

# Adamstown Public School



## School Attendance Policy

Staff: 2014

Parents/Community: 2014

**To Be Reviewed in 2016**



# Adamstown Public School

## OPPORTUNITY INNOVATION SUCCESS

Bryant St Adamstown NSW 2289  
Tel: 4957 1114 Fax: 4956 2446  
Email: adamstown-p@det.nsw.edu.au  
Principal: Kym Ross



## APPENDICES:

### Processes and Procedures

- Absences Procedures and Policy Update for Parents. Copy to be included in School Newsletter at the beginning each Semester and in Kindergarten Orientation Packs.
- School Attendance Procedures.
- Roll Marking Procedures.
- Student Attendance Register Codes – the ONLY codes to be used when marking the roll.
- WebAttend Handy Hints.
- Attendance Monitoring Process – the 4-level process to follow to support accurate and positive attendance.
- Absence Monitoring Sheet – to be used by the classroom teacher to monitor strategies once the attendance of a student becomes “of concern”.
- Casual Staff Sentral log on and Marking Roll Instructions – specific information for casual teachers.
- Two Day Consecutive Absence form
- Adamstown Public School Attendance Actions (as at 9/9/13)

### Letters to Parents

- Student Absence Note Yellow form
- Absence Notification – Printed by office – one week in arrears after an unexplained absence.
- Semester reminder note – to be sent at the end of a term for students who have had a high number of absences (irrespective of justification etc).
- Principal Attendance notification – to be sent by Principal after notification by class teacher of continued concern.
- Partial absences notes – to be sent at the end of a term for students with high partial attendance rates (irrespective of justifications etc) – number of days needs to be added manually at present.

### Support Documents

- LST Strategies – suggestions for LST to implement to encourage improved attendance for a student.
- Application for part-day exemption – to be used for students who are unable to manage full-day attendance at school – submitted by Principal.
- Application for exemption due to family holiday/other – to be submitted by family prior to an unavoidable absence of 10 school days or more.
- HSLO Application – to be completed by Principal after previous intervention strategies have failed (includes referral to LST).
- Parent brochure on attendance requirements – available in foyer and given to all new enrolments.



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### Absences Procedures & Policy Update

This document forms part of the Adamstown Public School Attendance Policy

Dear Parent /Carers

Laws governing attendance in schools require us to communicate with authorities over issues of student attendance. Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their learning potential. Schools, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. All student absences at Adamstown Public School, including late arrivals and early leavers, will be recorded electronically in line with the NSW Department of Education and Training Attendance Policy. This information is passed on to the department at the end of each day. Chronic whole and partial day absences will be referred to the Home School Liaison Officer for investigation.

#### **Roll Marking:**

First thing each morning your child's teacher will mark the roll. If your child is not in attendance i.e. in the class, he or she will be marked as absent. It is then the duty of the school to seek verbal or written advice promptly from parents regarding unexplained full or part day absences. To gain this information:

1. The school requests that when a child returns after an absence a signed note is given to their class teacher explaining the reason for the absence, e.g. sick, medical appointment etc.
2. If your child returns without a note of explanation the classroom teacher will give your child a form to take home requesting this information or an official letter "*Absentee Notice - Compulsory School Attendance*" may be sent home. Please sign and return these notes to school as soon as possible.
3. If your child is away from school for more than a day it is asked that parents phone the school indicating the reason for the absence.
4. If your child is away for 2 consecutive days or more without explanation the school in line with Department Policy will ring seeking information about the reason for your child's absence.

#### **Late Arrivals Register:**

If your child is late to school they **MUST** come to the office and get a **Late Note**. This note is signed by office staff and the student then gives it to their class teacher. If a parent/caregiver is with the child they will be asked to provide a reason and a signature. If there is no parent/caregiver, the late note will be signed by office staff and the teacher will send the note home with your child for a reason and a signature. The note should be returned to the school the next day.

Depending on the reason given your child will be marked as having been absent for part of the day (a partial absence) with one of the following codes:

S = Sickness, L = approved leave i.e. medical appointment, funeral, etc or A = Unjustified.

**What is unjustified?:** reasons such as slept in, running late, or where no reason is given and/no signature is obtained.

#### **Early Leavers Register:**

If you wish your child to leave early, you must first come to the office and fill in an Early Leavers Note, stating a reason and providing a signature. The office staff will then sign the note and give the note to the parent/caregiver to present to the class teacher when collecting the student. Again the student will be marked as having a partial absence with one of the codes above.

#### **Extended Leave:**

If your child is going to be away from school for an extended period of time (more than 10 days), e.g. a family holiday, you can contact the school to apply to the Principal for an exemption from school attendance. By doing this your child will not be recorded as absent. The form for exemption can be collected from the school office.



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### School Attendance Procedures

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#### Teacher Role/Responsibility

- Mark role each day according to *Roll Marking Procedures* document.
- Follow-up absence explanations according to *Roll Marking Procedures* document.
- Monitor consecutive day absences according to *Roll Marking Procedures* document.

#### Office Staff Role/Responsibility

- Complete verbal notifications when parents/carers notify of absences via phone or front counter.
- Follow up on Teachers action for *Two Day Consecutive Unexplained Absence* and record in Attendance Register.
- Contact HSLO daily if required when part of an Attendance Management Plan

#### Attendance Co-ordinator Role/Responsibility

- Complete attendance mail merge each week for previous week, print and place in teacher's pigeon holes to be handed out to students.
- Generate F4/B2 report in OASIS each Friday for Principal to sign, then file.
- Generate 85% report (F4/B3) in OASIS every 3-4 weeks. Cross reference with explanations and previous attendance actions and liaise with Principal as to required actions.
- Generate OASIS Partial Absence report (STUDENT517) twice per term and liaise with Principal as to required actions.
- Complete above actions (partial letter, attendance letter, HSLO referral) as per Principal's instructions. If the appropriate action is phone contact then it is the responsibility of the Principal to make contact.
- File a record of all actions, reports, etc.
- Ensure Exemption applications are passed to Principal. If approved, enter data in OASIS, file Exemption Certificate in the Pupil Record Card, file application in Absence folder and make note in roll of exemption dates for the teacher.
- Generally liaise with Principal, staff and HSLO in attendance matters.
- Complete Term Absence Check Sheet on Friday of each week.
- Record consecutive day absences on Attendance Actions sheet

#### Principal Role/Responsibility

- Attendance records are maintained in an approved format and are an accurate record of the attendance of students.
- Staff record accurately the attendance of each student.
- 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 or nominee (HSLO) 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.
- 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 attendance requirements.
- All cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences from school are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented.



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### Roll Marking Procedures as at 9<sup>th</sup> August 2013

This document forms part of the Adamstown Public School Attendance Policy

School rolls are legal documents that must be marked daily by the **TEACHER** only.

If a child is absent, in Sentral, click once on the date column and find the name of child in the corresponding row. A menu will pop up. It will already have "Whole Day" and "Unexplained" highlighted. Click on the absent drop down box and choose unjustified.

If this is correct, click OK. If you have a note explaining why the child is absent choose reason from drop down box:-

**Unjustified      Leave      Sick      Exempt      Suspended      School Business      Shared Enrolment**

A notification in red will appear next to child's name for all unexplained absences. When you have finished marking the roll click once on "**Submit Roll**", then click on OK in the pop up box. If there are no absences you still need to click "**Submit Roll**".

#### Marking Procedures

When a child brings a note in explaining an absence the teacher should:-

- **If for the current week** - Note on the roll the date, type of leave (whole or partial) and the reason such as:

**Unjustified      Leave      Sick      Exempt      Suspended      School Business      Shared Enrolment**

- **If for the previous week**: - Note on the roll the date, type of leave (whole W or partial P) and the reason as above.
- **Absences beyond the current and previous week cannot be altered**. Record on note "Unable to process due to time constraints. Date Received / / .

#### Notification from parents/carers

- Record in Sentral. If a parent/carer gives an explanation, eg head lice, flu, vomiting, please note in the comments section.
- Sign and date the note and place in *Term's Archived Notes from Parents and Partial Slips envelope* for your class. All notes should be sent to the office at the end of the term for archiving.
- Verbal notifications by parents/cares are acceptable and should be recorded in the roll. Write "verbal" in the comments.

#### Correcting Errors When a Student is Accidentally Marked Absent

Click on the error and choose "Remove" option or click on student, then scroll down to date of absence then click on absence and choose remove. If a student arrives late, the student needs to come via the office for a late slip. Office staff will make the amendment in Sentral.

#### Other marking procedures:

If you have concerns regarding what type of leave is relevant to an absence, please check with the Principal or Attendance Coordinator.

#### Late Arrival/Early Departures

Students must present a *late arrival/early leaving pass* to the teacher before entering or leaving class.

If the late note is complete, then it should be filed with other absence notes, no adjustment is necessary on the roll.

If the late note does not include a reason, the slip is to be taken home by the student for completion by the parent and then returned to the teacher. Upon return of slip, please mark the roll as per the marking procedures above.

Early leavers must have a yellow slip signed by the parent before leaving the classroom. No adjustment to the roll is necessary.

#### Two Day Consecutive Leave without Explanation

If any student is absent for two days without explanation, then on the third day if the child is still absent, the teacher is required to make contact with the family to enquire as to the reason for the absence. The teacher should record the reason for absence on the 2 day consecutive absence pink form, mark it in the roll, and return the pink form to the office ASAP.

#### Student Absence Note (Yellow form supplied in the Roll folder)

On the day a student returns to school after an absence, if they do not supply a note signed by the parent/carer regarding their absence, the teacher should supply them with this form to take home for completion. Teachers should fill out the name and date of absence/s only. Once the note is returned to school, mark in roll as per marking procedures above.



## Electronic Attendance Registers

Symbols to be used where students are absent from school		
Symbol	Meaning	Entered by
<b>W</b>	The student was absent on that day.	Class Teacher
<b>P</b>	The student was late or was absent for part of a day. The time of arrival or departure must be recorded.	Admin Staff
<b>A</b>	The student's absence is unexplained or unjustified. This symbol must be used if no notice has been provided by parents within seven days of the occurrence of the absence.	Automatic
<b>S</b>	<p>The student's absence is due to sickness or as the result of a medical or paramedical appointment. In these cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a medical certificate is provided or</li> <li>- the absence was due to sickness and the principal accepts this explanation. Principals may request a medical certificate in addition to explanations if the explanation is doubted or the duration of the absence is more than four days.</li> </ul>	Class Teacher
<b>L</b>	<p>Principals may record up to 15 days in a school year for students of compulsory school age who have provided an explanation of the absence which has been accepted by the principal. Additional days for students not of compulsory school age may be recorded at the principal's discretion. This symbol is recorded where a student's absence is due to reasons accepted by the principal. This may be due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- misadventure or unforeseen event</li> <li>- participation in special events not related to the school</li> <li>- domestic necessity such as serious illness of an immediate family member</li> <li>- attendance at funerals</li> <li>- recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions.</li> </ul>	Class Teacher
<b>E</b>	The student was suspended from school.	Class Teacher
<b>M</b>	The student was exempted from attending school.	Admin Staff
<b>B</b>	<p>The student is absent from the school on official school business. This symbol is recorded where the principal approves the student leaving the school site to undertake:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- school performances (eg: dance, choir)</li> <li>- school sport (regional and state carnivals)</li> <li>- school excursions.</li> </ul>	Admin Staff
<b>H</b>	The student is attending two or more education settings for a period of time (shared enrolment). The symbol is recorded where a student accesses education settings separate to their mainstream school such as tutorial centre and programs, behaviour schools, juvenile justice and hospital schools.	Class Teacher





## **HANDY HINTS**

- In “Attendance” – when you are marking the roll, if you wish to have a paper copy for any reason for that week (e.g Canberra Excursion), click on the button in the right top corner, which will allow you to print a paper copy of the roll for that week.
- Attendance →”Print Reports” will allow you to print a single day, week or fortnight or four terms worth of class lists. **Really handy for assessment!**
- When you are in Attendance and Roll Marking →on the right hand side, look for grey box called “My Settings”. Click on “Edit My Settings” (Highlighted in blue). This allows you to choose how you want your roll to appear. Selections include: seeing who has a birthday that day, how you want to see the names (year, first name, last name – 3 combinations), whether or not you want the student’s photo shown with their name.
- Attendance of concern → see attachment Attendance Monitoring Sheet for process
- Print attendance record → In Sentral, once you are in the Webattend section, on the left hand side, you will find a heading labeled “reports”. This allows a range of attendance reports to be printed – eg percentage data for attendance, absence lists, roll marking sheets, etc. this may be necessary for generating reports once a student’s attendance is of concern.

## **PASSWORDS AND ROLL MARKING LEGALITIES**

**NEVER** give your password for Sentral out to anyone, including a casual teacher. If a casual marks the roll in your name and the records are subpoenaed to court, you could be in in hot water!

Casuals will mark the roll on paper and it will be transferred electronically by the office staff, however some of our regular casuals have electronic access. All paper rolls will be kept and archived.



## ATTENDANCE MONITORING PROCESS

### Level 1 – Data Recording

- Teachers accurately mark rolls by 9.00am
- Teachers collect notes and allocate codes on roll – teachers must record on the note, date received, code allocated and signature.
- All absentee notes from students/parents, sent to office at the end of each term in envelope provided by admin staff at the beginning of each term.
- On the 2<sup>nd</sup> consecutive day a student is absent, the teacher phones home.
- Reasons for absences (whether by note or verbal) must be recorded with details, i.e type of illness, type of leave, etc
- When a student returns from an absence, if no note has been received on the second day back, teacher sends “yellow Student Absence Note” home.
- Teachers report any attendance issues to the Assistant Principal to follow up.
- Roll marking inconsistencies are reported to the school office staff.

### Level 2 – Intervention

- Absence explanation slips sent home - On Friday’s office staff will issue notes for any students who have unexplained absences for the “previous week”.
- Teacher speaks to student regarding absences.
- Phone contact with parent/guardian
- Teacher speaks to siblings (if appropriate).
- Parent /Teacher interview.
- Investigation of home issues (may require referral to outside agencies via LAST)
- Investigation of social issues, including bullying.
- Teacher reports consistent absence issues to Principal
- Principal table 85% attendance report at meetings and identify attendance problems.
- Student referred to Learning Support Team meetings
- Formal letter home from Principal (outlines legal requirements of school attendance.
- LST refers unresolved attendance issues to appropriate personnel or agency eg Principal, HSLO, DOCs, Director
- Teachers continue to monitor and report to Assistant Principal throughout this process to ensure all cases are resolved.





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## Two Day Consecutive Absence

Class Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ has been absent for two consecutive days unexplained from

\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_. **In accordance with DEC policy, the teacher is required to attempt to make contact with a parent/carer to check on the student.** Please complete the slip below and return to office **ASAP**. *Please refer to Sentral for parent's contact information.*

Parent name \_\_\_\_\_

Contact no/s. \_\_\_\_\_

Parent contacted: Date \_\_\_\_\_ reason for absence \_\_\_\_\_

or unable to make contact ☐

Other comments \_\_\_\_\_

If a note has been presented on student's return, please indicate on Sentral Webattend **and** on this form then please return to office when completed so Attendance Register can be updated.



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## Two Day Consecutive Absence

Class Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ has been absent for two consecutive days unexplained from

\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_. **In accordance with DEC policy, the teacher is required to attempt to make contact with a parent/carer to check on the student.** Please complete the slip below and return to office **ASAP**. *Please refer to Sentral for parent's contact information.*

Parent name \_\_\_\_\_

Contact no/s. \_\_\_\_\_

Parent contacted: Date \_\_\_\_\_ reason for absence \_\_\_\_\_

or unable to make contact ☐

Other comments \_\_\_\_\_

If a note has been presented on student's return, please indicate on Sentral Webattend **and** on this form then please return to office when completed so Attendance Register can be updated.



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Education &  
Communities

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### Student Absence Note

(To be completed by parent/guardian and returned to classroom teacher. Please be aware that all absences without an explanation will be automatically classified to "Unjustified" after 14 days and will be recorded on Student's Semester Report)

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reason for Absence**   **Date/s Absent** \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Sickness – please specify type of illness \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Family reasons – please specify \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Religious celebration
- ☐ Other – please specify \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of parent/guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_



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Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reason for Absence**   **Date/s Absent** \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Sickness – please specify type of illness \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Family reasons – please specify \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Religious celebration
- ☐ Other – please specify \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of parent/guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_



## Casual Staff Sentral Log On **and** Marking Rolls Instructions

If your normal DEC username and password do not allow you to log on to a computer at this venue, please use the following credentials:

**Username:** **srv1008citrix**

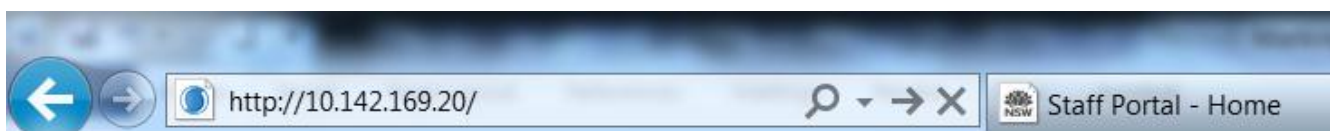
**Password:** **olive59**

This will get you to the Windows 'Desktop'.

This will not give you access to printers or the network drives, but you can use the SMART Notebook software, which is accessible through the normal Windows 'Start' menu.

Click on the internet explorer icon  .

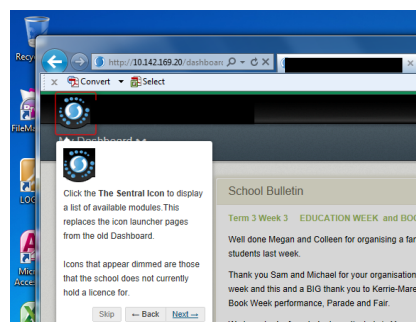
To access our SENTRAL server, go to the following IP address by entering it into the address box of Internet Explorer and pressing 'Enter': <http://10.142.169.20>



Then use the following SENTRAL username and password that have been assigned to you by the Administration staff.

**User ID:** **first name.surname**

**Password:** **casual**



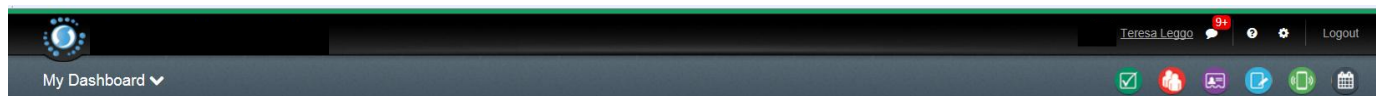
You are now in Sentral.



Please read the welcome messages and follow the instructions on the next page for procedures in marking the roll.

*We hope you enjoy your time with us here.*



## Marking Rolls Using Sentral



- Click on blue Sentral Icon 
- Click once on **Attendance icon** . You are now in “Attendance”.
- Click once on “**Roll Status**” located under “Attendance Administration”. You are now in “Roll Submissions”.
- Click once on the class you are assigned to. The “Daily Roll” for your class will appear. You may choose to use the “**Interactive Rolls Option**” on your smartboard. This is selected by clicking on the upside down triangle next to “Options” under the date you are marking. Otherwise, you mark the roll using the list of names. Student names are listed in year order – i.e. Year 1, then Year 2.

### Marking Absences

- Click once on the date column and find the name of child in the corresponding row who is absent. A menu will pop up. It will already have “Whole Day” and “Unexplained” highlighted. Click on the absent drop down box and choose unjustified.
- If this is correct, click OK. If you have a note explaining why the child is absent choose reason from drop down box. A notification in red will appear next to child’s name for all unexplained absences.
- When you have finished marking the roll click once on “**Submit Roll**”, then click on OK in the pop up box.
- If there are no absences you still need to click “**Submit Roll**”.

**Changes to Rolls – When Students bring notes in for previous absences please leave for class teacher to amend roll.**

### Correcting Errors When a Student is Accidentally Marked Absent

Click on the error and choose “Remove” option or click on student, then scroll down to date of absence then click on absence and choose remove.



## Suggested LST Strategies to Address Non-attendance Issues

Possible outcomes as discussed at school learning support team meeting

<input type="checkbox"/> Regular attendance restored. <input type="checkbox"/> Student participates in approved attendance program, increasing to satisfactory attendance within 20 days.	
<input type="checkbox"/> School based program incorporating use of community resources. <input type="checkbox"/> Apply for special class placement* <input type="checkbox"/> Apply to enrol at another school*	<input type="checkbox"/> Plan transition to work/further training* <input type="checkbox"/> Apply for Exemption from school* <input type="checkbox"/> Apply for Home Schooling Program*
<b>PLEASE NOTE: * INDICATES THAT SPECIFIC CRITERIA NEED TO BE MET</b>	

Strategies that may be useful

<input type="checkbox"/> Plan in learning support team meetings (Note: Learning support team reports should be provided with applications to the Home School Liaison Program) <input type="checkbox"/> School sends letters to family <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss at student welfare meeting <input type="checkbox"/> Interview parent / care provider <input type="checkbox"/> Student interview <input type="checkbox"/> Establish positive attendance program <input type="checkbox"/> Develop an individual education program <input type="checkbox"/> Establish an alternative school program <input type="checkbox"/> Place student on attendance monitoring <input type="checkbox"/> Place student on attendance contract <input type="checkbox"/> Address bullying/harassment problems <input type="checkbox"/> Interagency liaison: Police, Health, ADHC, Housing & Community Services <input type="checkbox"/> Address any social issues <input type="checkbox"/> Establish additional support for Aboriginal student via relevant Indigenous community group	<input type="checkbox"/> Modify school curricular <input type="checkbox"/> Travel training <input type="checkbox"/> Set up a buddy / teacher mentor program <input type="checkbox"/> Enlist help of peer / siblings <input type="checkbox"/> Gain permission to contact medical practitioner to discuss any current medical condition(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Student shadows teacher for a period of time <input type="checkbox"/> Give responsibility and/or leadership opportunity to student <input type="checkbox"/> Focus on student needs e.g. breakfast, clothing, hygiene, medical care, emotional support (grief and loss, resilience building) <input type="checkbox"/> Class writes to student inviting him/her back <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative program to avoid off task behaviours, teach alternate behaviours <input type="checkbox"/> Investigate work experience opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Community Service Support (Smith Family, Horizons, CentaCare, Barnados) <input type="checkbox"/> Daily wake up / check up calls for 5 days <input type="checkbox"/> Referral to school counsellor <input type="checkbox"/> Community justice mediator
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## Application for Part Day Exemptions from Attendance at School

Links to Learning Programs are not included in these procedures. For students accessing this program, the attendance register must indicate the absence with the code B

School	Student	<input type="checkbox"/> ATSI	Grade:	DOB: / /
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1.3.2 Students of compulsory school age may participate in **school based individual student programs that incorporate behavior management plans (to be attached) to reengage students with education**. In such cases, the parent's agreement to their child's participation in the program, by signature, constitutes an application of part day attendance at school. It is not necessary to complete a separate application for exemption from attendance at school form.

1.3.3 Students of compulsory school age participating in such programs may be granted part day exemptions for periods of time not exceeding the equivalent number of full school days provided for within the delegate's power.

1.3.4 Participation in such alternative education programs must be **approved** by the Director, **prior to the exemption being granted** by the delegate. The attendance register must indicate part day exemptions with the code M.

Name of Program(s)	Summary / outline of program

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Step 1					
Step 2					
Step 3					
Step 4					
Step 5					
<b>School Staff supporting Plan:</b>			<b>Period of Exemption:</b>		
Learning Support Team Coordinator:			Last date student attended full day / /		
<input type="checkbox"/> OoHC <input type="checkbox"/> Support class IN1, IN2, ED, BD, A, H, P, MC			<input type="checkbox"/> Transition <input type="checkbox"/> Funding Support <input type="checkbox"/> Recent suspension		

I understand I am responsible for my child's supervision during the times of non-attendance at school for the period of this exemption

Agreement: \_\_\_\_\_ /  
Principal/Delegate Case Manager Parent

To be emailed to local Office for Director's approval.

Recommended/Not Recommended

Approved/Not Approved

Date Signed: / /

Student Welfare Consultant

Director

When approved the parent needs to be provided with the **Original Certificate for Exemption** (3.4 Page 18) & a copy attached to the Pupil Record Card.

Hunter/Central Coast Region

Part Day Exemption Plan

To return student to full-time attendance





# ***Student Attendance in Government Schools - Procedures***

**Student Welfare Directorate  
2010**

**Telephone (02) 9266 8936**

This may not be the latest version of these procedures.

Please check the Department's Policies website at: <https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/>

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## **1 Context**

- 1.1 Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. Schools, in partnership 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 a part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences.
- 1.2 This document supports the [School Attendance Policy \(2010\)](#) and applies to all NSW Government schools, excluding pre-schools. It replaces *Student Attendance in Government Schools – Procedures (2006)*.
- 1.3 These procedures should be read in the context of [The Enrolment of Students in Government Schools: A Summary and Consolidation of Policy \(1997\)](#) which provides schools and the community with information on the entitlements, requirements and procedures for the enrolment of students in government schools.
- 1.4 The school attendance register (roll) should reflect the highest professional standards.

## **2 Responsibilities**

- 2.1 Parents are responsible for:
  - ☐ enrolling their children of [compulsory school age](#) in a government or registered non-government school or registering them with the [Board of Studies NSW](#) for home schooling
  - ☐ ensuring that their children attend school regularly
  - ☐ explaining the absences of their children from school promptly and within seven days to the school
  - ☐ taking measures to resolve attendance issues involving their children.
- 2.2 The responsibilities of school staff:
  - 2.2.1 School staff are responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students by:
    - providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the school community
    - recognising and rewarding excellent and improved student attendance
    - maintaining accurate records of student attendance
    - 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.

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2.2.2 The principal is responsible for ensuring that:

- students are enrolled consistent with the requirements set out in [The Enrolment of Students in Government Schools: A Summary and Consolidation of Policy \(1997\)](#) and the [Memorandum Enhanced Enrolment Procedures](#) (Intranet only)
- attendance records are maintained in an approved format and are an accurate record of the attendance of students
- staff record accurately the attendance of each student in each lesson when lessons are conducted in a number of locations. Schools should develop a suitable proforma for recording the attendance of students at each lesson
- 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 school education director is 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. In addition, in schools with attendance rates below regional primary or secondary averages, principals will develop and implement a School Attendance Action Plan that includes attendance targets, strategies, resources and timelines
- 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 attendance requirements
- all cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences from school are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented.

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- 2.2.3 In secondary schools, attendance is recorded each period or lesson. In primary schools, attendance is recorded in classes regularly conducted in locations other than the home classroom.
- 2.2.4 The principal or delegate will undertake all reasonable measures to contact parents promptly and within two days of an unexplained absence occurring. Contact may be made either by providing the parent with an [Absentee Notice – Compulsory School Attendance](#) by telephone, email or SMS text message, if a pre-arranged secure address has been provided. A sample [Absentee Notice – Compulsory School Attendance](#) can be found in the support documents.
- 2.2.5 The principal or delegate will ensure that where absences are recorded within seven days of the occurrence of the absence, the hard copy roll cannot be amended. (See Statement 4.2.4)
- 2.2.6 In the case of students participating in course work or school activities away from the school site (such as work placements), the principal or nominee should obtain an accurate record of student attendance at other sites at the conclusion of each school week.
- 2.2.7 Principals may grant:
- sick leave to students whose absences are satisfactorily explained as being due to illness (See **Appendix A: Attendance Register Code 'S'**)
  - an exemption from school attendance for periods totalling up to 50 days in a 12 month period for any one student (See **Appendix A: Attendance Register Code 'M'**) (Intranet only)  
<https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/admiserv/delegate/eda/eda019.htm>
  - an exemption from school attendance for students wishing to participate in employment in the entertainment industry or participation in elite sports events for short periods of time i.e. for one or two days, and at short notice (See **Appendix A: Attendance Register Code 'M'**) (Intranet only)  
<https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/admiserv/delegate/eda/eda019.htm>

Note: For large scale and long running productions applications for exemptions should be forwarded to the Student Welfare Directorate for approval by the Director, Student Welfare.

- part-day exemption from school attendance for periods totalling up to 50 days in a 12 month period for any one student (See **Appendix A: Attendance Register Codes 'M' and 'Pa'**) (See Statements 1.3.2 and 1.3.3 of [Guidelines for Exemption from School 2009](#))



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2.2.8 Principals may record up to 15 days in a school year for students of [compulsory school age](#) who have provided an explanation of the absence which has been accepted by the principal (See **Appendix A:** Attendance Register Code 'L'). Additional days for students not of [compulsory school age](#) may be recorded at the principal's discretion.

This may be due to:

- misadventure or unforeseen event
- participation in special events not related to the school
- domestic necessity such as serious illness of an immediate family member
- attendance at funerals
- recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions.

2.2.9 Principals may decline to accept as satisfactory an explanation for an absence. The parent should be advised that the explanation has not been accepted and a reason for the decision provided.

2.2.10 Principals may request medical certificates or other documentation when absences explained as being due to sickness are frequent or prolonged.

Medical certificates are not sacrosanct documents. Where principals have concerns about medical certificates being produced for absences, they can ask the parent to request that the doctor write on the certificate the statement 'this child is unfit for school' with specified dates included.

Where principals have ongoing concerns they can request the parents' consent to contact the doctor. If the request is denied, or if the principal is still not happy with the reason for absence, they can record the absence as 'unjustified'. (See **Appendix A:** Attendance Register Code 'A')

2.2.11 Principals may delegate responsibility for the maintenance of attendance registers (rolls) to teachers and other school personnel. In such cases, the principal must ensure that these staff:

- know the procedures in this document before marking the attendance register and following up absences. Staff must understand how an absence should be noted on an attendance register using the approved codes
- seek verbal or written advice promptly from parents regarding unexplained full or part day absences. Parents may not be aware that their child has been absent from school and will expect to be informed promptly if unexplained absences occur. Schools may wish to request this information by telephone. A letter such as [Absentee Notice - Compulsory School Attendance](#) may also be used for this purpose

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- retain records of written, electronic and verbal explanations from parents. If teachers receive verbal explanations from parents, they should record, sign and date the explanation
- are aware of their responsibility to alert the principal or staff member responsible for monitoring attendance when a student's pattern of attendance is of concern, or if no explanation is received from the parent or carer
- report chronic non-attendance, fractional truancy and persistent lateness promptly to the principal or nominee.

2.2.12 Principals of all secondary schools will implement and monitor the [Common Leave Pass](#) system in their schools.

### 2.3 The responsibilities of regional officers:

2.3.1 The school education director is responsible for ensuring that:

- schools are supported to maintain accurate records of student attendance in a form approved by the Minister. Home school liaison officers and other regional attendance personnel should conduct regular audits of school attendance registers and provide support to principals in maintaining these documents
- support is provided for the development and implementation of a Regional Attendance Action Plan that identifies attendance issues and targets. The plan seeks to ensure that regional resources supporting school attendance are targeted to areas of greatest need
- processes are in place to support approval being given by the school education director prior to students of [compulsory school age](#) participating in alternative education programs involving part day exemption from attendance at school
- recommendations are made to the Director of Student Welfare, about the prosecution of cases of non-attendance or failure to enrol a child at school, where warranted
- plans are implemented for the improvement of the attendance of students who are identified by schools as chronic non-attenders
- all secondary schools implement the [Common Leave Pass](#) System.

2.3.2 The school education director may grant:

- an exemption from school attendance for periods totalling up to 100 days in a 12 month period for any one student. (See **Appendix A:** Attendance Register Code 'M') (Intranet only)  
<https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/admiserv/delegate/eda/eda018.htm>

2.3.3 The regional director is responsible for the development and implementation of a Regional Attendance Action Plan that outlines strategies, targets, timelines, resources and responsibilities for the improvement of attendance in the region.

2.3.4 The regional director may grant:

- an exemption from school attendance totalling more than 100 days in a twelve month period for any one student. (See **Appendix A: Attendance Register Code 'M'**) (Intranet only)  
<https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/admiserv/delegate/eda/eda017.htm>
- an exemption from school enrolment provided certain conditions are met. (Intranet only)  
<https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/admiserv/delegate/eda/eda017.htm>

### **3 School Attendance Records Requirements**

3.1 School attendance records must include:

- a Register of Admission to be retained permanently
- notes and records of verbal explanations for absences from parents. This advice is to be retained for two years from the date of receipt
- an Attendance Register (roll) to be retained for three years. In a case where a student has an accident necessitating an accident report, all attendance records should be retained until the year the student reaches the age of 24 years
- in secondary schools, a record of the attendance at each lesson, to be retained until the end of the school year
- the student's record card detailing the number of absences each year to be retained for seven years after the student has left. In the case of a student who has had an accident necessitating an accident report, the record card should be retained until the student reaches the age of 24 years.

3.2 Records for Certificates of Exemption from attendance and enrolment must comply with requirements at Statements 1.4 and 2.3 of [Guidelines for Exemption from School \(2009\)](#).

## 4 Attendance Registers (rolls)

### 4.1 Registering the attendance of students

- 4.1.1 The [Education Act \(1990\)](#) (Section 24) requires that attendance registers (rolls) be maintained in a form approved by the Minister. These may be either manual or electronic rolls. This document describes the approved forms attendance registers may take.
- 4.1.2 Attendance registers (rolls) must be maintained on all days on which the school is open for instruction, including school sports days, swimming carnivals, excursions and similar events.
- 4.1.3 The exception method (marking absences only) is to be followed by all schools. Only the codes listed in the Attendance Register Codes are to be used. (See **Appendix A**)
- 4.1.4 School attendance must be recorded on the attendance register (roll) early in the school day.
- 4.1.5 Students involved in off-site activities organised by the school or Department of Education and Training must not be marked as absent. (See Statement 2.2.5)
- 4.1.6 Attendance information must be recorded on either the Department's electronic attendance register or approved manual roll, preferably on a daily basis. Other technologies may be used to support the maintenance of these attendance registers. These technologies must write back regularly and accurately to the Department's electronic attendance register
- 4.1.7 Staff responsible for maintaining attendance registers must be acquainted with requirements of this document and correct procedures. Advice and further information may be obtained from regional attendance officers. When manual registers are used in addition to electronic rolls, a certified hard copy of the electronic roll is the school's attendance register (roll).

### 4.2 Electronic attendance registers

- 4.2.1 Recording student attendance within the school's computerised administration system is the Department's preferred means for maintaining an attendance register (roll).
- 4.2.2 A hard copy of the electronic record is to be generated weekly for the previous two-week period. The principal or delegated school executive must endorse this hard copy, certifying its accuracy. Once signed, this hard copy becomes the record of attendance and must not be amended.

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- 4.2.3 In the case of late arrival or early departure, the precise times of arrival or departure must be recorded with the relevant attendance register code.
- 4.2.4 Where an alteration is necessary on an electronic attendance register, a line is to be ruled through the existing hard copy entry and the correct entry made above. The electronic record must then also be amended. The principal should initial any changes. Note: Alterations only applies to errors in roll marking.
- 4.2.5 Codes to be used on electronic attendance registers are found at **Appendix A**. Additional codes are not to be used.
- 4.2.6 The Attendance Register Code 'B' is to be used where a student is absent from the school site on official school business. This may include work experience, school sport (regional and state carnivals), and school excursions. 'B' is not an absence code and is not included as an absence for statistical purposes. (See **Appendix A**)

### 4.3 Manual attendance registers (rolls)

- 4.3.1 Manual rolls must reflect the highest professional standards.
- 4.3.2 Codes to be used on manual attendance registers are found at **Appendix A**. Additional codes must not be used. Supplementary comments regarding absences may be made in the 'notes' column, if required.
- 4.3.3 In the case of late arrival or early departure, the precise times of arrival or departure must be recorded with the relevant Attendance Register Code.
- 4.3.4 The teacher or other nominee of the principal, responsible for maintaining a manual attendance register, is required to sign the register each day in the place indicated. The principal should endorse the register each week.
- 4.3.5 Where an alteration is necessary on a manual attendance register, a line is to be ruled through the existing entry and the correct entry made above. Correction fluid must not be used.

### 4.4 Special circumstance registers

- 4.4.1 Attendance registers must be maintained each day the school is open with the exception of:
  - days on which there is part or full day industrial action involving teachers
  - approved school development days

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- days on which the school is inaccessible due to natural occurrences such as fire or flood. Principals should consult with regional personnel prior to deciding that a school is inaccessible.
- 4.4.2 Special circumstance registers are to be maintained on days as outlined in 4.4.1. They should:
- specify the dates and times of the variation
  - indicate the reason for the variation
  - list students attending on that day
  - be signed by the teacher maintaining the register
  - be permanently attached to attendance registers (rolls).
- 4.4.3 For schools maintaining a manual attendance register (roll), a broken line must be ruled through that day's column and the notation 'Roll not marked - see special circumstance register' recorded within.
- 4.4.4 Electronic attendance registers (rolls) will automatically display a 'school development day' message on school development days. A similar notation must be made on hard copies of electronic attendance registers regarding other reasons for maintaining a special circumstance register (eg industrial action or school closure due to fire or flood).
- 4.4.5 Absences on these days are not to be recorded on student record cards or counted as absences for statistical purposes.
- 4.4.6 Students can attend a specialist education setting separate to a mainstream school on a sessional or full-time basis in line with the Department's Enrolment Policy ([\*Enrolment of Students in NSW Government Schools: A Summary and Consolidation of Policy 1997\*](#)).

Such settings include tutorial centres and programs, behaviour schools, juvenile justice and hospital schools.

Where the mainstream school principal verifies that a student is attending a specialist education setting, the mainstream school can mark the attendance register with the Attendance Register Code 'H' to denote student attending a specialist education setting on a sessional or full-time basis.

Where the duration of attendance at a specialist education setting is more than four days in duration, the specialist education setting should use the special circumstance register to record student attendance (as per Statement 4.2.2). The special circumstance register should be returned to the student's mainstream school, preferably weekly.



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**4.5 Security of attendance registers (rolls)**

- 4.5.1 Registers (rolls) must be stored in a secure location within the school.
- 4.5.2 They must not be removed from the school premises unless removal is warranted by exceptional circumstances such as fire or flood. Teachers must not take attendance registers home.
- 4.5.3 The loss of an attendance register (roll) is a serious occurrence and must be reported immediately to the school education director. A new register (roll) should be commenced immediately. Attendance information referring to absences on occasions prior to the commencement of the new register must not be included.
- 4.5.4 A notice signed by the principal must be attached to the new register (roll). The notice must state the period for which the original register was a record of student attendance (eg 1 February - 30 March, 2009) and the date from which the replacement register (roll) commences.
- 4.5.5 At the end of each school year the principal must ensure that the attendance register (roll) and attached special circumstance registers are preserved as a complete record of students' absences for that year.

**4.6 School sport rolls**

- 4.6.1 School sport is an integral part of the curriculum. Principals must ensure adequate attendance monitoring practices at school sport to ensure the safety of students.
- 4.6.2 Specific sports rolls must be marked at the beginning and conclusion of each sports session. Attendance information contained on sports rolls must be transferred to the attendance register (roll). Class teachers or secondary school sports co-ordinators must follow up absentees promptly and ensure that the school's procedures for managing fractional truancy are implemented.

**4.7 Overseas exchange students**

- 4.7.1 Students participating in accredited overseas student exchange programs for periods of up to 12 months are to remain on the school attendance register (roll). They are not to be marked absent for the duration of their exchange.
- 4.7.2 A note is to be attached to the attendance register (roll) regarding the place and duration of the exchange. For statistical purposes, students on overseas exchange are to be considered present.

**4.8 Senior students participating in flexible timetables**

- 4.8.1 The attendance of senior students participating in flexible timetables must be recorded in the same manner as other students. However,

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scheduled days or periods of non-attendance must not be marked as absences. The symbol noted in the Attendance Register Codes regarding timetabled days or periods of non-attendance should be used, 'F'. (See **Appendix A**)

- 4.8.2 The scheduled non-attendance of senior students participating in flexible timetables is not recorded as an absence for statistical purposes.
- 4.9 Students who are suspended from school in accordance with Department's [\*Suspension and Expulsion of School Student – Procedures\*](#).
- 4.9.1 The appropriate Attendance Register Code symbol for suspension is to be used to denote the absences of students whilst on suspension, 'E'. This symbol is to be used only for the duration of the suspension and must not be applied to students who fail to return to school following the suspension period. In such cases, the student's absence would be unjustified and recorded accordingly. (See Attendance Register Code 'A' at **Appendix A**)
- 4.9.2 The absence of students who are suspended are counted as absences for statistical purposes.
- 4.10 Students who are exempted from school
- 4.10.1 The appropriate symbol for exemption is to be used when the absences are the result of students being exempted from attending school (see Attendance Register Code 'M' at **Appendix A**. This symbol is to be used only for the duration of the exemption and must not be applied to students who fail to return to school following the exemption period.
- 4.10.2 The absences of students who have been exempted from school are not counted as absences for statistical purposes.
- 4.11 A student's name must be removed from an attendance register (roll) if:
- a student has moved out of New South Wales and has not applied for a cross-border enrolment in New South Wales
  - the student enrolls in another school
  - advice has been received from parents that the student is enrolled in a non-government or other registered school, or is registered with the [\*Board of Studies NSW\*](#) for home schooling. Principals who are concerned about information provided to them by parents should request the name of the non-government or other registered school so that a check can be made
  - the student has been expelled from the school in accordance with the Department's [\*Suspension and Expulsion of School Student – Procedures\*](#).

- the student is of [compulsory school age](#), and has been marked as 'absent' for periods exceeding a total of 10 consecutive school days over a three week period, where the school is open for instruction, and is believed to have left the school. The school should report the matter to regional attendance personnel for investigation. Prior to reporting the matter all appropriate checks should be made (including the use of the Enrolment Registration Number database)
- the student is no longer of [compulsory school age](#), their whereabouts is unknown, and the student has not attended school for fifteen continuous school days for reasons not known to the school.

Regions should record the details of "students' whose whereabouts is unknown" on the state-wide database provided for this purpose. This information will be collated by the Student Welfare Directorate regularly.

- 4.11.1 If a student's name has been removed from the roll because 'their whereabouts is unknown', absences from the last day of attendance at school are not included as absences for statistical purposes. The roll should be amended to reflect this.

## 5 Enrolment and Attendance

- 5.1 Students may attend a NSW government school if they are:

- enrolled at that school or
- attending in the short-term.

- 5.2 Requirements and procedures for enrolling students in NSW government schools are located in [Enrolment of Students in NSW Government Schools: A Summary and Consolidation of Policy \(1997\)](#) and [the Memorandum Enhanced Enrolment Procedures](#) (Intranet only).

- 5.3 Short-term attendance of students

- 5.3.1 Students may be enrolled in one school only at any given time. However, for a variety of reasons, a student enrolled at a NSW government school may need to attend another NSW government school for a short period of time.
- 5.3.2 Short-term attendance arrangements should not unduly disrupt programs in the host school. They should not result in any reorganisation of classes or timetables.
- 5.3.3 Prior to agreeing to the short-term attendance of a student, the principal of the host school should gather the necessary information to permit a risk assessment to be conducted. The objective of the assessment should be the maintenance of a safe learning environment for staff and students. Principals should refer to [Legal Issues Bulletin 40](#) Collection, Use and Disclosure of Information About Students with a History Of Violence (Intranet only).

## **6 Supporting the Regular Attendance of Students at School**

- 6.1 Parents are responsible for the regular attendance of students at school. Principals and school staff, in consultation with students and their parents, will usually be able to resolve problems of non-attendance. While parents should be reminded of their legal obligations under the [Education Act \(1990\)](#) the welfare of the student must be the focus of this consultation.
- 6.2 The most effective means of restoring and maintaining regular school attendance includes sound attendance monitoring practices and regular follow-up of unexplained absences by contacting parents promptly. Early telephone contact with parents is one means of achieving this. The support document [Phone Intervention Program Guidelines](#) describes a program facilitating early telephone contact.
- 6.3 Resolution of attendance difficulties may require a range of additional school based strategies including:
- student and parent interviews
  - reviewing the appropriateness of the student's educational program
  - development of a school-based attendance improvement plan
  - referral to the school counsellor or outside agencies
  - support from school based personnel.
- 6.4 If a range of school based interventions has been unsuccessful, support may be requested by referring individual cases of unsatisfactory attendance to the regional Home School Liaison Program. The [Guidelines for Supporting Student Attendance](#) outline the role of home school liaison officers and Aboriginal student liaison officers. A proforma to be used when requesting Home School Liaison Program support can be found here.
- 6.5 Police officers are authorised to act as attendance officers under Section 122 of the [Education Act \(1990\)](#).
- 6.5.1 During school hours, an authorised person or police officer may approach a student who is apparently of [compulsory school age](#), and who is apparently not in attendance at school. They may request the student's name and home address and the name and address of his/her school. They may approach a student who is accompanied by an adult.
- 6.5.2 A police officer or authorised person, in the company of a police officer may accompany the student to his or her home, or to the school, to verify the information provided.
- 6.5.3 Under this authorisation, police have no power of arrest, detention or physical restraint.

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6.5.4 Police and Departmental personnel conduct regular Joint Anti-Truancy initiatives (JATS) targeting truancy.

6.6 The Department undertakes legal action in the case of parents who do not fulfill their obligations under the [Education Act \(1990\)](#) despite all reasonable measures being taken by school and regional staff to support them. Actions and timelines leading up to consideration of legal action are identified in Memorandum DN/08/00043 *Compulsory Enrolment and Attendance at School*.

6.6.1 Section 22 of the [Education Act \(1990\)](#) states that, parents may be guilty of an offence if they do not enrol a child of compulsory school age in school and ensure that they attend regularly. Legal proceedings may be appropriate when parents fail to:

- ensure their children attend school regularly, or
- enrol their children at a recognised school or register their children with the [Board of Studies NSW](#) for home schooling.

6.6.2 The school education director should refer the matter promptly to the Student Welfare Directorate for consideration of prosecution if a parent declines to comply with the requirements of the Act regarding enrolment in school. The proforma for Home School Liaison Program support in the [\\*XLGHOLQHVIRU6XSSRUWLQJ6WXGHQW\\$WWHQGDQFH](#) should be used.

6.6.3 Parents should be advised in writing when an attendance or enrolment issue has been referred to Student Welfare Directorate for consideration of legal proceedings.

## 7 Common Leave Pass

7.1 All government secondary schools are required to implement the Common Leave Pass System for students who wish to leave school premises during normal school hours. Guidelines for the implementation of the Common Leave Pass System are contained in the support document [Common Leave Pass](#).

## **8 Exemption from Attendance at School**

See [\*Guidelines for Exemption from School \(2009\)\*](#).

8.1 In the case of students of [compulsory school age](#), applications for student leave can be considered as applications for exemption from school attendance.

8.1.1 Certificates of Exemption from the compulsory education requirements of the Act may be granted by a delegated officer (as identified in [8.1.2 below](#)) when it has been clearly demonstrated by the applicant that an exemption is in the student's best interests in the short and long term and that alternatives to exemption have been considered. For example, in some cases, application for Distance Education may be more appropriate than seeking an exemption from school attendance.

8.1.2 Exemption should only be granted where conditions exist which make it necessary or desirable that a certificate of exemption be granted. Under Section 25 of the [Education Act \(1990\)](#), the Minister may grant a Certificate of Exemption. This power is delegated, subject to these Guidelines, to:

- Director, Student Welfare in relation to granting of an exemption for any period of time, for students wishing to participate in employment in the entertainment industry or participation in elite sporting events (Intranet only)  
<https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/admiserv/delegate/eda/eda014.htm>
- Regional Directors, in relation to granting of an exemption from school attendance totalling more than 100 days in a 12 month period (Intranet only)  
<https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/admiserv/delegate/eda/eda017.htm>
- School Education Directors, in relation to granting of an exemption from school attendance totalling up to 100 days in a 12 month period (Intranet only)  
<https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/admiserv/delegate/eda/eda018.htm>
- Principals, in relation to granting of an exemption from school attendance for periods totalling up to 50 days in a 12 month period for any one student. (Intranet only)  
<https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/admiserv/delegate/eda/eda019.htm>

In addition, the Director-General is delegated the power to exercise all the Minister's powers under Section 25 without limitation.

**Delegates cannot delegate this power.**



## **9 Students Attending Lessons Outside School During School Hours**

- 9.1 Involvement in private lessons, such as ballet and music classes, conducted outside the school during school hours may not be conducive to the effective operation of the school or to the education of the student concerned. Students' involvement in extra-curricula activities will usually be limited to outside school hours.
- 9.2 Where attendance at a private lesson during school hours is of exceptional importance such as sitting examinations, principals may use their discretion in justifying the absence. This provision must not be used on a regular basis.
- 9.3 If parents withdraw their children from school for private lessons, an unjustified absence should be recorded and dealt with in the usual manner.
- 9.4 This section of the document does not apply to School Certificate or Higher School Certificate courses conducted outside school or participation in work placement or TAFE based courses.

## **10 Definitions**

- 10.1 **Parent:** Includes a carer or other person having the care or custody of a child or young person.
- 10.2 **Unexplained absence:** A student absence where a parent provides no acceptable reason for a student's non-attendance.
- 10.3 **Truancy:** The absence of a student from school without the knowledge or permission of their parent or carer.
- 10.4 **Parent condoned absence:** When a parent or carer causes a student to be absent from school without acceptable reason.
- 10.5 **Explained/justified absence:** A parent has provided an explanation of the student's absence which has been accepted by the principal.
- 10.6 **Explained/unjustified absence:** A parent has provided an explanation of the student's absence which has not been accepted by the principal.
- 10.7 **Unexplained/unjustified absence:** A parent has not provided an explanation of the student's absence within seven days of the occurrence of the absence.
- 10.6 **Compulsory School Age:** {See Section 21B of the [Education Act \(1990\)](#)}

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**Appendix A**

**Manual Attendance Registers**

<b>Note:</b> The symbol X is to be used for the first and last day that the student attended for each term.	
<b>Symbols to be used where students are absent from school</b>	
<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<b>a</b>	The student was absent on that day.
<b>Pa</b>	The student was late or was absent for part of a day. The time of arrival or departure must be recorded.

<b>Symbols to be used for explanation of student absence</b>	
<b>Note:</b> The following symbols should be recorded above the <b>a</b> or <b>Pa</b> symbol as appropriate	
<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<b>A</b>	The student's absence is unexplained or unjustified. This symbol must be used if no notice has been provided by parents within seven days of the occurrence of the absence.
<b>S</b>	The student's absence is due to sickness or as the result of a medical or paramedical appointment. In these cases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a medical certificate is provided or</li> <li>- the absence was due to sickness and the principal accepts this explanation. Principals may request a medical certificate in addition to explanations if the explanation is doubted or the duration of the absence is more than four days.</li> </ul>
<b>L</b>	Principals may record up to 15 days in a school year for students of compulsory school age who have provided an explanation of the absence which has been accepted by the principal. Additional days for students not of compulsory school age may be recorded at the principal's discretion. This symbol is recorded where a student's absence is due to reasons accepted by the principal. This may be due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- misadventure or unforeseen event</li> <li>- participation in special events not related to the school</li> <li>- domestic necessity such as serious illness of an immediate family member</li> <li>- attendance at funerals</li> <li>- recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions.</li> </ul>
<b>E</b>	The student was suspended from school.
<b>M</b>	The student was exempted from attending school.
<b>F</b>	Senior student participating in flexible timetable not present because they are not required to be at school.

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<b>B</b>	<p>The student is absent from the school on official school business. This symbol is recorded where the principal approves the student leaving the school site to undertake:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- work experience</li><li>- school sport (regional and state carnivals)</li><li>- school excursions.</li></ul>
<b>H</b>	<p>The student is attending two or more education settings for a period of time (shared enrolment). This symbol is recorded where a student accesses a specialist educational setting on a sessional or full-time basis in line with the Department's Enrolment Policy (<i>Enrolment of Students in NSW Government Schools: A Summary and Consolidation of Policy 1997</i>).</p> <p>The symbol is recorded where a student accesses education settings separate to their mainstream school such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- tutorial centre and programs</li><li>- behaviour schools</li><li>- juvenile justice</li><li>- hospital schools.</li></ul>

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**Electronic Attendance Registers**

<b>Symbols to be used where students are absent from school</b>	
<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<b>W</b>	The student was absent on that day.
<b>P</b>	The student was late or was absent for part of a day. The time of arrival or departure must be recorded.

<b>Symbols to be used for explanation of student absence</b>	
<b>Note:</b> The following symbols should be recorded beside the <b>W</b> or <b>P</b> symbol as appropriate	
<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<b>A</b>	The student's absence is unexplained or unjustified. This symbol must be used if no notice has been provided by parents within seven days of the occurrence of the absence.
<b>S</b>	The student's absence is due to sickness or as the result of a medical or paramedical appointment. In these cases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a medical certificate is provided or</li> <li>- the absence was due to sickness and the principal accepts this explanation. Principals may request a medical certificate in addition to explanations if the explanation is doubted or the duration of the absence is more than four days.</li> </ul>
<b>L</b>	Principals may record up to 15 days in a school year for students of compulsory school age who have provided an explanation of the absence which has been accepted by the principal. Additional days for students not of compulsory school age may be recorded at the principal's discretion. This symbol is recorded where a student's absence is due to reasons accepted by the principal. This may be due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- misadventure or unforeseen event</li> <li>- participation in special events not related to the school</li> <li>- domestic necessity such as serious illness of an immediate family member</li> <li>- attendance at funerals</li> <li>- recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions.</li> </ul>
<b>E</b>	The student was suspended from school.
<b>M</b>	The student was exempted from attending school.
<b>F</b>	Senior student participating in flexible timetable not present because they are not required to be at school.

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<b>B</b>	<p>The student is absent from the school on official school business. This symbol is recorded where the principal approves the student leaving the school site to undertake:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- work experience</li><li>- school sport (regional and state carnivals)</li><li>- school excursions.</li></ul>
<b>H</b>	<p>The student is attending two or more education settings for a period of time (shared enrolment). This symbol is recorded where a student accesses a specialist educational setting on a sessional or full-time basis in line with the Department's Enrolment Policy (<i>Enrolment of Students in NSW Government Schools: A Summary and Consolidation of Policy 1997</i>).</p> <p>The symbol is recorded where a student accesses education settings separate to their mainstream school such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- tutorial centre and programs</li><li>- behaviour schools</li><li>- juvenile justice</li><li>- hospital schools.</li></ul>