



Earlwood Public School

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance at school for every student is essential if students are to achieve their potential, and increase their career and life options. Schools in partnerships with parents are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, school staff, as part of their duty of care, record and monitor part and whole day absences. Schools, in providing a caring teaching and learning environment, which addresses the learning and support needs of students, including those with additional learning and support needs or complex health conditions, foster students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the school community.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

1. Ensure their children of compulsory school age are enrolled in a government or registered non-government school or, registered with the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) for Home Schooling.
2. Ensure that their children attend school regularly and attend every day the school is open for instruction.
3. Ensure that their children are prompt for the commencement of school at 9am.
4. Explain absences of their children promptly to the school within seven days from the first day of absence.
5. Work with the school to resolve attendance issues involving their children.
6. Ensure that the school is aware of any health, welfare or other issues that may impact on their child's attendance.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PRINCIPALS

1. Monitor and evaluate whole school attendance data through regular roll checks.
2. Ensure attendance records are maintained in an approved format.
3. All cases of unsatisfactory attendance, including part day absences are investigated promptly and school based factors impacting on attendance are addressed.
4. Ensure staff are provided with information on attendance requirements and their obligation to monitor and promote attendance at school.
5. Effective strategies are in place to contact parents where there is a pattern of attendance causing concern or the parent has failed to provide a satisfactory explanation for an absence.
6. The school's Learning and Support Team, in partnership with parents, identify and implement strategies that address the learning and support needs of a student with attendance patterns of concern.
7. Parents, students and the school community are regularly informed of the importance of school and attendance requirements.

8. Any other child protection concerns underlying school attendance issues (including educational neglect) are managed consistent with the Protecting and Supporting Children and Young People Policy and Procedures.
9. Contact the NSW Police Force to request that a child safety check be undertaken or contact the Mandatory Reporter Guide (MRG) and/or the Child Wellbeing Unit to seek specialist advice and professional judgement, where there are concerns about suspected risk of harm.
10. Principals can decline to accept an explanation for an absence and record the absence as 'unjustified'. The parent should be advised that the explanation has not been accepted and a reason for the decision provided.
11. Retain attendance registers for a period of three years.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL SCHOOL STAFF

1. Provide a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters a sense of belonging by students to the school community.
2. Maintain accurate records of student attendance using approved procedures.
3. Seek and retain written, electronic and verbal explanations from parents via phone or office contact, regarding student attendance. This advice is retained by the school for two years from the date of receipt.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF CLASSROOM TEACHERS

1. Record absences on the class roll promptly at the commencement of the school day using the School Attendance Register Codes as documented by the Department of Education.
2. Undertake reasonable measures to contact parents within two days of an absence being unexplained through a 'Compulsory School Attendance letter' (Appendix A) or by telephone. An absence is unexplained if parents have failed to provide an explanation to the school within 7 days.
3. Report to Stage supervisor when a student's pattern of attendance is of concern, or if no explanation is received from the parent or carer within the required timeframes.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAGE SUPERVISORS/ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS

1. Monitor attendance and roll marking by class teachers.
2. Refer attendance concerns to the Learning Support Team and principal if stage based strategies for improvements have not been successful.

APPLICATIONS FOR EXTENDED LEAVE (travel or holiday)

1. The principal should not accept a reason for travel during school term if it is not in the best interests of the student. Educational, social and participation reasons should be specified on the application.
2. Travel is considered to be domestic or international travel for the purpose of a family holiday, family business, bereavement or other reasons, which should be specified on the application.
3. The principal should consult with parents about the intention of the travel and in the case of family holidays encourage parents to take holidays with their child during school vacation periods.
4. Where the principal considers that the travel is appropriate during school term, the principal should issue the parent with an Application for Extended Leave – Travel for completion and inform the parent that if the application is accepted, the absences will be recorded as "L" – Leave.
5. The Principal will request travel documentation, such as travel itinerary or e-ticket, and ensure this is attached to the application.

6. The Principal may decline to accept a parent's Application for Extended Leave – Travel. In this case the parent must be advised in writing.

PARTIAL ATTENDANCE

Parents/carers should attempt to make appointments outside school hours to reduce disruption to their child's education. Parents who collect their children before the end of the day are required to sign their child out at the office prior to taking their child away from the school grounds.

Parents/carers should also ensure that children arrive at school on time. If a student is late, both the student and their parent, where possible, are required to report to the office to collect a late slip which is given to the teacher.