



Arthur Phillip High School

# Attendance Policy

Supporting The Education Act 1990, School Attendance Policy and the Student Attendance in Government Schools – Procedures. (School Attendance Policy PD 2005 0259 Learning and Engagement Directorate).

2020

Latest Revision

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## Rationale

Arthur Phillip High School understands that student achievement starts with attendance. Regular attendance is essential for students to maximise their learning opportunities.

Attendance is a shared responsibility between the school, parents/carergivers and student. All students are expected to attend school each day it is open for instruction. Under the **Education Act (1990)**, **parents and guardians are legally responsible for the enrolment and regular attendance of all children in their care up until the age of 17.**

Arthur Phillip High School is committed to providing a safe environment that encourages positive attendance and recognises outstanding student attendance. We aim to use early intervention strategies and communication with parents/carergivers to assist those students where attendance is affecting their educational goals.

NSW Department of Education: Wellbeing for Schools

<https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/wellbeing/connect/school-attendance>

## School Responsibilities

The school will support the regular attendance of students by:

- providing clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and consequences of unsatisfactory attendance

*Information for Parents and Carers:* <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/going-to-a-public-school/translated-documents/compulsory-school-attendance-information-for-parents>

- maintaining accurate records of student attendance using SENTRAL and implement effective roll marking procedures when variation to normal school routine occurs
- updating the Attendance Register Codes when necessary and record attendance information on the Department's electronic attendance register, OASIS

*School Attendance Codes:* [https://policies.education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/related-documents/reg\\_codes.pdf](https://policies.education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/related-documents/reg_codes.pdf)

- keeping a period by period record of student attendance (*SENTRAL PxP*)
- recognising and rewarding excellent and improved student attendance
- providing safe and engaging learning environments that encourage student attendance
- implementing programs and practices to address attendance issues where necessary
- identifying patterns of concern and regularly communicating these with parents/carers
- obtaining an accurate record of student attendance at alternative placements

## Parents / Caregivers Responsibilities

It is a legal requirement that the parent/caregivers of a child of compulsory school-age ensures their child is enrolled at, and attends school up until the age of 17.

It is essential that parents/caregivers work in partnership with the school to ensure their child has the best possible opportunities to succeed in their time at Arthur Phillip High School by ensuring:

- students are at school each day it is open for instruction
- students are able to travel safely to and from school
- students arrive at school at least 15 minutes before the commencement of the school day
- parents inform the school prior to a known absence or on the day of the absence
- parents provide a **reasonable explanation of absenteeism** the day the student returns to school by sending contacting the school: **a note** or via electronic means such as **SMS text message, email, telephone or log into the parent portal on SENTRAL**
  - ***please note** the Senior Executive are responsible for deciding if the reason given for an absence is justified*
- a student's absence is **justified within 7 school days** of the absence taking place
- students arriving late to school can justify the lateness with a written explanation
- they contact the school well in advance when they require their child to be on extended leave, such as, an overseas holiday
  - ***please note** the Senior Executive are responsible for deciding if the reason given for an extended leave will be approved*
- they provide the school with **updated contact details** (forms available from Student Services on LG)
- they remain in constant communication with the school about any attendance concerns
- they work with the school to resolve attendance issues that may arise and support any interventions that have been put in place to support the welfare of the student

*Compulsory School Attendance: Information for parents*

<http://www.rsc.nsw.edu.au/resources/DepEdNSW-Attendance.pdf>

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/student-wellbeing/attendance-behaviour-and-engagement/school-attendance#Compulsory0>

## Late Arrivals

Parents must ensure that their child is at school at least 15 minutes before the commencement of the school day. Under exceptional circumstances a student may be late to school providing it is an acceptable reason for lateness as stated below and the student is not habitually late.

Reasons Acceptable for Lateness:

- Doctor's Appointment (with documentation)
- Unexpected emergency or incident on the way to school
- Public transport issues

Reasons Not Acceptable for Lateness:

- Slept in
- Traffic
- Other avoidable situations (e.g. buying breakfast, couldn't find my school uniform, etc)
- No reason given

**Students who arrive after the school day commences must report immediately to Student Services on LG** where they will be issued with a late slip that must be presented to the teacher they have at the time of their arrival. Any student who does not present with an acceptable reason will be required to complete a **Recess 1 Detention on Level UG**.

Students who are habitually late to school will be referred to the appropriate Year Adviser where an appropriate course of action will be taken (refer to attendance concerns).

## Early Departures

If a student is required to **leave school early** they must present a **signed note before the end of Recess 1 to the SASS staff on their Homepage**. Parents/Carergivers may be contacted to ensure the authenticity of the note. The student will then be issued with an **Early Leavers Slip** which must be shown to the teacher of that lesson at the time of departure. Students are then required to report to **Students Services** on the **Lower Ground** before departing school.

Alternatively a parent/carergiver may come to the Front Office to sign a student out early. No student under the age of 17 years will be permitted to leave school early without being accompanied by an appropriate adult.

## Promoting Positive Attendance

Students who consistently demonstrate excellent attendance and/or make meaningful improvements in their own attendance will be recognised accordingly.

- Attendance Achievement Letters and Awards sent at the end of each semester from the Principal recognising 100% attendance.
- Students who achieve 100% attendance throughout the year will be recognised at the schools' official Presentation Day Ceremony and/or ROSE Ceremony.
- Various reward based incentives will be used for any student causing concern and documented in the student's Attendance Improvement Plans. Such rewards will be used to promote positive attendance and improve student wellbeing at APHS.

## Truancy

Students are expected to be present and accounted for each period of the day they are at school.

- **Partial truancy** from class includes any student who presents late without a note or any student who leaves the class without permission.
  - It is expected that any partial truants from class will be dealt with by the classroom teacher and the incident will be recorded on SENTRAL.
- **Fractional truancy** includes students not attending 1 or up to and including 4 subject periods without a reasonable explanation.
  - It is expected that teachers and HT's will follow up these students using a range of strategies and consequences to support improved student attendance.
- Fractional truancies will be monitored by the Year Adviser and the Stage Wellbeing Team and may be referred to the HT Welfare. A range of strategies and consequences will be implemented which may include ASD, Attendance Monitoring Card, parent interviews, and individual mentoring.
- YA's will complete a period by period check on SENTRAL to gather information on students causing concern regarding persistent truancy for an agreed period of time.
- YA's will contact the parents of persistent truants in regards to their attendance.
- Whole school intermittent checks of period by period roll marking to be carried out twice a term by HT Welfare to gather information on students causing concern with truanting and these concerns will be discussed at Welfare Meetings.

## Attendance Concerns

It is expected that teachers will follow actions indicated on the flowchart 'Supporting Student Attendance'. Teachers are expected to be active in following up students with attendance issues by referring to the appropriate Year Adviser.

Teachers are an important asset in identifying students who are at risk of developing poor school attendance patterns. Students who are at risk may fall under one or all of the following categories:

- A multiple number of unexplained absences
- Non-Attendance to school for 5 or more days without contact from home
- Attendance percentage drops below 85%

Once attendance issues have been identified, Year Advisers will follow the procedures outlined in the STRIVE Attendance Management Flowchart.

**N.B.** Should a student's attendance impact on their academic progress, the Stage Deputy Principal and Stage Wellbeing Team will review and determine the student's progression into the next cohort.

## Exemptions

Parents wishing to organise a family holiday or needing to travel overseas for any reason must **seek approval for exemption from the School Principal** for absences of up to 50 days and the **School Education Director** for more than 50 days.

- **Parent** fills out 3.1 **Application For Exemption From Attendance at School form** – school keeps this on file
- **School** fills out 3.5 **Certificate for Exemption from Attendance at School form** – Parent and Principal to sign and date if leave is under 50 days – parent keeps original and school keeps a copy on file
- Office to fill out notification note for class teacher to keep with roll – enter "M" for long absence for exemption – office to upload documentation to student's wellbeing profile on SENTRAL and file original copy – once student returns from leave enter into Pupil's Record Card.
- If the student will be absent for more than 50 days the above forms will need to be signed by the parent and Director, Public Schools.

## Excursions / Sport

It is the responsibility of the teacher organising the excursion/incursion to submit a marked roll of students in attendance to Student Services before 9.00am on the day of the excursion. If students are meeting at the venue, the teacher must communicate to student services the students in attendance before 9.00am.

Any student absentees from an excursion need to be communicated with Student Services immediately.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Teachers**

- All teachers have a duty of care to all students and to follow up absences
- Maintain accurate and up to date attendance records for subject periods using SENTRAL
- Promote positive attendance and reward students for excellent attendance
- Follow up any attendance discrepancies such as unexplained lateness or truanting
- Report any attendance concerns to the students' Year Adviser
- Document any information in regards to students non-attendance on SENTRAL, such as, student interviews and parent contact

### **Year Advisers**

- Analyse student attendance data from SENTRAL
- Regularly liaise with teachers to monitor student attendance and welfare concerns
- Communicate attendance concerns with parents and send the appropriate documentation (Attendance Letter 1 SENTRAL)
- Send Attendance Letter 2 informing parents/carers of possible referral to Home School Liaison Program/Officer
- Interview students with habitual absences and document concerns
- Contact Parents/Carergivers to arrange an interview at the school
- Place student on School Attendance Improvement Program
- Support individual students with attendance/welfare concerns and address issues as needed through the appropriate referrals such as, Stage DPs, HT Welfare, Stage Team Meetings, HT LaST & School Counsellor
- Formally meet with Stage DP to discuss attendance concerns
- Attend Stage Wellbeing Meetings and Welfare Meetings and discuss students causing concern, referring ongoing attendance concerns to HT Welfare
- Support HT Welfare and Deputy Principals in attendance interviews with parents and Home School Liaison Officers
- Liaise with outside agencies that are supporting the wellbeing of the students

## Careers Adviser

- Regularly Liaise with HT Welfare to assist in addressing attendance issues of Stage 5 & 6 students such as, alternative pathways, work experience, TAFE, etc.
- Support HT Welfare and Deputy Principals in attendance interviews with parents and Home School Liaison Officers of Stage 5 & 6 students

## Executive

- Support subject teachers and Year Advisers when dealing with parents/caregivers regarding student attendance
- Follow up any attendance discrepancies within their subject area such as truancy and habitual lateness. Ensure appropriate measures are taken according to the procedures outlined under 'Truancy'

## Head Teacher Welfare

- Disseminate updated DoE attendance information to parents via School Website
- Analyse student attendance data and publish/disseminate relevant information to Year Advisers
- Disseminate attendance information to Executive Staff
- Coordinate whole school intermittent checks of period by period roll marking, to be carried out twice a term. Interview students causing concern. Distribute ASD to students who truant 2 or more sessions in a day. Teachers and executive staff are responsible for following up period by period truants from their subject area
- Regularly liaise with HSLO at formal meeting times
- Monitor attendance of students causing concern and send Attendance Letter 2 home of students at high risk
- Implement Attendance Improvement Plan with low percentage attendance students (70%).
  - Engage parents/caregivers in an attendance interview as part of the process in developing the plan
- Prepare referral for Home School Liaison Program/Officer for the Senior Executive to send for students who fail to meet the expectations of their School Attendance Monitoring Program
- Liaise with outside agencies that are supporting students who have attendance issues
- Access online mandatory reporter guide (Keep Them Safe) to determine risk of harm and report any suspicions of significant harm to Community Services Child Protection Helpline (13 3627)
- Report any students who do not meet the threshold of significant risk but are at risk of harm to the Child Wellbeing Unit (02 9269 9400)



## Senior Executive

- Monitor attendance procedures to ensure accurate records are being maintained
- Support staff when dealing with parents/caregivers regarding student attendance
- Provide clear expectations and consequences to parents/carersgivers and students in regards to attendance
- Ensure staff are updated with attendance requirements and their obligations to monitor and promote regular attendance
- Schedule Stage Wellbeing Meetings to discuss students of concern
- Provide exemptions where necessary to students seeking extended leave through illness or overseas travel
- Support the HT Welfare in managing students with significant attendance concerns
- Interview students and parents of students causing significant attendance concern
- Refer at risk students to the HT Welfare to refer to HSLO
- Coordinate the reporting of students at risk to Community Services or the Child Wellbeing Unit
- Access online mandatory reporter guide (Keep Them Safe) to determine risk of harm and report any suspicions of significant harm to Community Services Child Protection Helpline (13 3627)
- Report any students who do not meet the threshold of significant risk but are at risk of harm to the Child Wellbeing Unit (02 9269 9400)