



The Montessori School Kingsley Inc.

ATTENDANCE AND LATENESS POLICY



1. VERSION MANAGEMENT

Version	Date Published/Reviewed	Changes	Author	Date Ratified by School Council
1	2018	Formerly part of Enrolment Policy	Principal	September 2019
2	2024	Reviewed and Benchmarked	Principal	17 May 2024

2. INTENT

Consistent, accurate and correct recording of student attendance is a legal requirement for all schools in Western Australia. The Montessori School Kingsley monitors and manages student attendance on a regular basis to ensure students are attending school consistently to maximise the opportunity for all students to learn.

On the days on which the School is open for instruction, The School Education Act 1999 requires students to attend the School at which they are enrolled or otherwise participate in an educational programme of the School whether at the School or elsewhere.

3. ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE

School staff, students, and families.

4. DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
Attendance	A student is considered to be in attendance when present for or participating in the School's formal instructional program. Typically, this will be on the School site, but also includes off-site arrangements that respond to the student's learning needs and circumstances.
Authorised Absence	An absence where the reason provided by the parent is considered to be legitimate and is deemed acceptable by the Principal.
Attendance Category: Regular Attendance	More than 90 per cent attendance. This is understood to pose minimal educational risk. It equates to missing up to half a day a week.
Attendance Category: Indicated Educational Risk	Between 80-89 per cent attendance (missing up to one full day per week).
Attendance Category: Moderate Educational Risk	Between 60-79 per cent attendance (missing one to two days per week).
Attendance Category: Severe Educational Risk	Less than 60 per cent attendance (missing more than two days per week).

Non-Attendance	<p>Non-attendance at school can occur for a range of reasons including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The child is unwell; • The School has asked that the child remain home due to a communicable disease; • The child is absent with a valid reason in the opinion of the Principal (e.g., family funeral); • The student is absent without a valid reason in the opinion of the Principal (but with parent or carer consent) (e.g., staying at home for birthdays); • The student is absent due to an extended absence; • Refusal, when the student refuses to come to school or when the parent refuses to send their child to school. • Or the student is absent without parent or carer knowledge.
Parent	In relation to a child, means a person who at law has responsibility for the long-term care, welfare and development of the child; or the day-to-day care, welfare and development of the child.
School	The Montessori School Kingsley
Students Whose Whereabouts Are Unknown (SWU) list	<p>A list, usually referred to as the SWU List, that contains the names of children who are missing from schools and educational programs in Western Australia.</p> <p>This list is distributed by the Department to administrators in non-government schools and some other agencies by agreement between the parties.</p>
Workers	<p>A person is a worker if the person carries out work in any capacity for the School, including work as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) an employee b) a contractor or subcontractor; c) an employee of a contractor or subcontractor; d) an employee of a labour-hire company who has been assigned to work in the person's business or undertaking; e) an apprentice or trainee; f) a student gaining work experience; or g) a volunteer.

5. POLICY CONTENT

5.1 Attendance and Lateness Responsibilities

5.1.1 School Office Responsibilities

The School Office staff is to:

- promote student attendance through clear statements of expectations and procedures;
- promote attendance through regular articles in school newsletters;
- develop and implement rigorous and effective systems to record and monitor attendance;
- ensure that student attendance is recorded in every class;
- record 'notes' against all absences in the School's database – notes to include the name of the person who notified the teacher of the absence, the reason for the absence, the student's expected date of return to school, and the date the notification was received;
- maintain accurate attendance records in the School's database.
- prompt processing of student transfers;
- respond to parent requests for absences for vacations during the school term;
- if efforts to follow up on unexplained absences are unsuccessful, the School Office generates unexplained absence emails on a daily basis;
- notify the parents when students have been absent for 10 consecutive days and the reason is not known;
- generate letters to parents whose children are in the 'indicated,' moderate' and 'severe' categories in Weeks 5 and Week 10 (or last week) of each term;
- follow up on all unexplained absences via email/phone or by contacting parents.

5.1.2 Teacher Responsibilities

Teachers are to:

- promote and encourage attendance and punctuality;
- monitor and record each student's attendance in the School's database with 100% accuracy, twice daily;
- complete attendance responsibilities via Teacher Toolkit;
- seek advice from the School Office if unsure about what absence code to use (see Appendix A);
- refer parents/carers to the School Office to discuss requests for vacations during the school term;
- provide parents/carers with activities, work, or projects, for their children to complete when they are unable to attend school for acceptable reasons;
- Request a meeting with parents when students are at risk.

5.1.3 Students Responsibilities

Students are to:

- attend school at all times when the School is open for instruction;
- arrive at school and attend all classes on time;
- remain on the School premises during school time unless they have permission from both their parent/carer and the School to leave;
- complete any work that is missed due to absences if requested by the teacher;
- work cooperatively with the School and be actively involved in improving their attendance;
- attend school regularly and be present in all scheduled classes, unless there is a valid reason for their absence;
- make every effort to arrive at school on time, ready to start the day's activities at the designated start time;
- actively participate in classroom activities, discussions, and assignments. They should strive to make the most of their time in school by actively listening, asking questions, and contributing to the learning environment;
- seek support from parents, guardians, or school staff to address and resolve these challenges proactively if they are facing challenges that may impact their attendance, such as difficulty waking up on time or transportation issues;
- take ownership of their attendance and recognise its importance for their academic progress. They should strive to maintain good attendance habits and be proactive in addressing any attendance issues that may arise.

5.1.4 Parent Responsibilities

Parents are to:

- ensure their child attends school at all times when the School is open for instruction (see School Education Act, 1999);
- promote and provide organisational support to their child to allow them to attend school and participate on all designated school days;
- ensure their child is on time for school each day – this means ensuring that their child arrives at school 10 minutes before the formal start of the school day as punctuality is regarded as a daily exercise in good manners;
- notify the School on the first day of their child's absence, as well as include reason for absence and expected time period;
- notify the School in advance if an absence is planned;
- support their child's learning during continued or prolonged absences through the completion of educational activities;
- work cooperatively and collaboratively with the School to develop and implement improvement strategies when their child's attendance has been inconsistent due to reasons deemed unsatisfactory by the School;
- work cooperatively with the School to support their child when returning to school after prolonged absences;
- contact the School Office to discuss and seek authorisation for vacations during school terms;
- ensure the School has correct and up-to-date contact details;
- Notify the School via School Stream, phone, or email of absences due to sickness.
- Notify the School via School Stream, phone, or email of lateness;
- Inform the School Office and request an appointment with the Principal prior to any planned extended leave of absence.

5.1.5 Principal Responsibilities

The Principal is to:

- Review the Children Whose Whereabouts are Unknown List.
- Require students not to attend school for health reasons.
- Request a meeting with parents whose children for whom we have concerns regarding their extended absences.

5.2 Compulsory School Age

All children of compulsory school age must be enrolled in school and attend every day - that is the law. This is from the beginning of the year in which a child reaches the age of 5 years 6 months until the end of the year in which the child reaches the age of 17 years 6 months or turns 18, whichever happens first.

5.2.1 Alternatives to full-time schooling

If a child wishes to leave school before the end of Year 10, parents or legal guardians must obtain the Minister for Education and Training's approval for an exemption from full-time schooling.

If a child wishes to leave school during Years 11 and 12, parents or legal guardians must obtain the Minister for Education and Training's approval for a Notice of arrangements to enrol in full-time study outside of school (tertiary education).

A child in Years 11 or 12 at school may attend a community-based course. Younger students may also take part in community-based courses as long as they remain enrolled at school.

Source: [Department of Education](#)

5.3 Risk

The likelihood of success in learning is strongly linked to regular attendance and appropriate participation in educational programs. Students who have poor patterns of attendance are at risk of not achieving their potential. They may be disadvantaged in the quality of choices they are able to make later in life situations. Attendance at school is a prerequisite for student achievement.

Children who are regularly absent from school are at greater risk of:

- Dropping out of school early;
- Becoming long-term unemployed;
- Being caught in the poverty trap;
- Becoming welfare-dependent;
- Being involved in the justice system;
- Being socially isolated;
- Harm during times of absence;
- Being more likely to be involved in socially unacceptable and/or illegal activities;
- Have gaps in their knowledge and understanding of basic concepts; and
- Feeling unsure of school.

Once students have begun to develop patterns of poor attendance and lateness, there is the potential that the pattern of absences may continue to escalate in later years.

5.4 Children at Risk

Early intervention for children at risk of developing irregular patterns of attendance is crucial so that these patterns may be reversed.

Indicators children are at risk include the following:

- Frequent lateness;
- Leaving school early;
- Missing lessons;
- Being the victims of bullying and harassment;
- Learning difficulties;
- Many days absent, either through illness, unexplained reasons or family commitments;
- Unresolved issues with school personnel (staff or students)
- Social or emotional issues;
- Difficulties at times of transition; and
- Health issues experienced by the child and/or family members.

Intervention strategies need to be put in place regardless of the age of the child.

5.5 Non-Attendance

All non-attendance by children should be viewed as critical when it begins to impact their learning and health and wellbeing outcomes. This includes those absences which are explained (such as the parent providing the explanation that the student was unwell) and those which are unexplained.

5.6 Lateness

Timely arrival at school is crucial for a student's effective engagement in the learning process. Persistent lateness can disrupt the educational environment and impede a student's ability to fully benefit from the curriculum. Parents and guardians are urged to ensure that students arrive promptly for the commencement of the School day. In the event of unavoidable delays, it is essential to communicate with the School office to provide an explanation for the lateness. The School recognises that occasional lateness may occur due to unforeseen circumstances, but continuous patterns of lateness may be indicative of issues that require attention. The School may implement intervention strategies for students consistently arriving late to address any underlying concerns and promote a consistent learning experience for all students.

5.7 Medical Certificate Requirement

For absences extending beyond five consecutive school days, parents are requested to provide a valid medical certificate from a registered medical practitioner. The medical certificate should include the student's name, date of absence, the nature of the illness, and the expected duration of absence. This documentation helps the School maintain accurate attendance records and supports the student's return to school.

5.7.1 Submission of Medical Certificates: The medical certificate can be submitted to the School's front office in person or via email at admin@themontessorischool.wa.edu.au. It is recommended to submit the medical certificate within two days of the student's return to school.

6. ACCOUNTABILITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In relation to this policy, the following positions are responsible for:

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITY
Policy Owner	The Policy Owner, the Principal, has overall responsibility for the content of this Policy and its operation in the School.
Principal	The Principal is responsible for ensuring that the requirements of this policy are implemented, monitored, and reviewed.
Workers	Ensuring they understand the information presented in this policy.

7. RELATED DOCUMENTS

7.1 Policies that are relevant to the operation of this policy are as follows:

- Enrolment Policy

7.2 Procedures that are relevant to the operation of this policy are as follows:

- Enrolment and Resignation Procedures
- Attendance and Lateness Procedures
- Fees Policy

7.3 Internal documents that are relevant to the operation of this policy are as follows:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Community Code of Conduct
- Attendance & Lateness Letter to Parents

7.4 External documents that are relevant to the operation of this policy are as follows:

- Department of Education:
<https://www.education.wa.edu.au/alternatives-to-full-time-schooling>
- Follow-On: Managing Student Attendance in Western Australian Public Schools (2015)
- School Education Act 1999
- School Education Regulations 2000 (WA)