Attendance Procedures

This document should be read in conjunction with the School Attendance Policy and Attendance Matters Website.

1. **Rationale**

   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.

   Supporting positive school attendance is a shared responsibility - everyone has a role.

   Attendance is a whole school responsibility.

   Individual staff, student and parent responsibilities are outlined below. For the purpose of this document please note that:

   Whole Day Attendance – refers to students who are absent for the entire school day

   Part Day Attendance – refers to students who have arrived late to school or who have left early

   Fractional Truancy – refers to students who have not attended a particular class or classes

   Unjustified – refers to attendance issues that no reasonable explanation has been received or the explanation received for the absence has not been accepted by the principal

   Justified – refers to attendance issues where reasonable explanation has been received

2. **Roles and responsibilities**

Procedure

Attendance

Community Members	Area of Responsibility	Action/Responsibilities
Students	Themselves/Siblings	- Be present and ready to learn. - knowing what class activities are on which school day for example, PFHPE, sport – have a copy of your timetable with you - making sure you are ready for each school day: uniform, books, bag, lunch

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		• speaking with family, a friend or teacher if you have concerns about attending school, or if something is making it difficult to get to school • asking a teacher for help if schoolwork is challenging.
Parents	**Children**	Parents and carers can help foster positive attendance habits by: • helping their child learn the importance of punctuality and routine • ensuring their child arrives on time from the start of the school day, ready to participate in learning • reducing disruption to learning where possible, by planning any necessary appointments outside of school time • working with the school to encourage and support regular attendance. Parents are required to explain the absences of their children from school promptly and within seven days to the school at the front office, through text, phone call or email. Parents work in partnership with the school to plan and implement strategies to support regular attendance at school, including communicating with the school if they are aware of issues impacting on their child's attendance or engagement with school.

Staff	Area of Responsibility	Actions/Responsibilities
Attendance Officer	**Whole School**	• Send SMS to parents after first period when students are absent from school. • Contact parent promptly and within two school days of absence being unexplained (after 7 days an absence becomes unexplained). • Enter absentee notes on Sentral • <u>Interpreters and translated materials</u>, including letters are available when communicating with parents from language backgrounds other than English in matters relating to school attendance. • Update and upload data on attendance from Sentral to EBS4? • Email teachers whose role appears as unmarked (daily) • Print 85% or less attendance each weeks 4 and 9 of the term and email to parents. • Amend discrepancies
Roll Call Teacher	**Roll Call Room**	• Mark rolls accurately and submit roll at the beginning of the lesson. Complete head count to ensure accurate numbers • Monitor/track students' attendance. If they have been absent remind students to bring notes to the front office. • If you have attendance concerns discuss these with Year Adviser. • Contact Front Office SASS staff with discrepancies

Head Teacher	**Whole School**	• Support staff with general concern about student attendance • Support teachers to mark rolls accurately • Contact Front Office SASS staff with discrepancies
Classroom Teacher	**Classes**	• Mark rolls accurately and submit roll where possible, at the beginning of the lesson. Complete head count to ensure accurate numbers
Year Advisers	**Year Group**	• Provide Pastoral Care in Roll Call room to students who have poor attendance. • At the end of each week enter students onto Sentral if you have attendance concerns. about and create a notification to Attendance Officer
Attendance Officer	**Whole School**	• Collate Year Adviser referrals and week 4 and week 9 below 85% absence data and distribute this to the Deputies
School Counsellor	**Whole School**	• Support students and families with concerns of attendance and relay to Deputies
HSLO	**Whole School**	• Attendance Referrals • To contact parents and meet with students and parents who are on their Case Load • Attendance Interviews twice a term. • Issue Letter 1 to parents at meetings
Deputies	**Year Groups**	• Print Year Group attendance reports fortnightly and distribute to Year Advisers at welfare meetings. • Make HSLO referrals as need be. • Attend HSLO Case Management meeting as need arises. • Manage critical cases and discuss concerns with Year Adviser, SSO, School Counsellor, HSLO and Principal. • Contact Learning and Wellbeing as required. • Contact Front Office SASS staff with discrepancies • Notify CWU and DCJ as required and liaise with Principal
Deputies	**Whole School**	• Oversee whole school attendance policy and liaise with Principal
Principal	**Whole School**	• Manage complex cases with Deputies and Director of Education. Has the authority to: • grant sick leave to students whose absences are satisfactorily explained as being due to illness • accept other explanations for absence and record the absence as 'L' • decline to accept an explanation for absence and record the absence as unjustified • grant an exemption from school attendance for periods totalling up to 100 days in a 12-month period for any one student provided certain conditions are met (see the Exemption from School - Procedures) • grant part-day exemptions from school for periods totalling up to 100 days in a 12-month period (see the Exemption from School - Procedures)

Lateness

Staff	Area of Responsibility	Actions
Front Office SASS Staff Attendance Officer	**Whole School**	- Daily SMS to parents for students who are late - Record late students - Attendance Officer to Issue lateness report to DPs each fortnight. - Inform students if late 3 times of make up recess and lunch date – with DP
Classroom Teacher	**Students**	- If student is late to class, teacher negotiates make up time with student. - Refer to Head Teacher if student does not attend.
Head Teacher	**Students**	- Head Teacher contacts parents and create make up time - Referral to Deputy for students who do not complete make up time
Deputy Principal	**Students**	- Case manage students including contact with parents and students, make up time, community service or possible reflection room. - Action 3 days late – Recess & Lunch detention to make up time. - Second time 3 times late, issue Friday afternoon detention contact parents.
Principal		Manage complex cases with Deputies and Director of Education.
HSLO	**Students/Parents**	Home School Support Officers create the connection between students, parents, school and agencies so that students have the best possible opportunity to engage with their learning. Attendance support officers: - support attendance of compulsory school age students, between six and 17 years - monitor attendance registers, suggesting areas for development with school-based procedures and identifying emerging issues or concerns - support schools with the development and implementation of school-based strategies and school plans to improve attendance - collaborate with School Service staff in the resolution of attendance issues - provide advice to School Services and school staff on matters related to attendance; this may include information about attendance professional learning available to department staff - liaise with community, government, and non-government agencies. - Case manage referrals from Deputies

Truancy

Staff	Area of Responsibility	Actions
Classroom Teacher	Classes	• Teacher to mark roll and if student is truanting create makeup time - enter on Sentral and email parents.. • If student does not attend, refer to Head Teacher
Head Teacher	Classes and Referrals from Teacher	• As per classroom teacher • Referrals from classroom teachers, speak with student and arrange another makeup time and email parents. If student does not attend, refer to Deputy.
Deputy	Year Groups	• Case manage students including contact with parents and students, make up time, community service or possible Reflection Room
Year Advisers	Year Groups	• Have a restorative conversation with students regarding their Truancy
Sports Organiser	Students	• Informed of truancies, discuss critical cases with HT PDHPE and Deputy • Continuous truants are placed in non-sport for a period of time. Parents are informed

3. Attendance support strategies and programs

Universal preventions (90 -100%)	Schools create a welcoming environment for all students to attend school and participate in learning. Positive relationships with students, staff and the school community support a sense of belonging and engagement with learning and school activities. Student attendance is promoted and supported by all staff. Attendance records are monitored: common barriers to attendance are addressed; improvements in attendance are recognised; and early interventions are actioned.
Targeted intervention (80-90%)	- Resolution of attendance difficulties may require more targeted school-based strategies including: - meeting with the student and parents - referral to the school's Learning and Support Team to identify and implement strategies that address the learning and support needs for the student - development of a school-based attendance improvement plan with the student and parents - engaging identified groups of students in programs that support regular attendance and punctuality - referral to the school counsellor - requesting and sharing information and working collaboratively with other government or non- government agencies - use of interpreters and translated materials - seeking advice about culturally appropriate responses from relevant services and working collaboratively with them.
Individual interventions (0-80%)	- provide an open invitation for the families of the students to participate and be included in decision-making

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	- assist the student to develop explicit learning goals, with clear and consistent expectations about what the student is to do and how they are to do it - engage student-centred inquiry based pedagogies or opportunities for students to collaborate with peers, including project based learning - one to one teacher to student support, including mentoring - design learning spaces to promote 'place attachment' and the social interactions critical to student engagement and learning. - Explore the attendance resources for more examples of strategies.

4. Communication strategy

Audience	Communication channel	Frequency
Student and Parents	• Student meetings & parent meetings • Awards at assemblies • Positive phone calls home, SMS • Letters home • Student diary	Ongoing
All staff	Attendance Procedural Documents Induction/Staff handbook Attendance Whole School Evaluation	Annual
All staff	Attendance Professional learning (online and staff development day) *This may include; roll marking training, MRG training, attendance data analysis or new resources on attendance matters.*	Termly
Attendance Team and Executive Team	• Agenda item on the Learning and Support Meeting • Regular Attendance Meetings • Chapter 16 A – request for information	Weekly/Fortnightly
Whole School Community	• Newsletters • School Website • Attendance posters • Social Media Posts	Ongoing

5. Unsatisfactory pattern of attendance

A child is considered to have an unsatisfactory school attendance when they have:

- regular absences without explanation (despite follow-up from the school)
- regular absences and explanations provided by parents are not accepted by the principal, or
- extended periods of absence without an explanation or the explanation is not accepted by the principal.

An extended period of absence may be consecutive or irregular patterns of non-attendance.

All cases of unsatisfactory attendance, including part day absences are investigated promptly and school based factors impacting on attendance are addressed. Early identification of students at risk of developing poor school attendance patterns through strategies such as regular roll checks and review of attendance data.

Attendance reports from roll checks are generated at least fortnightly and tabled at Learning Support Team or attendance meetings for follow up by appropriate staff members

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6. **Learning and support needs, illness, and wellbeing**

The school's Learning and Support Team in partnership with parents identify and implement strategies that address the learning and support needs of a student with attendance patterns of concern.

When a student is frequently absent due to illness. The follow process will occur:

- Consultation occurs with parents regarding the health care needs of the student
- Medical certificates are sought for the absences
- Where there are ongoing concerns, approval is sought from parents to contact the student's doctor so the school has all relevant information regarding the student's health care needs
- Strategies are developed to ensure regular attendance at school.

7. **Reporting Child Protection concerns**

Our school ensures that any matter relating to school attendance where safety, welfare or wellbeing concerns arise for a student:

- consideration is given to the requirements of the <u>Child Protection Policy Guidelines: Responding to and reporting students at risk of harm</u>
- all required reports are made to the Community Services Child Protection Helpline or contact made with the Child Wellbeing Unit (as required by the Mandatory Reporter Guide).

8. **Roll Marking**:

   1. If a student is absent in your class mark them as ABSENT - you cannot mark them as present, you have duty of care for anyone you mark present on your roll.
   2. If they have school business or incursion next to their name for your **entire** period record it as an explained absence in PxP by selecting EXPLAINED in the drop down menu, then you can make a comment in the comment box as to where the student is.
   3. If they have school business or incursion next to their name for **part of** your period record it as either a **Early Departure** or **Late Arrival** and select the time and then select EXPLAINED in the drop down menu, then you can make a comment in the comment box as to where the student is.
   4. If the student is Present in your class when they have School Business or Incursion next to their name mark them as Present and then email Karin to inform her so she can chase up with the organiser of the event to see if the student was in attendance and then correct the attendance data.

Organiser of the School Business / Incursion - it is your responsibility to inform the SASS Attendance Officer if any student is ABSENT so they can amend the entry on Sentral. This needs to be done as soon as possible.

2015 Attendance Register Codes
Definitions

Only the following attendance register codes **must** be used to record the:
- explanation of student absence, and/or
- variation in student attendance**.**

Attendance Register Codes	
Symbols to be used for explanation of student absence	
Symbol	**Meaning**
A	The student's absence is unexplained or unjustified. This symbol must be used if no explanation has been provided by parents within seven days of the occurrence of an absence or the explanation is not accepted by the principal It is at the principal's discretion to accept or not accept the explanation provided.
S	The student's absence is due to sickness or as the result of a medical or paramedical appointment. In these cases: - a medical certificate is provided or - the absence was due to sickness and the principal accepts this explanation. Principals may request a medical certificate in addition to explanations if the explanation is doubted, or the student has a history of unsatisfactory attendance.
L	An explanation of the absence is provided which has been accepted by the principal. This may be due to: - misadventure or unforseen event - participation in special events not related to the school - domestic necessity such as serious illness of an immediate family member - attendance at funerals - travel in Australia and overseas - recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions.
E	The student was suspended from school

Symbol	Meaning
Attendance Register Codes **Symbols to be used to record a variation in attendance** (not counted as an absence for statistical purposes)	
M	The student was exempted from attending school and a Certificate of Exemption has been issued by a delegated officer.
F	The student is participating in a flexible timetable and not present because they are not required to be at school. This could include participation in: - HSC Pathways Program - Best Start Assessments - Trial or HSC examinations - VET courses
B	The student is absent from the school on official school business. This symbol is recorded where the principal approves the student leaving the school site to undertake, for example: - work experience - school sport (regional and state carnivals) - school excursions - student exchange
H[1]	The student is enrolled in a school and is required or approved to be attending an alternative educational setting on a sessional or full time basis. The symbol is recorded where a student accesses education settings separate to their mainstream school such as: - tutorial centre and programs - behaviour schools - juvenile justice - hospital schools - distance education

Recording the duration of an absence or variation in attendance

In addition to recording the reason for an absence or the reason for a variation in attendance, the duration of the absence or variation must be recorded.

Manual Attendance Registers

Department of Education and Communities schools that maintain manual attendance registers and do not use electronic means for maintaining student attendance must use the following symbols with the appropriate attendance register code for recording the reason for absence or a variation in attendance:

a - The student was absent on that day.
Pa - The student was late or was absent for part of a day. The time of arrival or departure must be recorded.

Note: The symbol X is to be used for the first and last day that the student attended for each term.

Electronic Attendance Registers[2]

For Department of Education and Communities schools using electronic means for maintaining student attendance (OASIS, ebs4 or compliant third party systems), when recording a partial absence, the precise time of arrival and/or departure must be documented.

When information is transferred to OASIS from other compliant electronic systems, or from manual attendance registers, whole day absence (a) will be shown as W and partial absence (Pa) will be shown as P.