



ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Introduction

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.

Responsibilities of Parents

Parents are to ensure children are enrolled in a school, attend school every day the school is open, provide an explanation for absences to the school within 7 days and work with the school to plan and implement strategies to support regular attendance

Responsibilities of School Staff following an Unexplained Absence

1. After three days of consecutive absences where the school has not been contacted, classroom teachers will contact parents. Principal will be alerted if contact is unsuccessful.
2. Seven days following an unexplained absence, administrative staff are to issue an Absentee Notice – Compulsory School Attendance (See Appendix A via email, SMS, letter, phone)
3. Nine days following an unexplained absence, administrative staff are to inform the Principal, and the Principal will make contact with the parents.

Unjustified Absence

Principals can decline to accept an explanation for an absence. If an absence is unjustified, the Principal needs to advise the parent that the explanation has not been accepted and a reason for the decision provided.

Frequent Absences Explained as Due to Illness

The Principal will meet with parents to discuss the health care needs of the child. A medical certificate needs to be provided stating that the "child is unfit for school" on specified dates. The Principal may request to consult with the child's doctor.

Unsatisfactory Pattern of Attendance

A child is considered to have an unsatisfactory pattern of 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.

The Principal will monitor patterns of attendance weekly and inform the classroom teacher when there has been an unsatisfactory pattern of attendance. The following hierarchy of strategies will then be implemented:

1. Classroom teacher to meet with student, complete an Absentee Interview Sheet, and contact parents.
2. Classroom teacher to make a referral to the Learning Support Team.
3. Learning Support Team, Classroom Teacher and Assistant Principal to develop an Attendance Improvement Plan and communicate it to parents and student.
4. Principal to meet with parents.
5. Principal to make a referral to the Home School Liaison Officer.
6. Principal to make a referral to the Child Wellbeing Unit or Family and Community Services.

Staff are to ensure that the implementation of all steps in this hierarchy is recorded in SENTRAL / LMBR.

Record-Keeping Requirements

The administration staff will ensure:

- A Register of Admission maintained digitally.
- Records of explanations of absences retained for two years.
- Attendance registers to be retained for 3 years and stored in a secure location.
- Student absence information recorded on Student Record Cards.

Applications for Extended Leave (Travel)

For travel within a school term of any number of days in length, the parent/carer must complete an Application for Extended Leave – Travel (See Appendix B). The school will then issue a Certificate of Extended Leave – Travel (See Appendix C). The absence, if approved by the Principal, will be recorded as "L" - Leave.

When travel exceeds one term, access to Distance Education must be considered.