



## BANKSTOWN SOUTH INFANTS SCHOOL

### Attendance Policy

<b>DATE</b>	26 <sup>TH</sup> July 2013
<b>DUE FOR REVIEW</b>	July 2014
<b>ON WEBSITE</b>	Included in Policies Tab

#### PURPOSE

*This policy sets out the requirements for the attendance of students in NSW government schools.*

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximize 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 part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences.

#### DEC - POLICY STATEMENT

The Education Act (1990) requires the parents of a child of compulsory school age to enrol them at a government school or a registered non-government school, or to register them with the Board of Studies for home schooling. The Act also required parents to ensure the regular attendance of the child 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). Parents convicted of this offence may be fined up to \$1,100.00 for each offence.

#### RESPONSIBILITIES

**Parents** responsibilities:

- Ensuring that their children attend school regularly.
- Explaining the absences of their children promptly and within seven days to the school.
- Taking measures to resolve attendance issues involving their children.
- If your child is late to school bring your child to the office. You must explain the reason for being late and collect a "Notice of Lateness" which you give to the class teacher.
- If your child needs to leave school before 3:30pm you need to come to the office to collect a "Notice to Leave Early" and present it to the class teacher. A reason must be given at the office for needing to leave early.
- If you know in advance that you are going on holidays, please notify the school of the length of the absence.

**School Staff** are responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students by:

- Providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of belonging to the school community.
- Maintaining accurate records of student attendance.
- Implementing programs and practices to address attendance issues providing clear information of students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance.
- Seeking written explanations for all student absences, including partial absences.

## **MAINTENANCE OF ATTENDANCE ROLLS**

Classroom teachers maintain the class roll. (Refer to Appendix A: regarding the correct procedure for the teacher to maintain the attendance roll). Partial absences are recorded at the school office and then transferred to the attendance roll. Students who are late or who leave early are issued with a Partial Absence Slip which must be given to the teacher as an indication that the partial absence has been recorded centrally. Teacher records partial absences in the class roll.

Registers must be stored in a secure location within the school. 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.

## **MONITORING**

Regular roll checks will be made by the Stage Supervisor, Principal and Home School Liaison Office (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 seek advice from the Principal so that rectification measures can be taken or a referral made to the HSLO. (Appendix C and Appendix I are to be used in support of serious attendance matters).

## **VARIATIONS TO ROUTINE**

Attendance registers must be maintained each day the school is open with the exception of:

- Days on which there is part of full day industrial action involving teachers.
- Approved school development days.
- 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.

Special circumstance registers should:

- Specify the dates and times of the variation.
- Indicate the reasons for the variation.
- List students attending on that day.
- Be signed by the teacher maintaining the register.
- Be permanently attached to attendance registers.

For schools maintaining a manual attendance register, a broken line must be ruled through that day's column and the notation "Roll not marked – see special circumstance register" recorded within. Absences on these days are not to be recorded on student record cards or counted as absences for statistical purposes. During school evacuations the class attendance register (roll) must accompany the class to the designated evacuation point.

## REMOVAL OF A STUDENT

A student's name must be removed from an attendance register 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 to be enrolled in a non-government or other registered school, or is registered with the Board of Studies for home schooling.
- The student is between the ages of six and fifteen years, their whereabouts is unknown and the student has not attended school for a continuous period of 10 weeks in which the school was open. In such circumstances, the advice of regional student welfare personnel must be sought and a home school liaison officer must undertake a full investigation into the whereabouts of the student. If a student's name has been removed from the roll because they are missing, 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.

## SUPPORTING REGULAR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

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 *Guidelines for the Phone Intervention Program* describes a program facilitating early telephone contact.

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.



- Attendance rolls are to be marked as soon as school commences each day. Use black pen.
- Rolls are to be sent to the office by 10:30am every Friday. All absence notes should be submitted including late arrival and early departure notes.
- Rolls will then be forwarded to the Principal or delegate.
- LAMP sheets must be maintained by class teachers for students deemed at risk. If a student has three unexplained absences and/ or 3 instances of lateness within a term, a LAMP is started for that student and a phone call is made to parents by the class teacher. (See Appendix B).
- In all matters of attendance for a student, attention must be paid to the pattern of attendance of siblings.
- After three (3) consecutive days' absence of a student without notice from parents, the class teacher must phone the parents. (See Appendix D for script). Phone call is recorded on communication sheet in roll. Log parent explanation as a verbal notification of absence. (See Appendix E). If you are not able to make contact within three days, please notify your Principal.
- Students still at school after 3:30pm must present to the office. The teacher on duty phones the parents.
- Exemptions granted by the Principal will be recorded on class rolls by the class teacher.
- Parent notification by phone of a reason for student absence should be recorded on the Telephone Evidence of Absences (See Appendix E) and given to the class teacher.
- If no written advice of student absence has been provided by a parent after the student has returned to school, the class teacher will provide a "Written Evidence of Reason for Absence" (See Appendix F,G, or H) to the parent to be completed and returned to school immediately.

## Manual Attendance Registers

- Please use a black pen only in rolls. No correction fluid to be used.
- Initial the roll every day.
- The symbol X is to be used for the first and last day that the student attended for each term.
- New enrolments – draw a red arrow to the first day →.
- Leavers – draw a red line to the last day with an arrow ←. Draw a red line through the leaver's name.
- Follow up absences within 2/3 days. Ask for notes.
- After 7 days mark all unexplained absences with an **A** above the **a**
- Record all partial absences with a **P**. Details of all partial absences must be recorded in the back of the roll.
- SDDs and public holidays need to be marked with broken lines.
- Record reason for regular absences due to medical reasons I.e. Speech Pathology and Dr. Appointments in the special note section of the roll
- Registers must be stored in a secure location within the school. 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.

### Symbols to be used where students are absent from school.

<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.

## Symbols to be used for explanation of student absence.

**Note:** The following symbols should be recorded above the **a** or **Pa** symbol as appropriate.

<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 appointment. In these cases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Medical certificate is provided or</li> <li>- The absence was due to sickness and the principal accepts this explanation</li> </ul> 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.
<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 school.
<b>F</b>	Senior student participating in flexible timetable not present because they are not required to be at school.
<b>B</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: <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>	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. The symbol is recorded where a student accesses education settings separate to their mainstream school such as: <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>

## Appendix B

BANKSTOWN SOUTH INFANTS SCHOOL

Home School Liaison Program/Riverwood Office

SCHOOL: Lateness and Attendance Monitoring Program 2013

Family Name:				
T1	a		pa	
T2	a		pa	

Term 3	M	T	W	T	F	STUDENT DETAILS	Term 4	M	T	W	T	F
1						Name(First):	1					
2						Year:	2					
3						DOB:	3					
4						Parents:	4					
5						Caregiver:	5					
6						Address:	6					
7							7					
8						Ph (Hm):	8					
9						Ph (Wk/Mb):	9					
10						Emergency:	10					

### Intervention

Date	Action	Comments
Step 1	By CRT	3-4 Interventions Maximum. 3-4 Weeks Maximum.
Step 2	+Executive	Parent Meeting. 1-2 Weeks Maximum.
Step 3	+Principal	Letter 5 to Parent. 1-2 Weeks Maximum.
Step 4	+Co-Ord	Refer to HSLO

PC = Phone Call	N = Note Sent Home	PM = Parent Meeting (Official)
SI = Student Interview	NR = Note Received	R = Referral to....
PI = Parent Interview		

Sample script for telephoning parents.

Dear Parents

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_, classroom teacher for \_\_\_\_\_.  
Our records show that \_\_\_\_\_ has missed several days recently and I was a little concerned. I was wondering if there are any problems or anything we can help with?

Response

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



Telephone Evidence of Absences.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss \_\_\_\_\_ informed

By phone/verbally that \_\_\_\_\_ was away

\_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss \_\_\_\_\_ informed

By phone/verbally that \_\_\_\_\_ was away

\_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Written Evidence of Reason for Absence.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

My child \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

was away from school on \_\_\_\_\_ (dates)

because \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

My child \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

was away from school on \_\_\_\_\_ (dates)

because \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date

Name

Street Address

Suburb NSW 2\_\_\_\_\_

Dear Mr/Mrs \_\_\_\_\_,

I refer to the attendance of your son/daughter, \_\_\_\_\_ at school.

*The Education Act (1990)* requires parents to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend school on each day that the school is open for instruction. If children are absent from school, parents are required to provide the school with an acceptable explanation within seven days of the absence.

You have previously been advised that \_\_\_\_\_'s attendance is a matter of concern. The school has implemented a range of strategies to encourage \_\_\_\_\_'s full attendance at school without success.

I am obliged to report apparent unresolved non-compliance with the *Education Act (1990)* to the local member of the region's Home School Liaison Program for further investigation by a home school liaison officer to help resolve the matter. The local manager will consider if further action is necessary. This may include the development of an Attendance Improvement Plan with specific targets, strategies and timelines.

If you do not meaningfully engage in the plan and there is no improvement in the \_\_\_\_\_'s attendance during this time, the matter may be referred to the Department's senior officers for possible legal action.

It is important that you work with us to resolve the issue.

Yours sincerely,

Sharon Simpson

**Principal**

**Bankstown South Infants School**