



Adelong Public School

School Attendance

Policy and Procedures

RATIONALE

A student's regular attendance at school is vital in order for them to obtain the greatest educational opportunities that school can offer.

Students with irregular attendance:

1. fail to obtain the continuity in their education that is desirable and necessary for them to succeed and achieve.
2. don't develop the social networks amongst their peers that is part of a healthy school experience – they are often ostracised by their peers because of their poor attendance.
3. often miss vital concepts and building blocks in their education creating difficulties for the student in their future years. This undermines their confidence and their ability to achieve in their school work.
4. create difficulties for the teachers in terms that missed work needs to be revised with the student concerned; assigned work is often late for marking and students may become behaviour problems. They often also create difficulties for the effective organisation of class activities, excursions, assessment tasks, reporting procedures, etc.

PURPOSE

To record and monitor student's attendance in order that regular attendance of students will be encouraged and to enable steps to be taken which will improve poor attendance.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents will:

- understand the legal requirements and educational necessity for regular school attendance
- accept help from the school and HSLO to overcome student attendance issues
- provide documentation explaining the reason for a student's absence via the school app or by verbal or written communication, no later than 7 days after the student is absent
- 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 3:05pm
- when possible, provide a written note of explanation prior to students being away for a period of more than 5 days
- provide proof of travel or illness if students are absent for a period of more than 5 days; and
- provide valid medical certificates as requested by the school

Students will:

- unless for valid reasons, attend school every day it is open
- take pride in regular attendance
- attempt to overcome problems that contribute to poor attendance; and
- not leave school between their arrival and pick up, without a valid reason

Teachers will:

- understand the importance of accurately recording and carefully, efficiently and effectively monitoring students' attendance
- ensure the class roll is marked daily by 9:10am on ebs ontrack
- ensure absence notes received are promptly recorded with the date and a letter symbol, as per DoE guidelines (e.g., L = leave, A = unexplained or unjustified). Then sent to the school office where the reason will be marked on ebs:Central
- be conversant with the school and Department's attendance policies
- discuss attendance concerns with the principal
- provide a caring, stimulating and successful learning environment which will encourage students' regular attendance; and
- on special days when parents sign out students early, return the signed class list to the office

The Principal will:

- regularly oversee of the accurate recording of students' attendance
- follow up instances of unsatisfactory attendance
- liaise with the Learning Support Team and HSLO (Home School Liaison Officer) when attendance becomes an issue
- in-service staff as to their roles and responsibilities as outlined in the Attendance Policy; and
- notify parents whenever student(s) truant from school

The HSLO will: (Home School Liaison Officer)

- provide the school with support in its endeavours to improve school attendance

Administration Staff will:

- if contacted by parent/caregiver, notify the relevant teacher and record the reason in ebs:Central
- if notified by parents verbally of a students absence, enter the reason into ebs:Central
- print absent letters for parents every even week of the school term
- record students who arrive late or leave early on ebs:Central

ROLL MARKING PROCEDURES

- teachers will follow the attendance procedures as outlines in the 'Student Attendance in Government Schools Procedures'
- Roll marking is to be recorded daily and accurately by teachers in *ebs ontrack* before 9:30am. Refer to QRG *How to mark a roll in ebs: ontrack+*
- Casual teachers are to mark the roll on a class list and send to school office for office staff to enter through ebs:Central
- Absent codes will be as outlined in the School Attendance Register Codes 2015 table.

PROCEDURES FOR SPECIAL EVENT DAYS/EXCURSIONS AND PSSA

Special event days are days that alter the school routine significantly.

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

- For full day events, teachers will return rolls, which include full or partial absences, to the office. The administrative staff are responsible for filing these with the daily paper rolls.
- For small groups who have left the school, and where a student has been signed out from the group, the supervising teacher should inform the office, who will update ebs:Central.

THE FOLLOWING POINTS SHOULD BE NOTED

- Students who arrive after 9:05am or leave before 3:05pm will be recorded on ebs:Central by the administration staff.
- If arriving late, students should present to the school office where they will be given a Late Arrival Slip. This must be taken to the classroom teacher.
- 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 principal should be alerted by the class teacher.
- Unexplained or unsatisfactory reason for absences should be marked as 'A'.
- *Note: Exemptions can no longer be requested or approved for parents/caregivers going on holidays during a school term. These absences are marked as leave (L) and are counted in the student's attendance record.*

ATTENDANCE MONITORING PROCEDURES

- Teachers are to monitor absences and unjustified lateness, and any concerns should be brought to the attention of the Principal.
- The Principal will monitor rolls at 5 weekly intervals in Weeks 5 and 10 each term and bring any concerns to the attention of the Learning Support Team and HSLO (if required).
- Any roll marking anomalies will be investigated by the Principal
- In the event that a student becomes an attendance concern, the following strategies will be applied at the Principal's discretion:
 - Discussions with student/teacher
 - Contact with parent
 - Rewards chart implemented to improve attendance
 - Meetings with the student's parents; and/or
 - Referral to HSLO
- The HSLO will monitor attendance remotely and notify the school of any students who are an attendance concern
- All records will be maintained so that they are easily accessible for the HSLO.

LIAISON WITH PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

- All explanatory notes must be dated. Teachers should date and initial any undated parental note.
- Verbal notifications of absences should be recorded on ebs:Central. This information should be conveyed between the office and the class teacher. Where a student's consistent lateness causes concern, teachers should discuss this with the parents of the child. If the child continues to be late, the teacher should alert the Principal.

- If no satisfactory explanation is received within 7 days of the first period of absence, teachers should contact the parent. If no satisfactory explanation is forthcoming, the teacher should alert the Principal.
- If no explanation for 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 should notify the Principal immediately.

STRATEGIES FOR GOOD ATTENDANCE

- Teachers will provide a caring and stimulating learning environment in which students are able to achieve success and recognition for success every day.
- Teachers will provide praise and incentives to encourage good attendance
- Class teachers will provide awards for 100% attendance each semester.
- Procedures for notification of absence and the importance of prompt arrival will be regularly inserted into the newsletter and regularly reported on at parent meetings, P&C meetings, etc.
- A pamphlet from the NSW Department of Education regarding student attendance is distributed at the start of each year to all families, via the newsletter, and is included in the Kindergarten Orientation packages.

Parent Awareness of the Importance of Attendance

Throughout the year there are several opportunities to raise parent and community awareness of the need for excellent attendance and the impact of poor attendance on academic performance. These include:

- Inclusion of a session on attendance at the Parent Information Evening in Term 1
- Reminders regarding the requirement of attendance in newsletters
- Letters to specific years, such as Kindergarten
- Letters and attendance reports to parents of children with an attendance pattern of less than 85% at the end of Terms 1, 2 and 3; and
- Inclusion of attendance data on the semester reports

Procedures for Dealing with Unacceptable Attendance

School Measures

Adelong 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.

In the case of a student who has been identified with unacceptable attendance (an attendance pattern of less than 85%), it is necessary to document the measures taken to monitor and improve attendance. The school is required to provide documentary evidence of its interventions before making a HSLO referral. This documentation will take the form of the *DoE Attendance Checklist for Schools*.

When classroom teachers feel a student has an unacceptable attendance pattern, and the student is not already being monitored, they should make a referral to the LaST (Learning and Support Team). The LaST will discuss and implement strategies to improve attendance. This MUST

include the use of monitoring with the *DoE Attendance Checklist for Schools* so that appropriate documentation is available if a referral needs to be made to the HSLO.

HSLO Intervention and Investigation

Where the school has taken all reasonable actions to support the regular attendance of a student of **compulsory** school age but the student continues to attend erratically, the matter should be referred to the Home School Liaison Program for investigation. Investigation, including a review of school documentation, must be completed within five school days of referral.

If appropriate, and within five school days of completing the investigation, home school liaison officers must develop an attendance improvement plan for the student. The plan will be developed in consultation with the school and will identify targets, strategies and timelines.

If the investigation indicates that home school liaison intervention is not warranted, the home school liaison officer must, within five school days, provide the school with advice on additional strategies to be implemented by the school.

Absentee Flow Chart

UNEXPLAINED ABSENCE



Verbal follow up
Action: Class Teacher



Letter sent to parents requesting explanation of absence
Action: Administration
ebs: Central



Telephone call or letter to parents requesting explanation
Action: Principal



Referral to HSLO
Action: Principal