



SCARBOROUGH PUBLIC SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

PREAMBLE

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.

This document supports the [School Attendance Policy](#) (2015) and is adapted from the [Student Attendance in Government Schools – Procedures](#) (2015).

IMPLEMENTATION:

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES:

ALL STAFF

- Regularly remind parents and school community that good attendance is a factor in ensuring sound academic achievement
- Promote understanding of attendance through regular items in the school newsletter
- Conduct information sessions for parents for parents that reinforce regular attendance
- Develop good parent-staff relationships to encourage regular attendance
- Work with regional support staff to identify and address any barriers to student attendance

CLASS TEACHER

- **Mark the roll by 9.15am every day in Compass**
- Contact parent after two consecutive days of unexplained absences, and request a note to explain.
- Send absence notes to the office for processing in Compass
- Notify principal of any absence concerns
- Regularly acknowledge students who have good or improved attendance
- Log all actions and communication in Compass Chronicle
- Update student record cards absences at the end of each term

ADMIN STAFF

- Ensure all late arrivals and early departures are entered through the Compass kiosk, enter manually, if required.
- Provide casual staff with a casual folder, including current roll.
- Enter details of verbal and email explanations into Compass and forward info to teacher
- Manually enter roll for classes with casuals, by 9.30am
- Transfer absence data from Compass to ebs
- Unexplained absence notes sent to parents fortnightly.
- Notify teachers of unmarked rolls
- Retain all notes and certificates

PRINCIPAL

- Regularly analyse Compass attendance data to identify students with high absences and address any issues
- Identify and address any community issues which may lead to absenteeism
- Ensure the accuracy of roll marking and that there is appropriate follow-up by school staff with parents/carers
- Ensure the follow up of absences adheres to the Department *School Attendance Policy*
- Regularly highlight the importance of accuracy in roll marking with staff

LEARNING & SUPPORT TEAM

- Monitor and review student attendance in fortnightly Learning and Support Team meetings.
- Liaise with the Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO) regarding any attendance issues



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ATTENDANCE MONITORING

ROLL MARKING

Teacher and non-teaching staff enter absences into Compass using the Department of Education Student Attendance Register Codes. **This must be completed by 9.15am.**

FOLLOWING UP

Teacher contacts parent after **two consecutive days** of unexplained absences and requests a note to explain reasons for absence. Parents must provide this information **within 7 days** of the start of the absence. Teacher to record parent contact in Compass Chronicle.

Notes requesting reasons for unexplained absences are sent out from the office every fortnight (odd weeks).

If a noticeable improvement – acknowledge and celebrate

PATTERNS OF NON-ATTENDANCE

If student's attendance is **below 90%** or there is a pattern of non-attendance, teacher must contact the parent and express concern to supervisor. Ensure any parent communication is logged in Compass Chronicle.

If a noticeable improvement – acknowledge and celebrate

MONITORING

If the student attendance issue continues, teacher requests a parent meeting to develop strategies to improve student attendance. **Compulsory School Attendance: Information for Parents** sheet given to parents.

Teacher completes an ***Individual Student Attendance Monitoring and Communication Sheet*** to track actions.

If a noticeable improvement – acknowledge and celebrate

LEARNING & SUPPORT TEAM

If there is no improvement in attendance, the principal contacts the parents about attendance concerns with letter sent home. Medical certificate and information requested for any absences due to sickness. Referral to Learning & Support Team through Compass, attaching a copy of the completed ***Student Attendance Monitoring and Communication Sheet*** for review. All communication recorded in Compass Chronicle.

If a noticeable improvement – acknowledge and celebrate

STRATEGIES REVIEWED

Principal monitors attendance of student. Learning and Support Team review strategies implemented at fortnightly LaST meetings and provide feedback to the classroom teacher. Strategies modified/implemented e.g. school counsellor intervention. Record on monitoring sheet and in Compass Chronicle.

If a noticeable improvement – acknowledge and celebrate

HSLO INVOLVEMENT

If attendance issue continues, complete Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO) application and relevant documentation.



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INDIVIDUAL STUDENT ATTENDANCE MONITORING AND COMMUNICATION SHEET

Name of student	
Class	
Year	
Teacher	

RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

Term 1		Term 2		Term 3		Term 4	
Total	Unjustified	Total	Unjustified	Total	Unjustified	Total	Unjustified

ACTION TAKEN TO RESTORE ATTENDANCE

Action	Date completed
Student interviewed	
Information and/or medical certificates sought for unexplained absences	
Phone call made to parent/carer expressing concern over attendance (logged in Compass Chronicle)	
Request for teacher meeting with parents/carer regarding attendance improvement	
Letter sent home regarding attendance concerns, with attached Compulsory School Attendance: Information for Parents document.	
Student referred to Learning & Support Team for review of strategies	
Positive reward system implemented	
Principal contact with parents regarding attendance concerns with formal letter sent home.	
School counsellor intervention – if appropriate	
Other action/strategies used:	

Attendance has now improved and student rewarded with certificate and merit sticker.
No further action required at this stage

These actions have failed to improve attendance, referral to HSLO program made on:

Date: _____ Principal: _____



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RESOURCES FOR NEWSLETTER AND SOCIAL MEDIA



EVERY DAY COUNTS


A day here or there doesn't seem like much, but...

When your child misses just...	That equals...	Which is...	And therefore, from Kindy to Year 12, that is...	This means that the best your child can achieve is...
1 day each fortnight	20 days per year	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1 ½ years of learning	Equal to finishing Year 11
1 day a week	40 days per year	8 weeks per year	Over 2 ½ years of learning	Equal to finishing Year 10
2 days a week	80 days per year	16 weeks per year	Over 5 years of learning	Equal to finishing Year 7
3 days a week	120 days per year	24 weeks per year	Nearly 8 years of learning	Equal to finishing Year 4

Give your child every chance to succeed

Every day counts!





EVERY MINUTE COUNTS


A few minutes here or there don't seem like much, but...

When your child misses just...	That equals...	Which is...	And...	And therefore, from Kindy to Year 12, that is...
10 minutes a day	Nearly an hour per week	Nearly 1 ½ days per term	Over 1 full week of lost learning a year	Over 1 ½ terms of learning
20 minutes a day	Nearly 1 ½ hours per week	2 ½ days per term	Over 2 full weeks of lost learning a year	Nearly 3 terms of learning
30 minutes a day	2 ½ hours per week	Over 3 full days per term	Over 3 weeks learning lost a year	Over 1 full year of learning
1 hour a day	5 hours per week	Over 1 ½ weeks per term	2/3 of a term's learning lost a year	Over 2 full years of learning

Many classes have critical literacy groups first thing in the morning. Missing that valuable instruction significantly impacts on your child.

Give your child every chance to succeed

Every minute counts!



Compulsory School Attendance

Information for parents

Education for your child is important and regular attendance at school is essential for your child to achieve their educational best and increase their career and life options. NSW public schools work in partnership with parents to encourage and support regular attendance of children and young people. When your child attends school every day, learning becomes easier and your child will build and maintain friendships with other children.

What are my legal responsibilities?

Education in New South Wales is compulsory for all children between the ages of six years and below the minimum school leaving age. The *Education Act 1990* requires that parents ensure their children of compulsory school age are enrolled at, and regularly attend school, or, are registered with the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards for homeschooling.

Once enrolled, children are required to attend school each day it is open for students.

The importance of arriving on time

Arriving at school and class on time:

- Ensures that students do not miss out on important learning activities scheduled early in the day
- Helps students learn the importance of punctuality and routine
- Give students time to greet their friends before class
- Reduces classroom disruption

Lateness is recorded as a partial absence and must be explained by parents.

What if my child has to be away from school?

On occasion, your child may need to be absent from school. Justified reasons for student absences may include:

- being sick, or having an infectious disease
- having an unavoidable medical appointment
- being required to attend a recognised religious holiday
- exceptional or urgent family circumstance (e.g. attending a funeral)

Following an absence from school you must ensure that within 7 days you provide your child's school with a verbal or written explanation for the absence. However, if the school has not received an explanation from you within 2 days, the school may contact you to discuss the absence.

Principals may decline to accept an explanation that you have provided if they do not believe the absence is in the best interest of your child. In these circumstances your child's absence would be recorded as unjustified. When this happens the principal will discuss their decision with you and the reasons why.

Principals may request medical certificates or other documentation when frequent or long term absences are explained as being due to illness. Principals may also seek parental permission to speak with medical specialists to obtain information to collaboratively develop a health care plan to support your child. If the request is denied, the principal can record the absences as unjustified.

Travel

Families are encouraged to travel during school holidays. If travel during school term is necessary, discuss this with your child's school principal. An *Application for Extended Leave* may need to be completed. Absences relating to travel will be marked as leave on the roll and therefore contribute to your child's total absences for the year.

In some circumstances students may be eligible to enrol in distance education for travel periods over 50 school days. This should be discussed with your child's school principal.





My child won't go to school. What should I do?

You should contact the principal as soon as possible to discuss the issue and ask for help. Strategies to help improve attendance may include a referral to the school's learning and support team or linking your child with appropriate support networks. The principal may seek further support from the Home School Liaison Program to develop an Attendance Improvement Plan.

What might happen if my child continues to have unacceptable absences?

It is important to understand that the Department of Education and Communities may be required to take further action where children of compulsory school age have recurring numbers of unexplained or unjustified absences from school.

Some of the following actions may be undertaken:

- Compulsory Schooling Conferences

You may be asked, along with your child, to attend a Compulsory Schooling Conference. The conference will help to identify the supports your child may need to have in place so they attend school regularly. The school, parents and agencies will work together to develop an agreed plan (known as Undertakings) to support your child's attendance at school.

- Application to the Children's Court – Compulsory Schooling Order

If your child's attendance at school remains unsatisfactory the Department

may apply to the Children's Court for a *Compulsory Schooling Order*. The Children's Court magistrate may order a Compulsory Schooling Conference to be convened.

- Prosecution in the Local Court

School and Department staff remain committed to working in partnership with you to address the issues which are preventing your child's full participation at school. In circumstances where a breach of compulsory schooling orders occurs further action may be taken against a parent in the Local Court. The result of court action can be the imposition of a community service order or a fine.

What age can my child leave school?

All New South Wales students must complete Year 10 or its equivalent. After Year 10, and up until they reach 17 years of age, there are a range of flexible options for students to complete their schooling.

Working in Partnership

The Department of Education and Communities recognises that working collaboratively with students and their families is the best way to support the regular attendance of students at school.

We look forward to working in partnership with you to support your child to fulfil their life opportunities.

If a student misses as little as 8 days in a school term, by the end of primary school they'll have missed over a year of school.

Further information regarding school attendance can be obtained from the following websites:

Policy, information and brochures:

Please visit the Department of Education's *Policy library*

The school leaving age:

Please visit the Department of Education's *Wellbeing and Learning* website

Do you need an interpreter?

Interpreting services are available on request, including for the hearing impaired. The Telephone Interpreter Service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week on 131 450. You will not be charged for this service.

For further advice and questions contact your educational services team

T 131 536

Learning and Engagement

Student Engagement & Interagency Partnerships

T 9244 512

www.dec.nsw.gov.au

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