

Woodport Public School Attendance Procedures



Woodport Public School observes NSW Department of Education policies. The procedures outlined in this document align with expectations stated in:

- School Attendance Policy in Government Schools

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/school-attendance-policy>

- Exemption from School Procedures

https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/exempt_gui.pdf

Woodport Public School

At Woodport Public School we strive to have all of our students attend school each day. We monitor student attendance and encourage regular attendance of students. Steps will be taken to improve attendance that is not satisfactory.

The *Education Act 1990* requires the parents of children of compulsory school age to enrol them at a government school, or registered non-government school or to register them with the Board of Studies for home schooling. The Act also requires parents to ensure the regular attendance of their children at school. It is an offence for parents to fail to meet these obligations unless they can show they have a defence (for example, illness or accident).

The Department undertakes legal action in the case of parents who do not fulfill these obligations despite all reasonable measures being undertaken by school and regional staff to support them.

At Woodport Public School, regular attendance is regarded as an important component in the achievement of student learning outcomes. Measures to establish acceptable attendance patterns include:

- acknowledging and encouraging good attendance
- early detection of poor attendance, and
- prompt, positive intervention measures.

Woodport Public School recognises and values the benefits of positive home/school relationships and seeks to involve parents in developing and maintaining the strategies that support the development of positive patterns of attendance for all students. Parent and care giver support will be sought in developing and maintaining the Attendance Policy, (in accordance with the Department of Education Attendance Policy 25/03/2016).

Context

Regular attendance at school is essential to assist students to maximise their potential. Schools, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students.



Procedures for Recording and Monitoring Attendance

1. Class Roll

- Class rolls will be maintained by the classroom teacher.
- The roll will be marked electronically using the Sentral Attendance Package daily within the first hour of the teaching day.
- If a casual teacher is on the class, a paper roll will be used and data transported into Sentral/ebS4 by the SAO.
- Reasons for absences offered by parents or guardians should be provided in writing and will also be accepted via email. Teachers may accept a verbal reason from parents provided they make a written notation (signed and dated) to add to their note file or explanation recorded in Sentral/ebS4
- At the end of the school year all class rolls and absence notes are to be sent to the Administrative staff for secure storage.

2. Late Arrivals

Students who arrive after the bell must report to the office and follow the procedures set out below:

- Collect a printed late slip that is issued by the School Administrative Staff.
- Promptly proceed to class and present the late slip to the class teacher. Late slips are to be stored with the student's other absentee notes in the Roll and Notes folder.
- Details of all late arrival (indicating time of arrival) will be recorded in the Sentral/ebS4 system by the School Administrative Officer and checked by the classroom teacher. The responsibility of ensuring the accuracy of classroom roles is the classroom teacher.

Parent/caregivers of persistent latecomers will be contacted by the class teacher and/or executive member.

Notes of explanation for lateness are to be provided by the parent/carer and filed with absence notes.

Verbal reports of student absence from the parent must be recorded in the Sentral system by the classroom teacher.

3. Early Leavers

Students will not leave school grounds without prior permission of the Principal or Delegate.

Students who leave before normal completion time must:

- Be signed out via the front office.
- Be collected from the school by a parent/caregiver or by a responsible adult who has written permission from the parent/caregiver to collect the child. (If the person is unknown to the administration staff an additional phone call to the parent/carer and an identification check will be requested.)

The person responsible for collecting the student must call at the front office and sign an early release



4. Illness

Students who are ill and need to be sent home (with the permission of the Principal) will have the parent/caregiver sign an Early Release Note at the time of departure.

5. Excursions/Sporting and Other Visits

Students attending off site Departmental activities/programs are to be marked as present, but on School Business.

At School Carnivals, rolls are marked in the usual way. Similarly, all Stewart House visits to be recorded on Students Record Card with dates.

6. Special Circumstances

- School refusers and students returning to school from extended absences need support. The classroom teacher may arrange a case conference through the Learning Support Team, this may also include the Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO).
- Strike / Industrial Action Disputes - Executive staff will enact roll marking procedures. Students who are absent from school will be classed as on 'leave', a special circumstance register is to be completed. If it is only a half day action and the student is away from the whole day a note will be requested as the child is to attend school after the action is complete.

Attendance Monitoring Procedures

Regular roll checks will be made by both the Principal and the Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO) to ensure that all students maintain an acceptable attendance pattern.

If a classroom teacher is concerned about lack of attendance or consistent lateness they should seek advice from their stage leader or the Principal so that rectification measures can be taken or a referral made to the Learning Support Team (LST).

All teachers are issued with an Attendance folder at the beginning of the school year which is to be stored in their desk drawer for easy access by the classroom teacher, stage leader and Principal. This folder has a checklist of strategies aimed at restoring attendance. Teachers are to document in this folder all strategies implemented. At the end of the school year the folder will be sent to the Administrative staff for secure storage.

- Teachers are to monitor absences and unjustified lateness's and any concerns should be brought to the attention of their stage leader.
- Class teacher will contact parent for:
 - Continued partial attendance
 - Patterns of attendance e.g. – most Friday's are absent
 - Two consecutive/non-consecutive absences with no home contact
 - When attendance drops below 85%
- At executive meetings attendance is reviewed and discussed on a regular basis.
- The Roll Supervisor will monitor rolls at 4 weekly intervals and bring any concerns to the attention of the Learning Support Team, the Principal and the HSLO.
- The HSLO will monitor attendance of notified students with the assistance of the relevant Roll Supervisor who will make daily checks on these students' attendance. The HSLO will be notified immediately of any non-attendance of these students
- All records will be maintained so that they are easily accessible for the HSLO.



Strategies for Good Attendance

- Teachers will provide a caring & stimulating learning environment in which students are able to achieve success and recognition for success every day.
- Students will receive awards for 100% attendance each semester.
- The importance of student attendance is discussed at Meet the Teacher Information sessions (term one), Kindergarten Orientation as well as information is written in the school newsletter.

Procedures for Dealing With Unacceptable Attendance

Woodport P.S. 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. Every attempt is made to help resolve attendance issues.

In the case of a student who has been identified with unacceptable attendance (an attendance pattern of less than 90%), 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.

HSLO Intervention and Investigation

Where the school has taken all reasonable action to support the regular attendance of a student of **compulsory** school age but the student continues to attend erratically, the matter 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.

Roles

1. Administrative Staff

- If contacted by parent/caregiver, pass on in writing to the relevant teacher for recording in class roll.
- Print Absentee Reports each fortnight and place in the Attendance folder.
- Transfer weekly attendance from Sentral to ebs4 by 9:30am every Monday morning.
- Securely store class rolls and absentee notes for required period of seven years.
- To issue late and or early leavers slips.

2. Class Teachers

- Ensure that the roll is marked in accordance with policy.
- Reinforce importance of regular attendance.
- Actively encourage students to provide written explanations of absences.
- Ensure absence notes received are promptly recorded accordingly in the class roll, ticked and signed as entered then placed in a class folder
- Advise their supervisor of students with attendance problems.
- Send absence note to parent the day after an unexplained absence.
- Actively participate in the process and assist executive in implementing strategies to resolve attendance issues.



3. Executive

- Ensure staff are knowledgeable of policy and practice regarding monitoring of student attendance.
- Inform the Principal of all issues relating to student attendance.

4. Parent/Carer

- Understand the legal requirements and educational necessity for regular school attendance,
- Ensure their children attend school regularly
- Provide a written explanation of all absences including partial absences
- Apply for an 'Application for Extended Leave – Travel' form prior to commencement of extended leave i.e. for overseas travel. Form can be obtained from school website or from the front office.

Rolls Marking Codes

A	The student's absence is unexplained or unjustified. This symbol must be used if no explanation has been provided by parents within seven days of the occurrence of an absence or the explanation is not accepted by the principal It is at the principal's discretion to accept or not accept the explanation provided.
S	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"> - a medical certificate is provided or - 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 student has a history of unsatisfactory attendance.
L	An explanation of the absence is provided which has been accepted by the principal. This may be due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 - travel in Australia and overseas - recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions - medical or dental appointment - attendance hearings at court or other legal hearings or meetings associated with the hearing
E	The student was suspended from school
M	The student was exempted from attending school and a Certificate of Exemption has been issued by a delegated officer.
F	The student is participating in a flexible timetable and not present because they are not required to be at school. This could include participation in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HSC Pathways Program - Best Start Assessments - Trial or HSC examinations - VET courses
B	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, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - work experience - school sport (regional and state carnivals) - school excursions - student exchange
H1	The student is enrolled in a school and is required or approved to be attending an alternative educational setting on a sessional or full time basis. The symbol is recorded where a student accesses education settings separate to their mainstream school such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - tutorial centre and programs - behaviour schools - juvenile justice - hospital schools - distance education

Appendix 1



Attendance Checklist for Schools

Please attach this to your application for Home School Liaison Program assistance

Student: _____ **School: Woodport Public School**

Principals and Learning Support Teams should ensure that a full range of strategies to restore school attendance has been implemented prior to applying for support from the Home School Liaison Program (Home School Liaison Program Guidelines 2.4 Student Welfare Directorate 2008).

Intervention	Yes/No	Date	Comment
Absentee Notice/Compulsory School Attendance Note sent to parent/caregivers after 2 days unexplained absence.			
Student Interview with teacher/year adviser/SW co-ordinator to identify the cause of poor attendance.			
Contact parents/caregivers by phone or letter to involve them in resolving the attendance issue.			
School personnel organise attendance meeting with parent/caregiver.			
Individualised attendance monitoring e.g. Student placed on an attendance care, reports to a designated teacher, provided with a mentor, SC, STLA, ESL support. *			
Student discussed at LST/School welfare meetings to discuss attendance strategies and support required.			
Request for medical certificates – these should be carefully monitored.			
Involvement of outside agencies (as Appropriate) e.g. FACS, Community Health, Housing, Juvenile Justice, local Community organisations.			
Incentive program initiated i.e. reward for improved attendance.			
Curriculum/timetabling issues examined and amended if appropriate.			
Involvement of regional support staff (if appropriate) e.g. APLA, DSTLA, STB,CLO, ACLO			

Please note: The application for support can only be signed by the Principal or the Relieving Principal (as per new attendance procedures).

Appendix 2

