
STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Version Number: 2

Date Adopted: 12 June 2023

Responsible Person: Principal

Approved By: Yiramalay council

Next Review Date: 12 June 2023

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Every day that a student does not attend school can have a negative impact on their learning.

Studio Schools of Australia Ltd ('SSA') monitors and manages the attendance of all students enrolled at SSA, identifies students with attendance issues and implements appropriate measures to restore regular attendance.

2. LEGISLATION AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

2.1. School Education Act (1999)

Part 2, Division 3 of the [WA School Education Act 1999](#) sets out attendance requirements that all Western Australian schools must satisfy. A very brief description of the applicable sections is provided below however, schools should read the sections in full so as to be absolutely clear on every aspect.

Section	Refers to
23	Compulsory aged student's requirement to attend school for every day that school is open for instruction or, otherwise participate in the school's educational programme, at the school or elsewhere, as required by the Principal ... <i>(parents/guardian's obligation to ensure the child attends)</i> .
24	Principal's authority to facilitate (in writing) a student's participation in the school's educational programme at a place other than the school. This may be for part of the school year ...
25	- Excusing a student from attendance or participating in the school's educational programme, for reason of temporary physical or mental incapacity or any other reasonable cause; - Parent's/guardian's obligation to notify the Principal, of the child's non-attendance or non-participation, as soon as practicable and within 3 school days from when the non-attendance started; - Principal's authority to request a parent/guardian to supply a certificate from a registered medical practitioner - Student being excused from attendance / participation when moving to registered homeschooling

26	Action that can be taken where there are doubtful reasons for non-attendance. These actions include referral to an Attendance Panel, under section 39.
27	Principal's authority to require students' non-attendance, on the basis of advice from the Chief Health Officer or a registered medical practitioner, due to reasons of a medical condition, considered by the Principal to be infectious, contagious or otherwise harmful to the health of persons at school or participating in the school's educational programme.
28	- Principal's requirement to maintain attendance / participation (or non-attendance / non-participation, as applies) records for each student. - Principal's requirement to maintain such records for 7 years from the date that enrolment ceased, as prescribed under regulation 21 of the <i>School Education Regulations 2000</i>. <i>In the event of school closure during that period, the records must be transferred to the Director General.</i> - Requirement that attendance records must be able to be reproduced in written form, though they may be kept in electronic form.
11	Circumstances involving approved options other than school in the final 2 years of compulsory education, including a student engaging in part-time studies at a school.
159(1)(h)	The WA Education Minister's determination of a Non-Government school registration standard that relates to ' <i>the enrolment and attendance procedures at a school.</i> ' s.159(1)(h).
182	The Non-Government Schools' Funding Order and Non-Government Schools' Funding Guidelines. These documents are produced each year. The Guidelines set out student attendance eligibility requirements for the school's receipt of State funding.

2.2. Public Health Act 2016

The [WA Public Health Act 2016](#) outlines circumstances where a student (or students) are to be excluded from attending school. A very brief description of the applicable section provided below however, schools should read the section in full so as to be absolutely clear on every aspect.

Section	Refers to
142	- Reporting information to the Chief Health Officer; - The Chief Health Officer's authority to direct that a child who has not been immunised against a vaccine preventable notifiable infectious disease is not permitted to attend, or participate in the educational programme of the school, for a specified period; - The Chief Health Officer's authority to direct the closure of whole, or a part, of the school for a specified period, to limit or prevent the spread of a vaccine preventable notifiable infectious disease

2.3. Australian Education Act 2013 and Australian Education Regulations 2013

Part 1, Division 2 of the [Australian Education Regulations 2013](#) sets out information about student attendance eligibility requirements for the receipt of Commonwealth funding. This information is also available from the Non-Government Schools Census Guidelines that are produced each year.

2.4. Registration Standards and Other Requirements for Non-Government Schools

The [Guide to Registration Standards and Other Requirements for Non-Government Schools](#) outlines the registration standards that Independent schools must observe, along with some brief explanatory information. Below are standards that are relevant to student attendance:

Standard 6: Enrolment and Attendance Procedures

6.1 *Student enrolment and attendance procedures and practices comply with all legal requirements.*

Standard 7: Critical and Emergency Incidents

7.2 *The governing body ensures the Director General is notified of every reportable incident as soon as practicable, and in any event within 48 hours of the incident, using the form published by the Director General for this purpose.*

This standard is relevant to attendance because one of the definitions of a reportable incident states that:

- (3) *An incident requiring a police or other emergency services response when a student appears to have been taken or removed, or goes missing and cannot be accounted for, from the school or from a school-related activity without proper authority.*

Standard 13: Minimum Age of Enrolment

13.1 *Unless the Director General provides prior approval, the school does not permit any child to be enrolled at the school before the final year of their early education period and the child has turned 3 years of age.*

Other Requirement – Standard of Education

The following may be requested before, during or after a renewal of registration school visit:

Documentation of the re-engagement strategies implemented when a student's unapproved absences are having a significant impact on the student's progress with the learning programme.

The Student Tracking System

This initiative applies to all schools in Western Australia and must be referenced in a school's Attendance Policy. The [Guide to the Registration Standards and Other Requirements](#) advises that the Director General of the Department of Education may check that where a school has been unable to locate a student within 20 days of the start of an absence and the parent/s cannot be contacted, the Principal has regarded the student as missing and contacted the Student Tracking Coordinator (STC) in the

Department of Education. The [Student Whose Whereabouts Are Unknown Flowchart 1](#) and [Students Whose Whereabouts Are Unknown Flowchart 2](#) can be used as guides.

A student can be regarded as 'missing' when they cannot be located and their parent/s cannot be contacted (using the strategies listed below) and the school has not received advice that the student is being educated elsewhere. The SWU Request Form provided as Schedule 1, should be completed for missing students within 15 school days of their last date of attendance.

The following are strategies that can be used to locate missing students:

- written communication to parent/s (social media is not an appropriate medium)
- telephone parent/s (home and work)
- conduct a home visit
- telephone emergency contacts
- check previous school
- query relatives and peers attending the school
- contact relevant agencies (if involved) e.g. Department of Communities: Child Protection and Family Support (DCPFS)
- consultation with Student Tracking Coordinator (STC).

Reporting a missing student to the STC should generate an emailed response from the STC within 15 school days if the student has enrolled elsewhere (if at a public school) or is to be placed on the SWU List. For Non-Government schools the STC may authorise the Principal to make an adjustment to the attendance records and enrolment register to reflect that the enrolment has ceased.

NB: It should be noted that the [Students Whose Whereabouts Are Unknown Guidelines & Procedures](#) states that:

If a student has been absent from school for three days without a reasonable explanation from their parent/s all steps listed under the Missing Students section of this document should be utilised to locate the student and restore their attendance.

For complete advice on this initiative and to access the form to report a missing student a school should refer to the document. [Students Whose Whereabouts Are Unknown Guidelines & Procedures](#).

3. POLICY RULES

It is the responsibility of the Principal to manage student attendance in accordance with the Student Attendance procedures.

This includes:

- recording of all student attendance and absences
- recording information and reasons for absences
- every occurrence of the school's contact (personal, phone, email, sms, letter, social media) with the parent/guardian should be recorded as well as the strategies

- employed and/or agreements entered into as part of managing problematic absences with a view to managing a student back to regular attendance.
- promoting the importance of school attendance to their school community
 - engaging in community-initiated approaches to strengthen student attendance
 - developing plans in partnership with students, families, communities and other agencies to improve student attendance, including documented plans where required, to address the persistent absence of individual students
 - responding to Department requests for reporting and disclosure of attendance data
 - managing alternative attendance arrangements where these are in the best interests of the student; and
 - retaining all relevant documentation.

4. RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND COMPLIANCE

Implementation of the policy is the responsibility of the Principal.

Compliance monitoring is the responsibility the Principal and Delegate/s.

5. DEFINITIONS

P – Present

A student is considered to be in attendance or present when present for or participating in the school's formal instructional program. Typically, this will be on the school site but also includes off-site arrangements that respond to the student's learning needs and circumstances.

AA - Absent approved

An absence where the reason provided by the parent is considered to be legitimate and is deemed acceptable by the principal.

AC - Absent Culture

An absence where the reason provided by the parent is to attend to cultural event e.g. sorry business.

AI – Absent Illness

An absence where the reason the student cannot attend is due to physical or mental illness.

A – Absent Unapproved

Where the student is absent without meeting any of the criteria above or due to truancy.

S – Suspended

Where a student has been placed on a suspension due to behavioural or other issues whilst at the school.

Community

Local people, groups and organisations in and around schools in remote, regional and metropolitan areas. This includes, but is not limited to, students, families, principals, teachers and other school staff, community leaders, local government agency staff and not-for-profit organisations.

Documented Plan

Documented plan is the umbrella term describing a range of ways of catering for the identified education needs of an individual student and/or a small group of students with similar education needs. Documented plans may take a variety of forms, including:

- Adjustment Summary
- Personalised Learning Plans (PLP)
- Individual Behaviour Plans (IBP).
- Individual Transition Plans (ITP); and
- Risk Management Plans (RMP).

Parent

In relation to a child, means a person who at law has responsibility for the long-term care, welfare and development of the child, or the day-to-day care, welfare and development of the child.