



## Attendance Procedures

Regular attendance at school is fundamental to student learning. Students who attend school regularly are more likely to achieve educational success and increase their career and life options. Schools, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students.

**95% + is our expected student attendance. Students with attendance rates below 90% may be educationally at risk.**

**Aim:** To record and monitor student attendance so that regular attendance of students will be encouraged. Steps are promptly taken to monitor and improve poor attendance and/or lateness.

### Responsibilities:

#### Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers are responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students and must ensure:

- their children of compulsory school age are enrolled in a government or registered non-government school or, they are registered with the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (NESA) for Home Schooling
- their children who are enrolled at school attend every day the school is open.
- they provide an explanation for absences, by means such as a telephone call, written note, or email to the school within 7 days
- they work in partnership with the school to plan and implement strategies to support regular attendance at school.

#### Teachers

Teachers are also responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students at school by:

- understanding the importance of accurately recording and carefully monitoring student attendance and do so efficiently and effectively.
- providing a caring, stimulating and successful learning environment which will encourage students' regular attendance.
- ensuring class roll is marked and submitted on Sentral promptly each morning between 9:35 - 10.00am using appropriate marking codes.
- ensuring absence notes received are promptly recorded on Sentral then sent to the office for storage.
- recording verbal or written notifications of absence onto Sentral.
- approval of leave up to 5 days in the first instance.
- contacting parents via phone call when attendance rates fall below (less than 90%).
- referring any student to the Attendance Officer and/or Assistant Principal who has ongoing unsatisfactory attendance rates (less than 90%) and/or repeated lateness or early departure.
- sending the parent/carer Notice of Absence letter (printed from Sentral) if no satisfactory explanation is received within 2 days of the student returning from absence, or if a student is absent (unexplained) for 3 consecutive days.

### **Attendance officer and/or Learning and Support Team (LST)**

The Attendance officer and/or Learning and Support Team is responsible for:

- discussing any student who has been identified as an attendance concern with the student's teacher and/or Stage supervisor.
- monitoring and following up instances of unsatisfactory attendance (< 85%)
- liaising with the Principal as well as the HSLO (Home School Liaison Officer).

### **Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO)**

The Home School Liaison Officer is responsible for:

- providing the school with support to monitor and improve school attendance.
- providing information for parents/carers as required (for example, Kindergarten information sessions).

### **Principal**

The Principal is responsible for:

- ensuring staff and students adhere to Miranda North Public School attendance policy.
- approval of extended leave for extenuating circumstances beyond 5 days.
- liaising with teachers, LST Team, HSLO and parents/carers in relation to all attendance concerns.

### **Administration Staff**

Administration Staff are responsible for:

- sending email each day for students who are absent.
- recording the dates and reason for absence on Sentral when contacted by parent/carer.
- filing absentee notes at the end of each term.
- documenting late arrivals and early departures on Sentral.

### **The following points should be noted:**

- Late arrival or early departure slips are printed by the office staff from Sentral - this will automatically appear in the class roll for students who arrive after 9:20am or leave before 3.25pm.
- Students should present to the office where they will be given a late arrival slip. Students must not leave early unless collected by a parent/carer or their approved nominated persons.
- Exemptions can no longer be requested or approved for parents/carers going on holidays during a school term. These absences are marked as leave (L) and are counted in the student's attendance record. A form needs to be completed for absences of 5 days or more. This information is tracked in the office and is checked by the Principal before the leave is approved by the Principal.

### **Attendance Monitoring Procedures**

- Teachers will monitor student absences and bring any concerns to the attention of the Attendance Officer and/ or Stage Supervisor.
- The HSLO will monitor attendance of notified students with the assistance of the Principal or nominated person, who will make daily checks on the attendance of students of concern. The HSLO will be notified of any non-attendance of these students.

### **Liaison with Parents and Caregivers**

- Principals may request medical certificates or other documentation when frequent or long-term absences are being explained due to illness.
- Parents/Carers are encouraged to refer to the 'Compulsory School Attendance: Information for parents' document and 'Regular School Attendance: Information for parents and carers of children in, or about to enter, Kindergarten'. This is distributed as part of the school's Kindergarten enrolment information pack.

# Attendance Monitoring

Class teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Attendance at or &lt; 90% for the term. Contacting parents via phone call when attendance rates fall below 90%.</li> <li>▪ Referring any student to the Attendance Officer and/or Stage Supervisor who has ongoing unsatisfactory attendance rates (less than 85%) and/or repeated lateness or early departure.</li> <li>▪ Sending the parent/carer Notice of Absence letter (printed from Sentral) if no satisfactory explanation is received within 2 days of the student returning from absence.</li> <li>▪ Call parent/carer if a student is absent (unexplained) for 3 consecutive days.</li> <li>▪ CT reports any ongoing concerns to the Attendance Officer and/or Stage Supervisor and sets 'attendance concern' on Sentral.</li> </ul>
Attendance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review attendance data on Sentral.</li> <li>▪ Review 90% or less.</li> <li>▪ Inform teachers of regular monitoring and follow up any unexplained absences.</li> <li>▪ Contact parents if attendance has not improved.</li> <li>▪ Refer students to LST if attendance is a concern.</li> <li>▪ If attendance improves continue to monitor on Sentral.</li> <li>▪ Review stage data and celebrate at assembly.</li> </ul>
Learning & Support Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If attendance is still a concern, LST makes contact with parent for interview regarding student's attendance.</li> <li>▪ If attendance falls &lt;85%, referral to Principal.</li> </ul>
Principal Or Nominated Peron	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discuss matter with HSLO.</li> <li>▪ DoE Letter 1 (<a href="#">Appendix 5</a>) signed by Principal/Nominated Person and sent to parent.</li> <li>▪ Monitor attendance: if no improvement, contact HSLO to request support.</li> <li>▪ Completes Application for Home School Liaison Program (<a href="#">Appendix 6</a>).</li> </ul>
HSLO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ HSLO makes contact with parents.</li> <li>▪ HSLO to monitor student attendance.</li> </ul>

## Further resources to support Attendance Monitoring.

**Appendix 7** - [Attendance Strategies](#)

**Appendix 8** - DoE Policy Brochure - [Compulsory School Attendance](#)

**Appendix 9**- DoE Policy Brochure - Newsletter Article (see below)

**Appendix 10**- [16A - Request for Information](#) (CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS (CARE AND PROTECTION) ACT 1998 - SECT 248)

## Appendix 9

### Newsletter articles

**Did you know that if students miss as little as eight days in a school term, by the end of primary school they will have missed an entire year of education?**

If you are experiencing difficulties with getting your kids to school, please let us know. You can speak to your child's classroom teacher, an executive member, or even the front office staff about how we may assist you. Our aim is to fix attendance issues as soon as they arise.

### Why is regular school attendance important?

Regular school attendance will help your child succeed later in life. Attending school every day makes learning easier for your child and helps children build and maintain friendships with other children. If your child doesn't learn the basic skills in the early years of school, they may develop learning problems in later years.

### Why is arriving at school on time important?

Arriving at school on time:

- Ensures that your child doesn't miss out on the important learning activities scheduled early in the day when they are most alert.
- Helps your child to learn the importance of punctuality and routine.
- Gives your child time to greet their friends before class and therefore reduces the opportunity for classroom disruption.

Lateness is recorded as a partial absence and must be explained to the school the same way as other forms of absence.

### Getting your child to school: Problems/Solutions

- **Won't get out of bed**/*Have a set time to be out of bed*
- **Won't go to bed**/*Have a set bedtime*
- **Can't find their clothes, books, homework, school bag**/*Have uniform and school bag ready the night before*
- **School lunches are not ready**/*Make lunches the night before*
- **Slow to eat breakfast**/*have a set time for starting and ending breakfast. A routine is important.*
- **Homework not done**/*Set time for daily homework activities and check that it is done*
- **Watching television late at night or when they should be getting ready for school**/*Turn the television on for a set time and only if appropriate*
- **Test or presentations at school**/*Provide lots of positive encouragement*
- **Birthdays**/*Be firm, a birthday is not a holiday*
- **Screaming and not letting go**/*Time arrival at school to coincide with bell time and leave quickly, happily and confidently. You may say something like "I'll see you this afternoon" to reassure them. If arranged with the teacher beforehand, place your child's hand into that of the teacher and then leave.*

## When is being away OK?

Sometimes it's hard to decide when it is acceptable to keep your child home from school. Below is a list of acceptable and unacceptable examples:

### Acceptable

Unavoidable medical, specialist or dental appointments (Try to encourage appointments outside school hours, or close to home time.)  
Religious holidays  
Urgent family situation (E.g. funerals)  
Sick or infectious disease (E.g. conjunctivitis)

### Unacceptable

Shopping  
Sleeping in  
Working around the house  
Minding siblings/other children/older relatives  
Minor family events (birthdays)  
Hair cuts  
Weather conditions: Rainy/Windy/Hot  
Frequent car problems  
Frequent late train/bus  
Airport/Visitors from overseas or other states  
Other member of the family is sick  
Hospital Visits to relatives or friends  
Head Lice (This can be treated effectively at home after school)

## The legalities of compulsory school attendance

In Australia, regular school attendance is compulsory between the ages of 6-17. Children of compulsory school age **MUST** attend school every day that school is open for instruction

It is important to understand that the New South Wales Department of Education may prosecute parents (including carers) if children of compulsory school age have recurring numbers of unjustified absences from school.

If you would like to read more about compulsory school attendance, or read documents in another language please follow this link: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/student-wellbeing/attendance-matters-resources-for-schools/compulsory-school-attendance>

## How does Miranda North Public School promote regular attendance?

The staff at The Miranda North Public School are here to help create a happy and safe environment in which your child can learn. Below are some ways that we can help you with your child's attendance:

- Rewards for excellent and improved attendance.
- Making school a fun, educational and safe environment for all children
- Keep in contact with parents/caregivers regarding attendance and changes to routine
- Offer parent information sessions to provide parents with strategies to support attendance
- Liaise with support staff such as HSLOs, ASLOs (Aboriginal School Liaison Officers) and Community Liaison Officers.

## How can you help promote regular attendance of your child?

- Send your child to school as much as possible.
- Getting to school on time is really important. The first 20 minutes of class is where children learn important skills and get used to routine. Also, being late can make a child feel behind and left out for the rest of the day.
- If your child has been absent, please send a note to explain this absence within 7 days.
- Be organised. It's not always easy when your child springs the permission slip on you on the morning it's due, but a good way to avoid problems like this is to ask your child to show you any notes or homework when they get home from school. You may also need to check their bags yourself!
- Sports carnivals, excursions and other special event days are just the same as regular school days. Attendance is compulsory.

## Notes! Notes! Notes!

As teachers, we have a legal duty of care when it comes to the safety and wellbeing of all the students enrolled at our schools. To this end, communication between home and school is VERY important. The main way that parents communicate to school staff is in writing.

- **Absentee notes:** If your child is sick, or there is a family emergency, we need to know. This year, the school is issuing booklets of simple, tear out absentee notes that make it easier for you to send a note to school with your child. Please ask at the office if you don't receive one.
- **Late notes:** Life happens, especially in the morning for some reason! If your child is late for school, please send a short note in with them. Make sure they know to give this to their teacher.
- **Time limits:** Lots of parents don't realise that schools are only able to accept absentee notes within a certain time frame. Legally, the school can only accept notes explaining and absence **within 7 days** of that absence occurring. After this time frame elapses, the absence must be marked as unexplained.

## Take your holidays when we do!

School is an important time in your child's life, where they learn social and academic skills and the routines and work ethic that will stay with them throughout their life. But because children need time to be children, there are also school holidays which allow them time off from the formalities of school. Students in NSW have a total of approximately 12 weeks off school each year. The school holidays for 2025 are as follows:

**Term 1 Holidays: 14 April – 30 April**

**Term 2 Holidays: 7 July – 18 July**

**Term 3 Holidays: 29 September – 10 October**

**Term 4 Holidays: 22 December 2025 - 2 February 2026**

Family holidays are an important part of growing up, but so is attending school. For this reason, we ask that wherever possible, **you take your holidays when we do**, during school holiday time. Even taking a couple of weeks off school during term time can make it very hard for your child to catch up on their work and if this is repeated over several years, children often find themselves falling behind.

If you must schedule your holiday during term time, we ask that you please do the following things before you go:

- Notify the school of the dates you will be away.
- Provide additional documentation, such as travel itineraries. If you do not notify the school, your child's absences will be marked down as unexplained.
- Speak to your child's classroom teacher about how best to help your child cope with the work they will miss while away. It may not always be possible for teachers to provide weeks of work in advance for your child to take with them as many of the activities done in class build on each other and require teacher instruction.

## The things you need to know about compulsory school attendance:

- Regular attendance at school is compulsory for children aged 6-17.
- It is your legal responsibility to ensure that your child attends school regularly. The staff are happy to help, but ultimately the responsibility falls on the parent.
- Kindergarten is the most important year of school when it comes to attendance. This is the year when kids learn the importance of routine and develop lasting friendships. If your child is away a lot in Kinder, you may find that they have trouble getting to school and developing strong friendships.

- Home School Liaison Officers (HSLOs) work with students and families whose attendance falls below 85%. So if your child has more than 5 or 6 days off per term, you may be contacted to discuss their attendance. We are employees of the Department of Education (DE) and work exclusively to improve attendance and prosecute non-attendance and enrolment issues.
- Principals have the right to ask for Medical Certificates for sick days, especially if there is an excessive number.

## Medical Certificates

Principals are legally responsible for keeping accurate records of student attendance. Principals are also responsible for deciding if the reason given for an absence is justified. For this reason, Principals may request medical certificates or other documentation for long or frequent absences explained by parents as being due to illness. If Principals don't consider an explanation to be satisfactory, they will record the absence as unjustified.

## Do the maths!

This might have happened to you: You have a paying job. You get sick and use up a sick day here, a couple more there and suddenly you're out of sick days. At work, the pay check reminds us of our limits, but with school attendance it's easy to let it slide. Here's some maths to help you keep it in perspective.

There are **200** school days in a year.

There are **50** school days in a term.

**10** days missed per term = **40** days missed per year (**That's almost an entire term**)

**8** days missed per term, over **7** years of primary school = **1 entire year missed**

If your child is **30 minutes** late, 2 times a week, after a term they will have missed over a day's worth of school

## What to include on an absentee note:

It's important that we receive the right information on absentee notes as it will be entered into the roll, which is a legal document. The following information should be included:

**Date**

**Child's name**

**Explanation for absence (e.g. Justin will be unable to attend school due to the flu is better than Justin will be away today)**

**When you expect your child to return to school**

**Contact details if they have recently changed**

**Your name**

**Your signature**

Legally, schools are required to keep any notes explaining absences in their files. If you speak and/or write in a language other than English you have a number of options when it comes to notes. If they are old enough, you can ask your son or daughter to write the note for you to sign or you can write the note in your first language. Alternately, there are absentee note templates in a wide range of languages at the front office.