

STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY & PROCEDURE

Reviewed: September 2018

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that staff, students and parents/carers are aware of the compulsory nature of schooling and the responsibilities each of them have in relation to attendance and the monitoring of such attendance.

All students who are enrolled at Nowra Christian School, regardless of their age, are expected to attend whenever instruction is provided. Regular attendance at school is essential to assist students to maximise their potential. The school, in partnership with parents/carers, is responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students.

Encouraging regular student attendance is a core school responsibility. It is a shared responsibility and relies on cooperation between school staff, parents/carers and students.

Details

Record of Attendance

- Register of Attendance: SEQTA (software)
- School Administration System: SAS2000 and SEQTA (software)

Responsibilities

Parents/carers

Section 22 of the Education Act (1990) states that it is the duty of the parent of a child of compulsory school age to cause the child:

1. *to be enrolled at, and to attend, a government school or a registered non-government school*
OR
2. *to be registered for homeschooling with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and to receive instruction in accordance with the conditions to which the registration is subject¹.*

Parents/carers are to notify the school if they know their child will be absent on any particular day.

Parents/carers are required to explain the absences of their children from school, in writing or SMS, email, phone calls and conversations within two school days.

¹ <https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/school-attendance-policy> (1.1)

Parents/carers can apply for additional leave for their child if needed for exceptional circumstances. Applications for exemption from school attendance must be made in writing using the relevant exemption forms available via reception or on the school website.

A doctor's certificate is required for extended absences and absences that correspond to assessment tasks in the RoSA and senior years of schooling (see Assessment and Reporting Policy).

Teachers

It is the teacher's responsibility to ensure the register of attendance is professionally maintained. Rolls are to be marked at the beginning of each teaching session. Specifically, for Secondary, by 8.45 am (by AM), and every period throughout the day and for Primary, by 8.45 am, directly after recess and lunch.

Teachers must ensure that the relevant Heads of School are informed of attendance concerns.

Principal

The Principal must provide clear information to students and parents/carers regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance.

Reception staff will undertake all reasonable measures to advise parents/carers promptly on the day of an unexplained absence occurring.

The Principal must ensure that school staff are provided with information on attendance requirements and their obligation to monitor and promote regular attendance at school.

The Principal has the authority to grant:

- sick leave or leave to students whose absences are satisfactorily explained as being due to illness or other reason that is accepted by the principal;
- an exemption from school attendance for periods totalling up to 100 days in a 12-month period for any one student²;
- part-day exemptions from school for periods totalling up to 50 days in a 12-month period;
- extended leave for travel when a request is made by the family prior to the period of travel being taken;
- exemption from enrolment when a student who has completed Year 9 wishes to leave the school to undertake an apprenticeship or traineeship.

Students

Students have a responsibility to attend school every day when an instructional program is provided.

² <https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/school-attendance-policy>

Reception Staff

Reception staff must ensure that the relevant Heads of School are informed of attendance problems and issues. This includes providing relevant Heads of School with regular information about students for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue.

Reception staff have the responsibility to ensure rolls have been marked. Each morning, reception staff must notify parents/carers through SMS messages via SEQTA of any unexplained absences. Reception staff must also ensure that any student who reports to reception as a late arrival or early departure is entered into SEQTA and has the required parental permission.

Related Documents

Section 22 & 25 of the Education Act (1990)

Exemption from Attendance Form (Reception & [website](#))

School Attendance Register Codes (AIS NSW)

[Unsatisfactory Student Attendance Procedure](#)

[Attendance Improvement Plan](#)

Behaviour & Discipline Policy

Pastoral Care Policy

[Student Enrolment Destination Unknown Form](#)

Procedures

General Attendance

- (i) Class teacher to mark roll by the beginning of each class or session. Specifically, for Secondary, by 8.45 am (by AM), and every period throughout the day and for Primary, by 8.45 am, directly after recess and lunch;
- (ii) A late student is defined as a student who arrives after the roll has been marked. Any late arrivals at the beginning of the day must report (with a note or a form of communication signed by their parents/carers) to the reception staff who will record their partial absence in SEQTA. (Class teachers can confirm this change via SEQTA rolls);
- (iii) Late students should not be admitted to class without signing in at reception;
- (iv) Early leavers must report to the reception staff who will record their partial absence. For this early departure, the student must have parental permission;
- (v) Teachers should not send students to reception without a parental note (which teachers are to

- initial) or in response to a call from reception staff;
- (vi) Any early leaver/late arrival or absentee notes must be forwarded to reception staff;
 - (vii) Reasons considered to be unacceptable are to be promptly brought to the attention of the relevant Head of School.
 - (viii) Absentee codes in Seqta are in accordance with the common code approved by the Minister. (See Section 3.8 of the NESA Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools (NSW) Manual).³

Reception Staff

Once the rolls are marked, reception staff are to:

- (i) generate an absence report;
- (ii) send out SMS notifications to the student's parents/carers by 9.30 am;
- (iii) carry out a bulk absence attendance management solution for the remainder of the day for all absent students.

Late arrivals

Late arrivals are recorded for that period or session using the minister's codes, including the time of arrival. All following periods/sessions are will be marked as per usual practice by class teachers.

Excursions

Attendance for students who are attending excursions will be adjusted accordingly prior to the event. Attendance for students who are arriving directly to a school excursion event will be marked and communicated by the excursion teacher to the reception staff for appropriate recording.

Unresolved Absences

Any absence or partial absence, unexplained after two (2) school days is to be marked as being unresolved.

Students with unresolved absences will be issued a letter addressed to parents/carers by reception staff, seeking a satisfactory explanation for these absences.

³ https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/related-documents/reg_codes.pdf

Addressing Ongoing Attendance Concerns

Resolution of attendance concerns may include the following school-based strategies initiated by the relevant Head of School:

- student and parent interviews with a relevant WellbeingTeam member;
- reviewing the appropriateness of the student's educational program;
- development of an attendance improvement plan;
- Compulsory Schooling Conference;
- support from other relevant school personnel (eg. counsellor/psychologist);
- referral to relevant outside agencies;
- where there is immediate concern for the safety and welfare of the child or young person, the police or FACS should be contacted;
- use of the mandatory reporting guide (educational neglect) to provide further guidelines regarding any additional actions to be taken by the school.

If a range of school-based interventions have been unsuccessful, the matter may need to be forwarded to relevant authorities. See the Unsatisfactory Student Attendance Procedure.

The relevant Head of School will notify the Principal of any specific concerns regarding student absences during their regular meetings.