

BLAKEHURST PUBLIC SCHOOL



ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES



Rationale

For students to learn, they need to arrive at school on time and attend regularly. Regular attendance is a critical factor in ensuring that students have every opportunity to learn and develop. This cannot occur without a strong partnership between parents/carers who have a legal responsibility to ensure that students attend school regularly and school staff who have a duty of care to ensure that student attendance is managed according to the school's procedures.

Responsibilities

Parents will:

- Understand the legal requirements and educational necessity for regular school attendance.
- Accept help from the school and Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO) to overcome student attendance issues.
- Provide documentation explaining the reason for a student's absence by verbal or written or electronic communication, no later than 7 days after the student is absent.
- Explain the absence of their children promptly.
- Ensure students are 'signed out' with the appropriate teacher, stating the time, whenever parents/carers pick up students early on special days e.g. athletics carnivals.
- Attend the office when picking up students before 3:25pm or arriving after 9:25am.

Students will:

- Attend school every day it is open except in the case of a valid reason.
- Take pride in regular attendance.
- Attempt to overcome problems that contribute to poor attendance.
- Not leave school between the school's start and finish times without a valid reason e.g. illness.

Teachers will:

- Understand the importance of accurately recording and carefully, efficiently and effectively monitoring students' attendance.
- Ensure the class roll is marked daily and by the time indicated in the school's procedures.
- Record reasons for absences on Sentral when either written or verbal advice is provided by parents/carers. This includes the recording of the date and a letter symbol, as per DoE (Department of Education) guidelines (e.g. L-leave).
- Be conversant with the school and Department's attendance policies.
- Contact parents/carers if a child is absent for 3 consecutive days, the child has unjustified leave and an explanation has not been given after 7 days or if the child's attendance is deemed to be a concern.
- Record all correspondence regarding attendance on the school's Sentral system – as per school procedures.
- Discuss attendance concerns with Assistant Principal/Stage leaders so that follow up can take place as required.
- Provide a caring, stimulating and successful learning environment which will encourage regular attendance.
- Ensure that when students are signed out early on special days (such as school concerts or athletics carnivals) that this is recorded on Sentral.

The Assistant Principal/attendance supervisors will:

- Discuss attendance concerns with teachers at stage/team meetings.
- Liaise with the Principal, Learning Support Team and the HSLO when attendance is/becomes an issue.
- Regularly induct/in-service staff as to their roles and responsibilities as outlined in the Attendance Procedures.
- Notify parents whenever student(s) truant from school.

The Principal will:

- Ensure that the regular monitoring of attendance is a core school responsibility.
- Ensure attendance registers are maintained accurately.
- Provide clear information to students and parents about attendance requirements.
- Ensure processes are in place to contact parents when reasons for absences have not been explained.
- Ensure that students with attendance concerns are identified and strategies are put in place to address these concerns.

The Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO) will:

- Assist the school in the monitoring of school attendance and to follow up and give support to the school and families where necessary.
- Work closely with the school staff to ensure school attendance is maintained successfully and any issues are addressed.

Administration Staff will:

- Enter late arrivals and early leavers are entered into Sentral.
- Communicate with teachers so that they know when one of their children has left early – particularly if this happens outside of class times – ie, sport, lunch, recess, etc.
- Collect the paper copy of rolls and update attendance on Sentral when casual teachers are on a class or when special days occur.
- Complete daily checks to ensure that all rolls have been marked and submitted as per the school's procedures.
- The SAM will roll over attendance from Sentral to EBS4 on a weekly basis.

Roll Marking Procedures

Teachers will:

- Follow the attendance procedures as outlined in the 'Student Attendance in Government Schools Procedures'.
- Mark and record rolls daily and accurately.
- Casual teachers are to mark the roll on a class list and send to school office. The administration staff to enter attendance in Sentral.
- If casual teacher is allocated to a class for a sustained period, they are to follow procedures for teachers and roll marking in Sentral. When this applies, an induction will be provided to the teacher to ensure that the process is followed correctly.
- Utilise the 'Attendance Register Codes'.

Procedures for special event days/excursions and PSSA (*Special events days are days which alter the school routine significantly.*)

- **Coordinators of special events** are to inform classroom teachers and the office of students who are attending an event that is linked to the curriculum. These students are to be marked as 'School Business' on the roll.

- **Full day events:** teachers will return paper rolls, which include full or partial absences, to the office. The administrative staff will file these rolls and record attendance on Sentral.
- **Small groups who have left the school, and where a student has been signed out from the group:** the supervising teacher will inform the office, who will update in Sentral.

The following points should be noted:

- The attendance supervisor on each stage is the Assistant Principal for that stage. The overall attendance administrator is the Principal.
- Students who arrive after 9:25am or leave before 3:25pm will be recorded on Sentral by the office.
- Students **must not** leave early unless collected by a parent/carer or their approved nominated representative. Parents or carers picking up students should attend the office. If a student consistently arrives late or leaves early, the relevant attendance supervisor should be alerted by the class teacher.
- Unexplained or unsatisfactory reasons for absences will be marked as 'Absent and Unjustified'.

Note: Exemptions for leave during the school term need to be approved by the Principal. Parents/Carers are required to complete the relevant documentation and the Principal will communicate with the parent/carer to determine the suitability of the request. The Principal will then communicate with the class teacher to inform him/her if leave has been approved. Absences not approved by the Principal will be counted in the student's absence record.

Attendance Monitoring Procedures

- Teachers monitor absences and unjustified lateness, and any concerns are brought to the attention of the Assistant Principal.
- The Assistant Principal will then include the attendance issue as part of discussions at the Learning and Support Team meeting.
- As part of their supervision requirement, the Assistant Principal will monitor rolls in set weeks across each term. Any concerns are then brought to the attention of the Learning Support Team (LST), and the Principal.
- In the event that a student becomes an attendance concern, the following strategies will be applied:
 1. Contact with parent/caregiver.
 2. Initiatives implemented to improve attendance.
 3. Meetings with the student's parent/caregiver if attendance concerns continue.
 4. Referral to the Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO).

The H.S.L.O. will also monitor attendance remotely using Sentral and communicate with the school as required.

Liaison with Parents/Caregivers

- All explanatory notes must be dated.
- Verbal notifications of absence will be recorded.
- If no satisfactory explanation is received within 7 (calendar) days of the first period of absence, teachers will contact the parent.
- Any contact with parents regarding attendance is recorded in Sentral.
- If no explanation for an absence has been received, and the child has not returned to school for more than 3 days or there has been no request for a transfer, the teacher will ring the parent/carer. Where contact cannot be made and the child continues to be absent, the school executive will follow up with the family.

Strategies used by the school to promote the Importance of Good Attendance

- Provide a caring and stimulating learning environment in which students are able to achieve success and recognition for success every day.
- Regularly communicate the importance of school attendance and the school's Attendance Procedures with parents through various forms of communication and at events including information sessions, workshops and orientation sessions.
- Publish attendance census data when compiled in Terms 2 and 4.
- Include attendance data in student Academic Reports (Terms 2 and 4)

Procedures for Dealing with Unacceptable Attendance

School Measures

Blakehurst Public School implements a wide range of strategies to support the regular attendance of students, including extensive contact with parents to resolve issues of non-attendance. These strategies include letters, phone calls, interviews and family support. Students are expected to maintain an attendance rate of 85% or above at all times, unless approved leave has been granted.

When classroom teachers feel a student has an unacceptable attendance pattern, and the student is not already being monitored, a referral is made to the Learning and Support Team so that follow up initiatives can be considered and implemented.

Home School Liaison Officer Intervention and Investigation

Where the school has taken all reasonable action to support the regular attendance of a student of **compulsory** school age but the student continues to attend erratically, the matter will be referred to the Home School Liaison program for investigation. An Attendance Improvement Plan will then be developed And implemented in consultation with the family.

Most recent review: November 2019

Next review date: December 2020



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References:

School Attendance Policy (PD20050259)

Student Attendance in Government Schools: Procedures -2015

School Attendance Register Codes 2015

School Attendance in Government Schools – Absentee Notices 2015

Safe

Respectful

Engaged

Resilient