

Attendance Policy

Purpose

The Department of Education articulates the following expectations for schools:

- Encourage greater responsibility of parents and the community to lift student attendance alongside implementation of school-based strategies.
- Establish targets to improve the proportion of students with more than 90% attendance.
- To inform school staff, leaders, and parents of the response to non-attendance.
- Establish a case management approach to address non-attendance.
- Build a positive and clear line of communication between parents and teachers and the wider school community.

Aim

- To inform school staff, leaders, and parents of the response to non-attendance.
- Establish a teacher led case management approach to address non-attendance.
- Build a positive and clear line of communication between parents and teachers; and the wider school community.

Objectives

- Increase the overall attendance of all students sitting below Regular attendance (At Risk < 90%)
- Reduce the number of students arriving late.
- Reduce the number of unexplained absence.

Responsibilities

Administration:

- Deputy Principal (Attendance) to provide regular parent information on attendance (At Risk students).
- SAER Team meets when student referrals are made or when whole school attendance decisions need to be made.
- All students at 'Severe Risk' and 'Moderate Risk' (< 60% attendance, 60%-79%) are individually case managed.
- Deputy Principal (Attendance) co-ordinate case conferences where necessary for case managed students.
- For at risk students, a letter will be sent home regularly outlining their attendance percentage. A Copy is given to Teachers – then collated into handover file for the following year.
- A more formal process to be implemented (e.g. conference) with Parent/ Caregiver as outlined in DoE Attendance Policy if attendance for Case managed students does not improve.



Attendance Category	Range	Administration Action
Regular Attendance	90% or Above	Monitoring of all students by Admin on a weekly basis. Discuss with teachers where necessary.
Indicated Attendance	80% - 89%	Admin to contact parents/caregivers by phone initially, discuss reasons for attendance, offer support where needed. If attendance fails to improve then a more formal process (attendance meeting/plan) will need to be initiated.
Moderate Risk	60% - 79 %	Case managed students. Formal attendance meeting initiated and an Attendance Improvement Plan devised with the parents/caregivers and external agencies where required.
Severe Risk	Below 60%	Case managed students, as above. Involvement of Regional Engagement Officer (SMERO) and Attendance Panel where deemed appropriate.

Teachers:

- Accurate entry of attendance in SIS using the appropriate code is vital in ensuring data is valid and can be collected to inform decisions regarding student attendance. Please familiarise yourself with the SIS Lesson Attendance codes and explanations (See Appendix A and B).
- Student attendance must be recorded by 9.30am. Student attendance records must be entered into SIS Lesson Attendance at the end of each day.
- If a student is away more than 3 consecutive days, teachers will contact Parent/Caregiver (Teachers to keep a record of all Parent/Caregiver contact on Integris under 'Student activity'). The aim is to have reduced unexplained absences in attendance data. A note explaining the reason (either verbal or written) for the absence must be entered into SIS Lesson Attendance for the absent days using the 'add note' feature.
- Students with attendance below 90% will be deemed 'at risk'. Teachers must be in regular contact with Parents/Caregivers of students in this category. Non-attendance Charts should be used for the basis of discussions with Parent/Caregivers. (See Appendix A)
- If unsuccessful in making contact with the Parent/Caregiver of students 'at risk' or attendance does not improve after classroom level intervention and support, the student will be referred to the Attendance Team.
- For students arriving at school after 8.55am this will be noted as 'late' in SIS by the School Officer/office staff.
- For students arriving late regularly (two times or more in any given week), class teachers will follow up with contact with Parents/Caregivers. Teachers are to refer student to Admin if lateness continues.
- Families taking Vacation Leave during school terms is discouraged. All vacations must be approved by the Principal. If approved this will be entered as 'X' in SIS Lesson Attendance.

Students:

- Ensure they arrive at school before 8:45am siren
- Prompt attendance outside respective classrooms after breaks 1 and 2
- If arriving after the second siren all student must report to the front office

Parents/Carers:

- Parents/Caregivers are responsible for ensuring that children in their care have 'Regular Attendance'
- Parents/Caregivers are to ensure that children in their care arrive at school before 8.45am
- Parent/caregivers to provide written/verbal explanation of child's absence on, before or immediately after the day/s of absence.
- Parents attend attendance case conference(s) as deemed necessary by the Attendance Team

Appendices:

Appendix A

Figure 1 – Cumulative absence table

If your child misses...	That equals...	Or...	From Kindy to year 12 that adds up to...	Which is the equivalent of attending until:	Attendance Rate
1 day per fortnight	20 days per year	1 month per year	nearly 1 ½ years	part-way through year 11	90%
1 day per week	40 days per year	2 months per year	over 2 ½ years	part-way through year 10	80%
2 days per week	80 days per year	4 months per year	over 5 years	the end of year 7	60%
3 days per week	120 days per year	6 months per year	nearly 8 years	the end of year 4	40%

APPENDIX B

EXPLANATORY NOTES FOR SIS LESSON ATTENDANCE CODES

There are 15 codes in the School Information System (SIS) Lesson Attendance module to record and monitor student attendance. These notes are provided to assist schools in accurately recording and monitoring student attendance.

Codes for students who are present

/ - Present code

This is the default setting in Lesson Attendance.

Three other codes may be used when students are participating in the educational program of the school but are not attending their classes as usual.

E - Educational Activity

This code should be used when the student is participating in an approved educational program such as an excursion, work placement or an off-site program (PEAC). This code is not classified as an absence.

W - Withdrawn

To be used when a student is withdrawn from classroom activities but is still present at school. For example, when a student is sent to the office or a buddy class but still remains at school. This code is not classified as an absence.

M - Medical or Sick Bay

The M code should be applied to students when they are **on school grounds** in the medical or sick bay. This code is not classified as an absence.

Codes for students who are late

L - Late

To be used when a student is late to school but is not late enough to be recorded as a half day absence. This code is not classified as an absence. *NB: A student is absent if they have attended less than two full hours of continuous instruction.*

Codes for Authorised Absences

There are five codes which may be applied when a student's absence has been authorised by the principal.

R - Reasonable Cause

This code should be used when the principal has deemed the reason provided as acceptable. This code should not be used when the student was absent due to suspension, cultural absence, illness or family holiday.

C - Cultural Absence

To be used when the principal has authorised an absence because of cultural or religious significance to the family such as funerals, weddings and sorry time. The duration of this absence should be pre-approved by the principal. If the absence extends beyond the number of agreed days, and no acceptable reason is provided, the additional absences should be recorded with an X (Unacceptable Reason).

N - Notified as Sick

To be used when a student's absence from school has been confirmed as illness. The principal may, if required, request a medical certificate.

V - Vacation

The V code *may* be applied when a student is absent due to family vacations. The principal should use their discretion to determine a reasonable duration of the absence and may include that the student complete a work package. If the absence extends beyond the number of agreed days, and no acceptable reason is provided, the additional absences should be recorded with an X (Unacceptable Reason).

F - Flexible

This code should be used when a student is not scheduled to attend a specific class or day as a result of study leave or flexible education arrangements. The F code can be applied to an individual student or a cohort. These arrangements are authorised in advance with the school principal. This code was developed to provide identification of senior school students who may be off school grounds during exam periods to study. This code is classified as an authorised absence.

Codes for Unauthorised Absences

There are three codes which may be used when a student is absent from school and the principal does not authorise the absence.

U - Absence – cause not yet established

To be used when a student is absent from school and no explanation has yet been provided. Follow up is required to establish an acceptable cause from the parents/caregivers.

X - Unacceptable Reason

This code is to be used when the principal has not approved the reason provided for the absence. Further follow up is required.

T - Truant

This may be used for a student that is absent from school and an investigation has revealed that the student has truanted. This will usually require a teacher or parent witnessing the student leaving the school grounds or educational program without permission.

Codes for students not required to attend

Y - Not Required to Attend

This code indicates that students are not required to attend on the selected day and effectively reduces the number of half days available for that student. The Y code can be applied to the whole school, a cohort of students or individuals. Schools can use this code for critical events, natural disasters, infectious diseases or amending programs. It can be applied to AM, PM or the whole day for a selected date. **This code can also be used when a **parent/caregiver** has notified the school that a student is detained through the justice system and has provided the principal with evidence of the length of the absence. This code is not classified as an absence.

Z - Suspended

This code is automatically recorded in Lesson Attendance by the Behaviour Module when a student is formally suspended. Schools do not have to record attendance for students when they are on suspension. This code is classified as an authorised absence.

DOCUMENT HISTORY

DATE	REV	APPROVED
Updated 25/07/2021	1.0	Principal Endorsed by Board:
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