

Student Attendance Procedures

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.

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2005-0259>

Implementation

Implementation of the school attendance policy is a joint responsibility held by school and parents.

School staff are responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students by:

- Providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of well being and belonging to the school community
- Recognising and rewarding excellent and improved student attendance
- Maintaining daily accurate records of student attendance using Sentral
- Implementing programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise
- Providing clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that:

- Students are enrolled consistent with the requirements set out in document; Student Attendance in Government Schools Procedures (2015)
- Attendance records are maintained in an approved format and are an accurate record of the attendance of students
- All attendance records including details of transfers and exemptions are accessible to the regional director, home school liaison officer and other personnel nominated by the regional director, Audit Directorate or nominated by the Director-General
- Documented plans are developed to address the needs of students whose attendance is identified as being of concern, prior to referral to the Home School Liaison Program
- The Director, Public Schools NSW, or nominee, is provided with regular information about students for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue and for whom school strategies have failed to restore regular attendance



- The school discipline policy addresses attendance issues, including truancy. It should provide strategies for encouraging good attendance and establish structures and procedures that support teachers in addressing issues of student non-attendance.
- School staff are trained to implement school attendance policies and procedures and that personnel with delegated responsibility for maintaining attendance records are supervised
- Parents and students are regularly informed of the importance of school and attendance requirements.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that:

- Their children of compulsory school age are enrolled in a government or registered non-government school or, registered with NESAs for Home Schooling.
- Their children who are enrolled at school attend every day the school is open for instruction
- They provide an explanation for absences to the school within 7 days from the first day of any period of absence through the schools app. Other acceptable means include telephone call, written note, text message or email. The 7 day timeframe for explaining absences is a requirement of the Education Act (1990)
- They work in partnership with the school to plan and implement strategies to support regular attendance at school. This includes communicating with the school if they are aware of issues impacting on their child's attendance or engagement with school.

Requirements

- All cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences from school are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented
- The principal or delegate will undertake all reasonable measures to contact parents promptly and within two days of an unexplained absence occurring.

Record keeping requirements for student attendance:

- Attendance registers (rolls) must reflect the highest professional standards
- The teacher or other nominee of the principal responsible for maintaining a manual attendance register is required to sign the register each day
- The principal or delegate will ensure that explanations for absences are recorded within 7 days of the occurrence of the absence
- School attendance must be recorded on the attendance register (Attendance Module in Sentral) at the commencement of the school day
- In the case of late arrival or early departure, the precise times of arrival or departure must be recorded with the relevant attendance register codes
- Principals can request the parents provide a medical certificate if the explanation is doubted or where there is a history of poor attendance.