



Rationale

Regular attendance is essential to ensure engagement and success that will lead to a solid foundation for our students' future. Attendance is a shared responsibility between Parent/Caregivers and school.

Every child of compulsory school age (until the age of 17) is required to be enrolled at an educational institution and must attend on every day that instruction is provided. Although there is no legal requirement for post compulsory aged learners to be enrolled, there is an expectation that once enrolled; learners will attend on a regular basis.

As a school we are required to monitor student attendance and follow up on any unsatisfactory or unexplained absences. It is important to keep in mind that repeated absences and lateness are not in the best interests of any student (whether under compulsion or over compulsion), and that we must remain alert for patterns of absences or lateness.

Early identification and intervention of non-attenders or irregular attendance is proven to improve student learning outcomes.

Attendance Expectations

The school expects that all students will attend school every day. If a student is unable to attend school due to illness or any other valid reason, the school expects notification via the Student Diary, phone, Skoolbag App or email.

Responsibilities

Student

The expectations are that students must:

- Attend all time-tabled lessons
- Be punctual in arriving at school and for all associated lessons and activities
- Participate appropriately in their learning
- Bring a note in their diary to explain absences

Consequences for failing to adhere to expectations:

- Parent/Caregiver contact
- Meeting with the Sub School Coordinator
- Interview with Parents/Caregivers
- Student Development Plan Review (If applicable)
- Truancy from lessons will result in a set number of detentions

Students who fall ill whilst at school must report to the First Aid Room via the Student Service Office. No student is permitted to leave the school grounds to go home, without first reporting to the First Aid Officer, where if necessary, the Parent/Caregiver will be contacted.



Parent/Caregiver

The expectations are that Parents/Caregivers accept the responsibility to:

- Provide an explanation whenever their child is absent from school *via* a note in the Diary, Skoolbag App, email or phone call. This should be done preferably in advance for a known absence or on the first day back at school after an absence
- Contact the school for any absence as well as providing a note in the Student Diary or via email
- Obtain a Medical Certificate and provide it to the school on the student's return, if the absence is due to illness in excess of three days or if a doctor is visited
- Provide information to the school that may assist: *i.e.* medical conditions, family issues
- Enable their child to attend punctually and regularly on every day of the school programme
- Apply for an exemption whenever their child is removed from school for a period of five days or more
- Work with the school on intervention strategies to improve attendance

Home Group Teacher

The expectations are that Home Group Teachers will:

- Monitor attendance and communicate any problems with Parents/Caregivers. Home Group Teachers must follow up any unexplained absences via a diary note or email. It is important that all 'Unexplained' absences or long periods of 'Family' absences are followed up
- During the morning Home Group period, teachers are required to check student attendance, record absences and enter appropriate codes to indicate the reasons for absence
- A phone call from a Parent/Caregiver to explain an absence is acceptable notification of the absence and does not require a further note, however this must be recorded by the Front Office or Student Service Office. Recorded phone messages must go to the Student Services Office and will be filed
- If a student is absent three (3) or more days without the school being notified, or if a student has failed to bring a satisfactory written explanation for any absence, however short, within two days of his or her return to school, the Home Group Teacher must contact the Parents/Caregivers
- **Any cases of 'U's' must be followed up and the code adjusted based on information found**

Home Group Teachers will be provided with a completed copy of recorded absences for the term at the end of each term. This needs to be checked for accuracy, changes noted, signed and dated. The sheet is then returned to the data entry person.

Subject Teacher

The expectations are that teachers will:

- Provide a relevant and dynamic learning programme that seeks to engage all students and offers the opportunity for success

When a student fails to attend a lesson or lessons on a day when that student is present at school then:

- The Subject Teacher should email the Home Group teacher seeking further information.
- The Home Group Teacher is required to follow up the absence with the student, inform Parents and/ or Year Level Coordinator
- The Home Group teacher should give detentions for any unacceptable absences



- The Home Group Teacher should inform the relevant subject teacher/s via email
- Any cases of a student missing multiple lessons on a particular day should be referred to the Sub School Coordinator

These processes are an exceptionally important part of our Duty-of- Care and all staff are required to monitor student absences continually.

Students who have been absent need to be encouraged by subject teachers to catch up on work missed. Tests need to be done as soon as possible after returning to school, especially from a short absence.

Counsellor

The Counsellor is responsible for:

- Working closely with the Sub School Coordinator to monitor student attendance;
- Communicating with Parents/Caregivers if attendance is poor or absence unexplained;
- Providing counselling support for students and families when required;
- Ensuring students are engaged in learning via a diverse range of alternative programmes;
- Connecting students to support agencies as the need arises;
- Contributing to the analysis of attendance trends and development and implementation of Attendance Plan;
- Refer all students under compulsion, with unsatisfactory attendance to the attendance officers *via* EDSAS

Sub School Coordinators

Year Level Coordinators are responsible for:

- Actively monitoring student attendance by regular visits to Home Groups, checking of Home Group rolls and discussion with Home Group teachers;
- Communicating with Parents/Caregivers if attendance is poor or absence unexplained
- Participating in regular meetings to discuss concerns and implement programmes for the particular year level;
- Liaising with Leaders/Counsellor, members of the administration and outside agencies
- Contributing to the analysis of attendance trends and development and implementation of the Attendance Plan;
- Refer all students under compulsion, with unsatisfactory attendance to the attendance officers *via* EDSAS

SSO's

The SSO staff are responsible for:

- Entering absences from phone messages and Schoolbag App.
- Entering camps, excursions and any other required absences
- Entering absences due to suspensions and or other long term absences *i.e.* VET and off- site courses
- Transfer data across to EDSAS each day
- Ensure integrity of the data

Attendance will be printed at the end of each term by the SSO responsible for EDSAS and distributed to Home Group Teachers for checking.



Any cases of 'U's' must be followed up by the Home Group Teachers with Parents/Caregivers.

Support staff should inform Sub School Coordinators if a student has had absences that do not appear to have been followed up.

All 'U's' should be adjusted based on information found. It is important this is done well *prior* to Week 9 of each term.

Support Staff will also provide Home Group Teachers with a **reconciled** copy of the completed roll for each term. This requires the Home Group Teachers signature to verify its accuracy, and then be returned to the data entry person.

Arriving Late:

Students who arrive late to school and miss Home Group, must report to the Student Services Office before proceeding to lessons. They must bring a note signed by the Parent/Caregiver stating the reason.

Leaving Early:

Students are not permitted to leave school grounds during the day unless they have permission from Parents/Caregivers and have 'signed out' through the Student Services Office.

Students who need to leave school for an appointment must present a note from Parents/Caregivers to the home Group Teacher. At the time of leaving, the student must show the note to the teacher during whose lesson the student leaves and then go and sign out at the Student Services Office.

In case of an emergency or special need to leave school grounds, students must check with the Student Services Office where a Principal or Deputy will confirm the need and permission to leave school. Students who have permission to leave school during the day will have a signed note or a computerised slip placed in their Diary. If a student leaves school grounds without the appropriate permission he/ she will be placed in Detention, and contact with the parent will be made.

Excursions and Camps:

Any excursions/camps outside of school require prior negotiation with the Business Manager and permission from Parents/Caregivers.

The teacher organising the excursion/camp must post a list of those attending on the notice board in the Staff room and provide a copy to the Student Services Office. If this is not done, the students cannot have the correct code for their absence recorded.

Teaching staff are to provide a copy of the roll to the Student Services Office on the morning of the excursion once they have confirmed which students are attending.

Exemptions:

When considering requests for students to be given exemption from attending school to seek employment, it is important to note that

"It is an offence to permit employment of a child who is under compulsion to attend school except when such an employment is outside normal school hours and at such a time and place as will not affect the child's ability to receive adequate instruction at school." (Education Act 1972)



If a student requests a temporary exemption to attend such things as family holidays and interstate or overseas sporting involvement, **an Exemption Form** must be obtained from the Student Services Office, completed and returned to the Principal at least 4 weeks prior to the requested date of exemption.

Exemptions for Students under 17:

Students between the ages of 16 and 17 can only be exempted from school under the following conditions:

- Undertaking a full-time, approved study option with another organisation (*ie* TAFE)
- Undertaking a full-time traineeship
- Undertaking a full-time apprenticeship

Students under the age of 17 cannot be given permanent exemption from being involved in a full- time education programme.

This policy will be reviewed every year with Staff and Governing Council input.

Updated June 2015

Reviewed: 2016 or as required