



ATTENDANCE POLICY

POLICY DOCUMENT

Ratified by Staff/Policy Committee: 2022

Ratified by Governing Council: September 2022

Review Date: September 2024

OVERVIEW

This TGS Attendance Policy supports and is in addition to the [Department for Education Attendance Policy](#) and should be read in conjunction with said Policy.

The DfE Attendance Policy describes the compulsory nature of education and underlines the responsibilities of all members of the school community to ensure children and young people are attending school. It also reflects research that indicates attendance at both preschool and school positively affects learning, wellbeing, employment and life outcomes for children and young people.

TGS BELIEF STATEMENT

Student attendance can significantly impact on student success. Students who have poor attendance patterns are at risk of not achieving their full potential, educationally, emotionally or socially and can therefore be disadvantaged in their future choices. Family/caregiver support in maintaining regular and punctual attendance is essential. We believe that in the case of poor attendance/punctuality extra support and intervention may be required to ensure that the student has the best opportunity for success in later life.

COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

The [Education and Children's Services Act 2019](#) and the [Regulations](#) impose statutory responsibilities in relation to attendance at school.

Both the school and parents/caregivers have responsibilities under the DfE Attendance Policy which should be adhered to. Over and above these responsibilities the following is required:

Student and Family Responsibilities

- Students should attend school every day unless the school receives a valid reason for being absent. Lawful excuses for absence include illness, danger of being affected by an infectious or contagious disease, temporary or permanent infirmity, events of cultural significance (eg. births, deaths, and related ceremonies), other events approved by the school Governing Council and any other unavoidable and sufficient cause.
- Families are required to inform the school of the reason for their child(ren)'s absence by note, phone, email, SeeSaw, text, conversation with the class teacher, School Office staff or a member of the leadership team by 8:45am.
- Absenteeism due to illness will be monitored.



- If a student is absent for three or more consecutive days, a medical certificate may be required for explanation.
- Where a student is absent for ten or more days in any term, a Health Support Plan may be required from the treating health professional that can guide appropriate school responses in the case of illness to inform negotiated attendance.
- Extended absences due to family reasons will be monitored.
 - Valid absences for family reasons include for days of cultural significance and any other unavoidable significant cause.
 - A pattern of regular non-attendance due to family reasons may indicate the need for intervention by the school and/or a truancy social worker.
- Students need to arrive at school between 8:30am and 8:50am. There is no duty of care before 8:30am; if children need to be at school earlier because of parent commitments they should attend Out of School Hours Care (OSHC).
- Student who arrive early and are not booked into OSHC will be asked to sit in the School Office.
- Students need to arrive to school on time. If they arrive late, students need to present to the School Office to collect a late slip which they need to give to their class teacher. Parents/caregivers are required to provide an explanation for their child(ren)'s lateness.
- Parents/caregivers picking their child(ren) up before 3:00pm need to visit the School Office to collect a leaving slip. Office staff will immediately mark the reason in the attendance system prior to the parent collecting the child.
- If a pattern of late arrivals/early departure becomes apparent this may require follow up by the school.
- Families are required to inform the school of extended absences. Any absence over five days requires an exemption that is to be approved by the Principal for up to 10 weeks. Exemptions of more than 10 weeks need to be approved by the Education Director. Parents/caregivers need to give adequate notice of exemptions.
- Students will be asked to wait in the School Office if they are not collected by 3:20pm.
- If necessary, children will be placed in OSHC at a cost to parents/caregivers.

Teacher Responsibilities (including TRTs)

- Monitor each child's attendance.
- Mark the roll electronically on Sentral by 9am at the beginning of the school day.
- If the electronic roll is not working or the Internet is unavailable, class teachers are to record any absences on a piece of paper and deliver it to the School Office ASAP.
- Teachers are to follow up with parents if three consecutive unexplained absences are recorded. If further follow up is required please discuss initially with the Senior Leader Wellbeing and Engagement.



- Class teachers need to follow up all unexplained absences within three days of the absence. If an explanation of a child's absence is obtained, teachers to update the electronic roll accordingly.
- Teachers will receive printouts of any unexplained absences on a regular basis. These must be followed up with the family ASAP.
- At the end of term, an absence report will be delivered to class. Teachers are to cross check. No unexplained absences should appear on this end of term paper roll.
- Teachers can speak with the AECO when making contact with Aboriginal families to gather any known pertinent family information that may relate to a student's absence or for guidance before making contact.

Responding to High Level Attendance Concerns- Using Attendance Alert Notes (form or email) to notify the Wellbeing and Engagement Senior Leader when:

- a student is absent three consecutive days without explanation, and attempts made by the teacher to make contact with the family have been unsuccessful;
- a student has been absent for six or more days in any one term.
- Teachers are to keep all correspondence regarding absences from families and document any contact/attempted contact with families/caregivers, keeping email records.
- School work is not required to be provided by the school for an exemption however a parent can request information about what will be covered during the absence or it can be provided by the school. Parents may also wish to discuss with the school ways to involve their children in a range of curriculum areas and learning activities while they are away with their family e.g. research on places visited and the history, culture, religion and geography through activities including written, photographic and video journals. Schools can encourage students to share their new knowledge with their class when they return.

School Office Responsibilities:

- Send out SMS text for all unexplained absences daily once teachers submit electronic roll.
- Update absences from messages received from the family.
- Give class teachers an Attendance Report at the end of each term to sign and verify.
- Periodically generate an unexplained absences report for each class teacher for follow up

Leadership Responsibilities:

- Leadership will support staff to follow up non-attendance when an Attendance Alert Note is received
- Leadership to regularly promote good attendance/punctuality through the School Newsletter and brochures provided at enrolment and the start of each year.
- Ensure that electronic roll is accurately completed by confirming teachers are using the correct absence coding and recording correspondence with families.



- STAR team will analyse attendance data each term, review attendance plans and organise coordination of attendance letters to go out to families with children with 6 or more absences for the term.
- Student Review Team (SRT) team to coordinate Case Management of families requiring Attendance Improvement Plans
- If an Attendance Alert is received regarding an Aboriginal student a decision will be made between the leadership team as to who will have primary responsibility when engaging with the family regarding the attendance issues, taking into account the needs of the family and the nature of their existing relationship with the school.
- The Leadership Team will have a pre-referral discussion with the Student Attendance Counsellor if attendance issues are not resolved after action by the school.
- Referral to the Aboriginal Inclusion Officer will occur if attendance issues have not improved and/or attempts by the school to engage with the family have not been successful. Referral to the Aboriginal Inclusion Officer involves pre-referral discussion with Student Attendance Counsellor/ Aboriginal Inclusion Officer. If the discussion results in a referral, the school is required to include a request for the Aboriginal Inclusion Officer in the 'Referral Concern' section of the referral form.
- Coordinate and document all interventions, strategies, home visits and phone calls in EDSAS. Should a student transfer to a different school the documentation is to be placed in the student's file for transfer.
- Liaise with appropriate support services (internal and external) to determine the best intervention option for each family.
- Leadership will facilitate regular meetings regarding students with attendance concerns involving the class teacher and other support staff as required.
- Principals have delegated authority from the Minister to approve applications for temporary exemption from school attendance for periods of up to one calendar month. Parents/caregivers should apply in writing and principals should also advise approvals and non-approvals on school letterhead. Copies of such advices are to be retained in school files, together with applications, and are to be made available to appropriate department officers as required.
- All applications for temporary exemptions exceeding one calendar month, and for permanent exemptions, are to be set out on Form ED175 and forwarded to the LET team.

Supporting documents

[Education and Children's Services Act 2019](#) and the [Regulations](#)
[Department for Education Attendance Policy](#)