given by a parent or medical/health practitioner for a student's absence or decline. The usual reason for a child not attending the MCHS education sessions is that they are deemed too unwell and cannot attend or they have medical/health appointments that they must attend. E.g. Physio, OT, Speech etc.

When a student does not engage in a MCHS education session, the teacher will enter a Non-Participation in School Session chronicle with the date of the absence which also notes a reason for non-participation and any follow up actions if required.

Recording student enrolment (admission) and exit (discharge) dates for inpatients

Ward / Stepping Stones / Oasis:

When a young person is admitted or re-admitted in the above mentioned wards, the Admin team will add a Compass chronicle to record the admission (enrolment) date. This will be done at the same time this young person is added to the relevant allocations list.

When a young person is discharged, and there is no future planned admission, the Admin team will add a Compass chronicle to mark the discharge (exit) date.

Lagoon / Cancer Centre:

When a young person is admitted or re-admitted in the above mentioned wards, the Admin team will add a Compass chronicle to record the admission (enrolment) date. This will be done at the same time this young person is added to the relevant allocations list.

A Discharge Date chronicle will only be entered when the student is discharged from hospital and there are no planned future admissions.



Managing non-attendance and supporting student engagement

Where absences are of concern due to their nature or frequency, or where a student has declined school support for more than five days, MCHS will work collaboratively with parents, the student, and other medical/health professionals, where appropriate, to develop strategies to improve attendance.

We understand from time to time that some students will need additional supports and assistance, and in collaboration with the student, their family and their treating team, MCHS will endeavour to provide this support when it is required.

Referral to School Attendance Officer

MCHS will not inform the School Attendance Officer of a student who does not attend the education sessions while an inpatient in hospital. However, they will alert the Student Attendance Officer (DE Regional Office) if they find out that a student has disengaged from their regular school or are simply not attending a school. This will also include communicating with the student's base school.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Discussed at annual staff briefings/meetings
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- The Department's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL): [Attendance](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	13 th August 2025
Consultation	Consultation with MCHS staff (recommended)
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	June 2028 The recommended minimum review cycle for this policy is 3 to 4 years.

