



# PARRAMATTA EAST PUBLIC SCHOOL

## *Attendance Procedure*

### 1. Objectives

Parramatta East Public School is committed to providing a caring and supportive teaching and learning environment to enable students to achieve their personal best. For students to learn, they need to arrive at school on time and attend regularly. Regular attendance is a critical factor in ensuring that students have every opportunity to learn and develop. This cannot occur without a strong partnership between parents/carers who have the legal responsibility to ensure that students attend school regularly and school staff who have a duty of care to ensure that student attendance is managed according to the school's procedures. Student attendance is everyone's responsibility.

The following procedures have been developed to ensure that Parramatta East Public School implements the NSW Department of Education School Attendance Policy. The procedures articulate the roles and responsibilities of all staff at Parramatta East Public School. Parramatta East Public School records student attendance electronically with ebs4.

### 2. Responsibilities

#### Parents are responsible for:

- enrolling their children of compulsory school age in a government or registered non-government school
- ensuring that their children attend school regularly
- explaining the absences of their children from school promptly and within seven days to the school, see Appendices B & C
- taking measures to resolve attendance issues involving their children

#### School staff are responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students by:

- providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the school community
- maintaining accurate records of student attendance
- implementing practices to address attendance issues when they arise
- providing clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements at Kindergarten Orientation and Meet the Teacher BBQ (compulsory attendance pamphlet) given out and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance

## The principal is responsible for ensuring that:

- students are enrolled consistent with the requirements set out in The Enrolment of Students in NSW Government Schools
- attendance records are maintained in an approved format and are an accurate record of the attendance of students
- parents and students are regularly informed of attendance requirements
- all cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences from school are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented
- See DoE Policy for further Principal responsibilities including 4.2.9 for exemption from school procedures

### 3. Attendance Registers (Rolls)

Attendance registers (rolls) must be maintained on all days on which the school is open for instruction, including school sports days, swimming carnivals, excursions and similar events.

The exception method (marking absences only) is to be followed by all schools. Only the codes listed in the Attendance Register Codes are to be used. See Appendix A.

School attendance must be recorded on the attendance register by 9.30am each day. On Friday PSSA coaches must mark their sports group roll and hand them into the office. Teachers 3-6 must mark school sport rolls and hand them into the office. All rolls are then marked electronically after recess.

Students involved in off-site activities organised by the school or Department of Education and Communities must not be marked as absent. See Appendix A.

Attendance information must be recorded on the Department's approved electronic roll (ebs4), daily.

SASS staff check the Schoolzine App twice a day for any absent notes posted from parents. A print out of all notes are placed in the relevant teacher's pigeon hole.

Any casual teacher on a class must mark the roll on a paper copy and send it to the office SASS for marking electronically.

Staff responsible for maintaining attendance registers must be acquainted with requirements of this document and correct procedures.

Codes to be used on manual attendance registers are found at Appendix A. Additional codes must not be used. Supplementary comments regarding absences may be made in the 'notes' column, if required.

In the case of late arrival or early departure, the precise times of arrival or departure must be recorded with the relevant Attendance Register Code. A late/early leaver slip is required from the SASS staff and a note explaining partial absences is to be filled in by parents/carers See Appendix D.

The teacher or other nominee of the principal, responsible for maintaining the attendance register, is required to save and lock after marking the roll.

Where an alteration is necessary (exceeding 7 days) on the attendance register, these will be made by SASS staff.

## 4. Attendance Monitoring

Teachers must be aware of the Attendance Policy and its procedures.

### **Class teachers are responsible for:**

- reinforcing that regular attendance is necessary and that notes are required.
- closely monitoring attendance patterns – absences and lateness.
- reminding students, and their parents, that explanatory notes are required within 7 school days of absence.
- contact the parent/caregiver when an unexplained absence occurs and contact parents if an explanation of absence does not follow. See Appendix B & C.
- recording the category of absence. See Appendix A.
- referring attendance patterns causing concern or unexplained absences (within two days of the absence becoming unexplained) to the Stage Supervisor.
- informing the Deputy Principal when a student has been absent for three days or more for any reason if non-attendance is an issue and needs further follow up.

### **The Deputy Principal will monitor all rolls to ensure that:**

- the rolls are marked in accordance with policy.
- the monitoring of attendance is effective.

## The Home School Liaison Officer

The HSLO will monitor attendance twice a term.

A key role of the home school liaison officer is to support schools in maintaining accurate records of student attendance.

- Home school liaison officer should check the level of student attendance.
- Student attendance checks must be planned. Deputy Principal/Principal should be provided with reasonable notice of when attendance checks are to occur.
- At the conclusion of attendance checks, the home school liaison officer should provide Deputy Principal with a brief written report summarising the outcomes of the check. If necessary, the report should specify areas for improvement and follow up including referrals to HSLO if required.
- Home school liaison officers should bring to the attention of the Deputy Principal or other nominated school executive, any student whose levels of unjustified absence or whose pattern of absence (including absences due to sickness, even where a medical certificate has been provided) is of concern. See Appendices E & F.

## Late/Early Leaving Students

- Students arriving after the morning bell will report to office where they will be entered into the 'late' register and will be required to complete a partial absence note. Appendix D. Students will be given a late slip for their teacher. The Deputy Principal will contact the parents/caregiver if students are consistently late for school.
- Parents signing their child out early must report to the office. The time of departure will be recorded by SASS staff and electronic rolls updated accordingly and will be required to complete a partial absence note. Appendix D. Deputy Principal will contact parents/caregivers if students are consistently picked up early from school.
- Deputy Principal will instigate and monitor a program to encourage a behaviour change with regard to lateness. Ongoing lateness will be referred to the HSLO.

## Leave Exemptions from Attendance at School:

- Parents may apply for consideration for a leave exemption from school attendance if a student will be absent for more than 10 consecutive school days.
- The application form must be obtained from the Deputy Principal or Principal and returned to the Deputy Principal or Principal.
- Exemptions may be sought on the grounds of a domestic necessity or the health of a child.
- The exemption must be sought before the student commences the period of absence.

## 5. Supporting Regular Attendance

- Parents are responsible for the regular attendance of students at school. Principals and school staff, in consultation with students and their parents, will usually be able to resolve problems of non-attendance. While parents should be reminded of their legal obligations under the Education Act (1990) the welfare of the student must be the focus of this consultation.
- 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.

**Resolution of attendance difficulties may require a range of additional school based strategies including:**

- student and parent interviews
- reviewing the appropriateness of the student's educational program
- the development of a school-based attendance improvement plan.
- referral to the school counsellor or outside agencies
- support from school based personnel.

If a range of school based interventions has been unsuccessful, support may be requested by referring individual cases of unsatisfactory attendance to the Home School Liaison.

## 6. Attendance Records

- Class rolls are retained for a minimum of 7 years.
- Absent notes are retained for minimum of 1 year after last action.
- Student Record cards retained until a student reaches age of 25 or for 7 years whichever is the greater.
- Accident reports are retained until the injured party reaches the age of 25 or for 7 years whichever is the greater.

## APPENDIX A: ebs4 Roll Marking Codes

Usage	Alternate Key	Description
+	1	Present
?	2	Pending Explanation
A	0	Unjustified Explanation Received
B	8	School Business
E	5	Suspended
F	7	Flexible Timetable
H	9	Shared Enrolment
I	N	Internal
L	4	Leave
M	6	Exempted
S	3	Sick
U		Unexplained after 7 days



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Brabyn Street, Parramatta NSW 2150

Phone: (02) 9630 2127

Email: [parramatte-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:parramatte-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au) Web: [www.parramatte-p.schools.det.nsw.edu.au](http://www.parramatte-p.schools.det.nsw.edu.au)

## Student Absence Reminder – One Whole Day

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of absence: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

9630 2127

Dear

Regular attendance at school is important for students to reach their potential. The school is required to record the reason for any absences as a way of ensuring that students are absent from school only when they are sick or have another good reason for missing school.

Your child was absent from school on the date shown above and no explanation has been received. Please assist us by completing the attached form and return it to school with your child as soon as possible.

Alternatively you may wish to contact the school on the telephone number shown above to discuss your child's attendance.

If you need an interpreter to assist you to contact the school, please call the Telephone Interpreter Service on 131 450 and ask for an interpreter in your language. The interpreter will call the school and stay on the line to assist you with your conversation. You will not be charged for this service.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Justine Miller

/ /2019

Reason for absence (e.g. sickness, family reasons, other reason)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent/Carer \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Carer's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



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## Student Absence Reminder – More than One Whole Day

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of absences: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

9630 2127

Dear

Regular attendance at school is important for students to reach their potential. The school is required to record the reason for any absences as a way of ensuring that students are absent from school only when they are sick or have another good reason for missing school.

Your child was absent from school on the date shown above and no explanation has been received. Please assist us by completing the attached form and return it to school with your child as soon as possible.

Alternatively you may wish to contact the school on the telephone number shown above to discuss your child's attendance.

If you need an interpreter to assist you to contact the school, please call the Telephone Interpreter Service on 131 450 and ask for an interpreter in your language. The interpreter will call the school and stay on the line to assist you with your conversation. You will not be charged for this service.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Justine Miller

/ /2019

Reason for absence (e.g. sickness, family reasons, other reason)

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Name of Parent/Carer \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Carer's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_





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## Student Absence Reminder – Partial Absence

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date/time of partial absence: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

9630 2127

Dear

Regular attendance at school is important for students to reach their potential. The school is required to record the reason for any absences as a way of ensuring that students are absent from school only when they are sick or have another good reason for missing school.

Your child was partially absent from school on the date shown above and no explanation has been received. Please assist us by completing the attached form and return it to school with your child as soon as possible.

Alternatively you may wish to contact the school on the telephone number shown above to discuss your child's attendance.

If you need an interpreter to assist you to contact the school, please call the Telephone Interpreter Service on 131 450 and ask for an interpreter in your language. The interpreter will call the school and stay on the line to assist you with your conversation. You will not be charged for this service.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Justine Miller

/ /2019

Reason for partial absence

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Name of Parent/Carer \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Carer's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



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## Letter A – Attendance Concern

ParentName  
StreetAddress  
SUBURB NSW 2000

Student SRN: 000000000

Dear Parents

I refer to the attendance of **studentname** at school.

As of date, **studentname** has been absent for **X** days, with only **Y** of those days explained with a note or phone call, resulting in an attendance rate of **Z**% for the year. The Department of Education sets 85% as the minimal level.

**Studentname**'s attendance is a concern as it is disruptive to **her/his** learning and is impacting on **her/his** ability to maintain consistent progress academically and socially.

The Education Act (1990) requires that parents ensure children of compulsory school age attend school on each day the school is open for instruction and any absences are satisfactorily explained.

Regular attendance at school is essential if **studentname** is to achieve **her/his** educational best. Our teachers are committed to working in partnership with you to address this issue, and improve **studentname**'s attendance at school.

I would be grateful if you contacted me, so that we can work out how to help **studentname** return to a satisfactory level of attendance.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Justine Miller

Principal



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## Letter B – Attendance Concern

ParentName  
StreetAddress  
SUBURB NSW 2000

Student SRN: 00000000

Dear Parents

I refer to the attendance of **studentname** at school.

The school has informed you on previous occasions that **studentname**'s attendance is of concern and procedures were put in place with you and **studentname** to improve the situation.

At a recent meeting with the **Learning Support Team/Executive/Stage Z teachers**, **studentname**'s pattern of attendance was reviewed. As of **date**, **studentname** has been absent for **X** days, with only **Y** of those days explained by you, resulting in an attendance rate of **Z%** for the year. The Department of Education sets 85% as the minimal level.

Regular attendance at school is essential if **studentname** is to achieve **her/his** educational best, and increase **her/his** career and life options. Our teachers are committed to working in partnership with you to address this issue.

If this pattern of attendance continues, I am required to make an application to the Home School Liaison Program local manager for consideration of further action. An Attendance Officer may be allocated to work with you and the school to develop an Attendance Improvement Plan (AIP) for **studentname**.

I would like to remind you that the Education Act (1990) requires parents to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend school each day it is open for instruction. If you were not to meaningfully engage in an Attendance Improvement Plan, or there is no improvement in **studentname**'s attendance, the Department of Education may consider further action such as an application to the Children's Court for Compulsory Schooling Orders.

It is important that we work together to improve **studentname**'s attendance at school.

I would be grateful if you contacted me, so we can work out a school plan to help **studentname** return to a satisfactory level of attendance.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Justine Miller

Principal

**date**

# Compulsory School Attendance

## Information for parents

Education for your child is important and regular attendance at school is essential for your child to achieve their educational best and increase their career and life options. NSW public schools work in partnership with parents to encourage and support regular attendance of children and young people. When your child attends school every day, learning becomes easier and your child will build and maintain friendships with other children.

### What are my legal responsibilities?

Education in New South Wales is compulsory for all children between the ages of six years and below the minimum school leaving age. The *Education Act 1990* requires that parents ensure their children of compulsory school age are enrolled at, and regularly attend school, or, are registered with the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards for homeschooling.

Once enrolled, children are required to attend school each day it is open for students.

### The importance of arriving on time

Arriving at school and class on time:

- Ensures that students do not miss out on important learning activities scheduled early in the day
- Helps students learn the importance of punctuality and routine
- Give students time to greet their friends before class
- Reduces classroom disruption

Lateness is recorded as a partial absence and must be explained by parents.

### What if my child has to be away from school?

On occasion, your child may need to be absent from school. Justified reasons for student absences may include:

- being sick, or having an infectious disease
- having an unavoidable medical appointment
- being required to attend a recognised religious holiday
- exceptional or urgent family circumstance (e.g. attending a funeral)

Following an absence from school you must ensure that within 7 days you provide your child's school with a verbal or written explanation for the absence. However, if the school has not received an explanation from you within 2 days, the school may contact you to discuss the absence.

Principals may decline to accept an explanation that you have provided if they do not believe the absence is in the best interest of your child. In these circumstances your child's absence would be recorded as unjustified. When this happens the principal will discuss their decision with you and the reasons why.

Principals may request medical certificates or other documentation when frequent or long term absences are explained as being due to illness. Principals may also seek parental permission to speak with medical specialists to obtain information to collaboratively develop a health care plan to support your child. If the request is denied, the principal can record the absences as unjustified.

### Travel

Families are encouraged to travel during school holidays. If travel during school term is necessary, discuss this with your child's school principal. An *Application for Extended Leave* may need to be completed. Absences relating to travel will be marked as leave on the roll and therefore contribute to your child's total absences for the year.

In some circumstances students may be eligible to enrol in distance education for travel periods over 50 school days. This should be discussed with your child's school principal.





### **My child won't go to school. What should I do?**

You should contact the principal as soon as possible to discuss the issue and ask for help. Strategies to help improve attendance may include a referral to the school's learning and support team or linking your child with appropriate support networks. The principal may seek further support from the Home School Liaison Program to develop an Attendance Improvement Plan.

### **What might happen if my child continues to have unacceptable absences?**

It is important to understand that the Department of Education and Communities may be required to take further action where children of compulsory school age have recurring numbers of unexplained or unjustified absences from school.

Some of the following actions may be undertaken:

- Compulsory Schooling Conferences

You may be asked, along with your child, to attend a Compulsory Schooling Conference. The conference will help to identify the supports your child may need to have in place so they attend school regularly. The school, parents and agencies will work together to develop an agreed plan (known as Undertakings) to support your child's attendance at school.

- Application to the Children's Court – Compulsory Schooling Order

If your child's attendance at school remains unsatisfactory the Department

may apply to the Children's Court for a *Compulsory Schooling Order*. The Children's Court magistrate may order a Compulsory Schooling Conference to be convened.

- Prosecution in the Local Court

School and Department staff remain committed to working in partnership with you to address the issues which are preventing your child's full participation at school. In circumstances where a breach of compulsory schooling orders occurs further action may be taken against a parent in the Local Court. The result of court action can be the imposition of a community service order or a fine.

### **What age can my child leave school?**

All New South Wales students must complete Year 10 or its equivalent. After Year 10, and up until they reach 17 years of age, there are a range of flexible options for students to [complete their schooling](#).

### **Working in Partnership**

The Department of Education and Communities recognises that working collaboratively with students and their families is the best way to support the regular attendance of students at school.

We look forward to working in partnership with you to support your child to fulfil their life opportunities.

**If a student misses as little as 8 days in a school term, by the end of primary school they'll have missed over a year of school.**

Further information regarding school attendance can be obtained from the following websites:

#### **Policy, information and brochures:**

Please visit the Department of Education's *Policy library*

#### **The school leaving age:**

Please visit the Department of Education's *Wellbeing and Learning* website

#### **Do you need an interpreter?**

Interpreting services are available on request, including for the hearing impaired. The Telephone Interpreter Service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week on 131 450. You will not be charged for this service.

For further advice and questions contact your educational services team

T 131 536

Learning and Engagement

Student Engagement & Interagency Partnerships

T 9244 512

[www.dec.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au)

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