



McCarthy Catholic College
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2 March 2016

Dear Parent/Guardians,

The research is overwhelming in terms of the correlation between attendance at school and performance at school. Here at McCarthy we have always taken attendance very seriously but in 2016, we are formalising the process in terms of accountabilities. The purpose of this letter is to inform you of those processes so you can be aware of the context and work with us to ensure maximum attendance for your child or children at school all year.

We do have many students who rarely miss days and we will be recognising perfect attendance on a term-by-term basis. In regards to attendance, our goal for all students is to be at school at least 95% of the time. As students have 40 weeks at school, that equates to approximately 200 school days per year. We are saying that students should aim to have no more than 10 days away per year, which averages to no more than 2-3 days away from school per term.

When a student is absent, an SMS will be sent to the nominated parent or guardian who may choose to send a reply SMS with the reason for the absence. That SMS will be accepted as a note if a valid justification is supplied. The alternative is that you will be required to send a note to justify the absence. If we have not received a justification by the end of the week, we will send a letter via your child to request that justification within a given time period. Should you not give that justification, the absence will be marked as an unjustified absence.

Separate to that process is the way in which we will address the number of absences. If a student's attendance rate falls below 90%, we are required by Government Legislation and the CEDP to send letters home to express our concern. It is important for parents to know that these letters will be sent even if students have returned medical certificates or parental justification for the absences. These letters will simply be in regards to attendance rates at school.

The first letter is a general warning about the attendance patterns and the need to improve those attendance patterns. If the attendance pattern does not improve after the first letter, you will be contacted to arrange for at least one parent to come to school to have an Attendance Plan Meeting with your child's House Coordinator. The second letter confirms the date and time of the meeting. In this formal meeting, strategies to improve attendance will be discussed and agreed upon.

Should the attendance pattern still not improve, you will be required to attend a formal attendance conference at the Catholic Education Office at Parramatta. This conference will be conducted by a 'Child Well-being and Attendance Officer from the Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Parramatta and one representative from McCarthy Catholic College staff will also attend.

The first series of letters have been sent this week so should you have any concerns, please contact me or your child's House Coordinator.

Yours Sincerely

Martin Stein
Head of Pastoral Care and Wellbeing

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PLEASE RETURN THIS SLIP TO TUTOR TEACHER

I have received the notification in regards to the procedures that have been implemented at McCarthy Catholic College in regards to attendance.

Parent/Guardian signature: _____ Student Name: _____ Tutor Group: _____

Please be aware that we have a 3 day return procedure at McCarthy Catholic College.

