

GENERAL

It is a legal requirement for any absence to be covered by a phone call or written explanation from the student's parent or legal guardian. Our absentee line is open 24 hours every day. Parents are requested to ring the absentee line on 9453 0135 or leave a voice message or SMS 0400 241 416 before 8.50am on the day of the absence with the following information:

- clearly state the full name of the student
- the student's year group
- your name and your relationship with the student
- day and date of the absence
- reason for the absence
- your contact telephone number

The school will contact parents via an SMS message if a student has been marked absent during Period 1 and when no contact has been received from a parent. If there is no further contact with the school, a note must be provided to the Attendance School Officer in Student Services on the day of the student's return.

- Students who have had more than two absences within the one week and have not provided a satisfactory explanation, may have their Good Standing status changed to "Watch".
- Absenteeism for holidays, study, non-attendance at carnivals, driving lessons (or a similar occasion which can be arranged out of school time) will be deemed as an "Absence without Satisfactory Explanation". This criterion will be used for reporting on student attendance for Youth Allowance purposes.
- Only medical grounds can be accepted as legitimate reasons for absence or non-participation.
- Students who arrive late to school must sign in at Student Services.
- Persistent lateness and unsatisfactory reasons may result in detention.
- Students who are absent on the day of a school social event (river cruise, school ball, dinner dance, socials etc.) will not normally be permitted to attend the event. In circumstances where the absence is unavoidable, parents must contact the relevant Year Coordinator to seek permission for the student to attend the social event.
- In all circumstances the Principal reserves the right to make the final decision.

STUDENTS ABSENT FROM SCHOOL FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD DUE TO SICKNESS OR INJURY

- For less than a week: the student/family is responsible for arranging work from the class teacher.
- For more than a week: the parent or guardian should contact the Year Coordinator who may arrange for work from teachers. Work can be arranged to be collected from Reception or accessed on Connect.

PERMISSION TO LEAVE SCHOOL DURING THE DAY

Students needing to leave the school during the day for dental/medical appointments etc. must have permission from their parent/guardian. This can be in the form of an SMS to the absentee line on 0400 241 416, a phone call to Student Services on 9453 0135 or a signed note authorising the absence.

Students must report to the Front Office to sign out and to sign back in to school if returning.

Students may not leave the school grounds at any time during the school day without permission from their parents.

PERMISSION TO BE OUT OF CLASS

No student is allowed out of class without written permission from a teacher.

NOTED LEAVE

This is absence that is deemed to be taken at the discretion of the family (eg. holidays) – thus there is a choice in the matter. It is not an accepted or endorsed absence and should therefore be avoided as a reason for absenteeism from school. Parents must take responsibility for the consequences of this absence. The timetable, learning program and assessment schedule will proceed. Students have course and assessment outlines for all upper school courses and lower school subjects. The student or family should make arrangements to collect materials and keep the absent student informed, for example organise friends to assist where possible. Teachers may or may not be in a position to make arrangements to allow a student to meet assessment requirements.

Staff cannot be expected to undertake a significant additional workload or jeopardise the integrity of their tests and assessments in order to meet the needs of students who are absent under these circumstances. As a consequence, there is a real possibility that a student's results will be affected.

The school is limited in its ability to support students who travel overseas at times when assessments are scheduled. This is especially critical prior to holiday breaks. Families need to avoid removing students at this time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Reports will not be posted or issued early for students.

ACCEPTED LEAVE

This is leave sanctioned by the Principal for any student who is representing the school, state or nation at an approved sporting or cultural event. It is the student's responsibility to apply for this leave at least three weeks prior to the absence. It is the student's responsibility to organise students in each of their classes to collect materials and to submit work as negotiated with each teacher. Teachers will endeavour to support the student's ongoing education and minimise the impact of the absence on marks or outcomes, particularly if the student meets the negotiated work submission requirements.

SICKNESS AND INJURY

Students are expected to catch up on missed classes. This can be done through discussions with teachers and accessing available content via Connect. Where there is the possibility of extended absence (more than a week), the family should also liaise with the Year Coordinator who will assist in ensuring the absent student has access to as much of their normal course work as possible. Teachers, where possible, will support the student's ongoing education to minimise the impact of the absence on marks or outcomes.

STUDENTS ABSENT FROM SCHOOL FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD DUE TO SICKNESS OR INJURY

- For less than a week, the student is responsible for following up with their teachers on missed work. Certain work/resources may be available on Connect.
- For more than a week, the parent or guardian should contact the Year Coordinator who may arrange for work from teachers.

The School of Special Education Needs: Medical and Mental Health (SSEN:MH) may be called upon to assist in keeping the student up-to-date with their normal school program.

SCHOOL EXCURSIONS

While students will not be penalised in any way for attending an approved excursion, there may be circumstances where different assessment procedures may have to be used. Students are expected to ensure they catch up on any work missed while absent from school.

TRUANCY

A student who truant (absents themselves without authority) on a day or from a class, has chosen to forego their educational opportunities and as a consequence, a mark of zero or an outcome of 'not demonstrated' will normally apply for school assessments.

Students who truant will face detention to make up for the time lost. For example, a student who truant for one school day will be given six hours of detention. Parents will be notified of the truancy and it will be recorded as such on the school's Attendance Register. Repeated acts of truancy in lower school will result in additional detention penalties. Students who truant may have their Good Standing status changed to reflect additional support required.

Where a member of the public notifies the school that a Darling Range Sports College student has been sighted in public and may be truanting, the school will telephone that student's parent and ask them to bring their child to school.

LATES

The Attendance Roll is to be completed within first 10 minutes of the start of the Period. After the roll has been taken any student who attends that class may be considered as Late and the roll is to be amended accordingly. At the start of each day, if a student attends the College after 9:00am they must attend Student Services to sign in.

SUSPENSION OR WITHDRAWAL

Students are required to continue to meet the requirements of their educational programs. They should follow the program as well as they can from course outline and access learning materials via Connect.

The students (or family) are to advise the relevant Year Coordinator of any difficulties in meeting this requirement. Where tests are set, the student will be given an alternative time to complete the set task. Should the test need to be completed on the during the time of the suspension, the student will need to be dropped off and collected at the times stated by the Associate Principal. This will only occur in circumstances that are approved by the College Principal and the student will be required to sit the text/exam in isolation.

The student will not be permitted to access any other part of the school or communicate with other students whilst at the school. The student is expected to submit all work by the due date.

STAFF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Important Note - In carrying out their duties staff should have an understanding of the Department of Education's Attendance Policy and how it relates to them.

CLASS TEACHER

- Record roll using Compass each session within ten (10) minutes of the start of the lesson;
- Ensure rolls accurately detail all current enrolled students;
- Accept students in to class late and record as Late;
- As part of the College's classroom Behaviour Management Plan ensure consequences are applied for students that are late without reasonable cause;
- Follow up persistent lateness by contacting parent/guardian and working with them and the student to resolve the issue;
- Refer ongoing lateness to the Head of Learning Area (HoLA);
- Work with HoLA, student and parent / guardian to resolve the issue of lateness;
- Contact the parents/guardians of any student suspected of being Truant;
- Discuss with parent/guardian and student the truancy in order to resolve including possible consequences;
- Refer ongoing truancy to your HoLA;
- Work with HoLA, student and parent / guardian to resolve the issue of truancy;
- If truancy is confirmed contact the parent/guardian and then email the Attendance Officer in Student Services who will adjust that student's attendance;
- Ensure ongoing attendance issues that cannot be resolved with HoLA assistance are referred to the appropriate Year Coordinator;
- For students with a Risk Management Plan follow the procedures outlined in the plan in case of absence;
- Ensure all actions/plans/information regarding attendance are recorded in Compass and Year Coordinator is notified;
- Email Student Services at the earliest convenience when a student is sent to Withdrawal.

FORM TEACHER

- Completes Attendance Roll using Compass before 9:00am;
- Ensures consequences are applied for students that are late without reasonable cause;
- Follow up persistent lateness by contacting parent / guardian and working with them and the student to resolve the issue;
- Refer ongoing lateness to the Year Coordinator;
- Works with the Year Coordinator, student and parent / guardian to resolve the issue of lateness;
- For students with a Risk Management Plan follow the procedures outlined in the plan in case of absence;
- Discuss with the class general issues concerning attendance, including presenting activities on attendance as a topic;
- Monitor and discuss where appropriate Unexplained Absences using the Form Absence Report received from the Year Coordinator weekly;
- Discuss with students that in the Form Absence Report demonstrate a pattern of late arrival at school or unauthorised absences; and
- For students with a Risk Management Plan follow the procedures outlined in the plan in case of absence.

HoLA

- Ensure teaching staff are aware of their attendance roles and responsibilities;
- Assist Learning Area Teachers with issues of truancy (including lateness);
- Refer ongoing truancy or absences to the Year Coordinator;
- Ensures all actions/plans/information regarding attendance are recorded by the classroom teacher in Compass and
- For students with a Risk Management Plan follow the procedures outlined in the plan in case of absence.

NON-TEACHING STAFF

- If you have students in your care during class time, ensure that you notify the Attendance Officer in Student Services within that period;
- If you have a program in operation, ensure that an accurate roll is taken and sent to the Attendance Officer in Student Services at the beginning of the program that day;
- If you are delivering a program across a break time (e.g. you have students Period 2, they leave for recess, then you also have them Period 3) please ensure you take the roll again after the break and send any adjustments to the Attendance Officer; and
- For students with a Risk Management Plan follow the procedures outlined in the plan in case of absence.

RELIEF TEACHERS

- Completes the Attendance Roll using Compass at the beginning of the lesson; and
- For students with a Risk Management Plan follow the procedures outlined in the plan in case of absence.

WITHDRAWAL TEACHER

- Withdrawal Teachers will sign off on the student blue withdrawal form to indicate to the class teacher that the student has arrived at and completed the time in the withdrawal class.

TEACHER IN CHARGE OF EXCURSION/CAMP

- Potential list submitted with application;
- Class List sent out to all staff at least 7 days prior to the excursion/camp;
- The roll is marked at the beginning of excursion/camp using the event created on Compass.
- Follow excursion emergency management plan in the event of 'lost'/truant student while on excursion or camp; and
- For students with a Risk Management Plan (RMP) follow the procedures outlined in the plan in case of absence. This includes ensuring you are aware of and have a copy of the RMP.

YEAR COORDINATOR

- Monitor year group's overall attendance;
- Monitor percentage attendance using Percentage Attendance Analysis received from Attendance Officer fortnightly;
- Call parent/guardian of students whose attendance falls below 90% unauthorised attendances;
- Call the parent/guardian of students that have three consecutive absences;
- Send **Letter 1** when attendance has fallen below 90% unauthorised attendances. Use Compass to identify factors affecting attendance. Important – In cases where a student's attendance is below 90%, the Letter 1 should still be sent, HOWEVER a phone call should be made to the parent/guardian first explaining that we understand the reasons but are required by the DoE to send the letter. Also that we expect the Attendance percentage to increase;
- Develop Attendance Improvement Plan if required;
- Issues Attendance Monitoring Sheet if required;
- For ongoing truancy or absence resulting in further decline in a student's attendance percentage send **Letter 2** and develop an Attendance Improvement Plan with the student and parent/guardian;
- Refer students with increasingly declining or rapidly declining (e.g. non-attenders) to the Student Services Manager;
- Carry out duties as part of Case Management as directed by the Student Services Manager or Associate Principal;
- In conjunction with the Student Services Manager ensure that all Aboriginal Students have documented plans (Individual Education Plans) that include an attendance plan;
- In conjunction with the Student Services Manager ensure that all Students in Department Care have documented plans (Individual Education Plans) that include an attendance plan;

- Ensure all actions/plans/information regarding attendance are recorded on Compass and sent to staff.
- Ensure copies of any Attendance Improvement Plan or other plans/information relating to attendance and student wellbeing are distributed to relevant staff and a copy is uploaded to Compass; and
- For students with a Risk Management Plan follow the procedures outlined in the plan in case of absence.

STUDENT SERVICES MANAGER

- Convenes regularly Attendance Management meetings with Associate Principal responsible for College Attendance, Year Coordinators, and Attendance Officers to review, address and strategies actions in relation to attendance issues;
- Monitor Attendance Processes;
- Ensure Year Coordinators perform their attendance roles and responsibilities;
- Liaise with relevant external agencies;
- Organise and conduct Case Conferences (**Letter 3**). Use **Individual Student Checklist** to identify factors affecting attendance;
- Adjust any attendance plan in consultation with all stakeholders;
- Issue **Attendance Monitoring Sheet** if required;
- Consults with Associate Principal and Regional Office if attendance issues are persistent. Sends **Letter 4**;
- Commence the Students Whose Whereabouts are Unknown (SWU) referral process students who have not attended for ten (10) days and for who no contact can be made with or the parent/guardian is unaware of their whereabouts. Complete the referral within 15 days;
- In conjunction with the Year Coordinator ensure that all Aboriginal students have documented plans (Individual Education Plans) that include an attendance plan;
- In conjunction with the Year Coordinator ensure that all students in department care have documented plans (Individual Education Plans) that include an attendance plan;
- Ensure all actions/plans/information regarding attendance are recorded in the SIS / Compass attendance module;
- Ensure copies of any Attendance Improvement Plan or other plans/information relating to attendance and student wellbeing are distributed to relevant staff and a copy stored in their central student file; and
- For students with a Risk Management Plan follow the procedures outlined in the plan in case of absence.

PERFORMANCE AND ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

- Monitor the attendance processes pertaining to senior school students;
- Oversee the student's participation in any off-site program. This includes:
 - consulting with the student's parent/s;
 - consulting with the alternative school/provider;
 - assessment of the environment of the alternative arrangement to ensure the student's duty of care needs, including health needs, will be met (may involve a site visit to the provider);
 - maintenance of attendance and achievement records; and
 - continue to review the arrangement to ensure these requirements are still being met.
- Facilitate the students should return to full-time school or another arrangement is entered into if arrangement is terminated.

ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL

- Monitor attendance processes;
- Ensure all staff perform their attendance roles and responsibilities;
- Case Manage attendance issues in consultation with the Student Services Manager;
- Approves **Letter 3** and **Letter 4** for relevant year group;
- Ensure all actions/plans/information regarding attendance are recorded in the SIS / Compass attendance module;
- Ensure copies of any Attendance Improvement Plan or other plans/information relating to attendance and student wellbeing are distributed to relevant staff and a copy stored in their central student file; and
- For students with a Risk Management Plan follow the procedures outlined in the plan in case of absence.

ATTENDANCE OFFICERS

- Monitor Daily Absences;
- Refer on going consecutive absences to the Year Coordinator;
- Manage text messaging service and data entry;
- Run, Print and distribute (or email) Absence Report and Percentage Attendance Report for each form group/Year Coordinator;
- Send out Absentee Query emails. Monitor returns. Enter data. Refer non returns to Associate Principal responsible for attendance;
- Track teachers that do not return data and send out reminders.
- Refer ongoing lack of data return to HoLA and Associate Principal responsible for attendance portfolio.
- Produce **Letters 1,2 & 3, Letters of Concern, Attendance Reports** etc. at the request of the Year Coordinator, Student Services Manager or Associate Principal.
- Ensures all actions/plans/information regarding attendance are recorded in Compass;
- For students with a Risk Management Plan follow the procedures outlined in the plan in case of absence;
- Maintain Attendance Records in accordance with the Department of Education's Attendance Policy.
- Monitor students who arrive to school post 8.56am. Refer ongoing late students to Year Coordinator.

STUDENT AND PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff can discuss these points with students and parents when contacting them with attendance concerns.

STUDENT

- If a student is going to be late they should where possible request a late note from their parents on that day and give it to Student Services. If it is not possible to get a note that day (e.g. parents at work) they should provide it to Student Services, the following day.
- Students who are late and arrive after 9am are to proceed to Student Services to 'sign-in'. Student Services will provide them with a note to enter class.
- A student that is absent should provide absentee notes or Medical Certificate to Student Services.
- Students can only leave school early if they have permission from their parent/guardian to do so. This may be in written form or a phone call.
- Students who are leaving early with permission are to 'sign out' at Student Services. Student Services will provide them with an exit pass to show staff and police if requested.
- Students that are late to classes during the day may be marked late. This can impact upon their attendance and is a form of truancy.

PARENT/GUARDIAN

- If your student is absent from school, please provide an absentee note or Medical Certificate.
- If your student is absent from school, please call to notify school the morning of the day of absence. Please provide the following information;
 - Your name
 - Student's full name
 - Student's Year Group
 - Reason for absence
 - This can be done by phoning the Student Services Absentee Line on 9453 0135 or leave a voice message or SMS on 0400 241 416
- If you need to sign your student out early, where possible please provide a note. Alternatively, a phone call to Student Services.
- Please discuss with your student the importance of regular attendance and ensure that they attend school whenever fit to do so.
- Avoid scheduling family holidays during school terms. Whilst the College respects that travel can be an educational experience in itself it is important that it does not come at the cost of the child's education. Parents are required to negotiate their child's absence with the college principal prior to first day of non-attendance, otherwise the absence will be considered to be 'unauthorised' and recorded as such. Absence due to family vacation is deemed by the Education Department to be an unacceptable reason for a student's absences from school.
- If your student is refusing to attend school, please contact the Year Coordinator or Student Services Manager as a matter of urgency.

BASED ON

- Student Attendance in Public Schools Policy and Procedures EFFECTIVE 19 JULY 2021

RELATED DOCUMENTS RELEVANT LEGISLATION OR AUTHORITY

- School Education Act 1999 (WA)
- School Education Regulations 2000 (WA)
- Public Sector Management Act 1994 (WA)
- Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)

RELATED DEPARTMENT POLICIES

- Student Behaviour in Public Schools Policy and Procedures
- Duty of Care for Public School Students Policy and Procedures
- Enrolment in Public Schools Policy and Procedures Excursions in Public Schools Policy and Procedures
- Student Health Care in Public Schools Policy and Procedures

OTHER DOCUMENTS

- Every day matters: 10-point plan to improve attendance
- Assist with a family court order involving your students
- Request to become a badged attendance officer
- Documented Plans - Support education planning for students and Schedule I of the School Education Act Employees' (Teachers and Administrators) General Agreement 2019
- Guidelines for the Use of Attendance Panels
- Guidelines for the use of education-related Responsible Parenting Agreements
- Retention and Disposal Schedule for Department of Education School, College and Campus Records
- School of Special Educational Needs: Medical and Mental Health (Guidelines)
- Students Whose Whereabouts Are Unknown Flowchart
- Students Whose Whereabouts Are Unknown Guidelines