



Woodland Road Public School

# Attendance Policy

Revised 2011



## Rationale

The primary responsibility for a child's attendance is the parent or caregiver.

Encouraging regular attendance is a core school responsibility.

Regular attendance at school is essential to assist students to maximise their potential.

Schools, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students

Parents are required to, by law through the Education Act:

- Ensure that their children attend school regularly
- Provide the school with an acceptable reason for absences **within 7 days**
- To apply for leave if their child will be absent from school for a justified purpose.
- Inform the school if their child is away for 3 or more consecutive days

\*Please note unjustifiable reasons for absences include shopping, sleeping in, working at home, minor family events such as birthdays and haircuts.

\* The NSW Department of Education and Training may take legal action against parents and carers who do not send their children to school without a valid reason.

\* Lateness is recorded as a partial absence and must be explained by parents or carers in the same way as other forms of absence

\*Sports and sports carnivals are normal school activities and students must attend.

## **The class teacher will:**

- Create a warm learning environment
- Have positive expectations of each student
- Ensure accurate absence information is recorded and is conveyed to the School Administrative Officer (Please note: this information becomes part of a legal document.)
- Insist on notes to explain absences when a student returns to school
- Indicate on the absentee note the absentee symbol and ensure that the child's name and date of absence is legible.
- Remind students of the attendance requirements
- Involve the school Learning Support Team
- Reward good attendance
- After unexplained absences, complete and send home an Absence Explanation note
- After 3 consecutive day's absence, contact the parents immediately to find out "why?"
- **Use the LAMP proforma to keep a record of action taken**

- Inform team leaders of any attendance concerns
- Implement agreed strategies to promote attendance, e.g. positive reward
- Teachers should be aware that they may be subpoenaed to attend court

**The School Administrative Officer will:**

- Ensure accurate absentee information is recorded on OASIS/ERN
- Ensure that the absence folders (display and clip) are up to date
- Ensure that procedures are in place for notifying parents about their children's lateness or absences
- Keep student's current addresses and phone numbers up to date

**The team leader will:**

- Be aware of any students who have attendance problems in their team
- Speak with teachers to ensure they are following LAMP procedures
- Communicate with the teacher regarding any welfare issues involved in lateness and in non-attendance
- Develop and implement preventative programs relating to regular attendance

**The principal will:**

- Ensure that legally accurate records of student attendance will be maintained
- Review attendance monitoring procedures regularly with staff
- Regularly inform parents of attendance requirements through newsletters
- Involve specialist school personnel such as the School Counsellor, Support teachers, Learning Support Team and the Home School Liaison Officer

## **Attendance Reward Strategies**

### **Attendance "Target" Card**

- After 3 days unexplained absence the class teacher will contact the family
- Chronic non-attenders will be monitored with a "Target" card (see appendix)
- The class teacher will stamp their target card each day they are present
- The target card will be for 5 weeks.
- At the end of each week the student will receive a small negotiated reward from the team leader.
- For 5 weeks improved attendance the student will be rewarded by the Principal.
- Each chronic non-attender case will be assessed individually and rewarded individually.

### **School Attendance Award**

- An Attendance Award Certificate will be awarded each semester for 100% attendance.
- These attendance award certificates will be presented by the Principal at the Education Week Special Assembly (Semester 1 – term one and two) and at Presentation Day (Semester 2 – term three and four)
- A special award is also given to those students who have achieved 100% attendance throughout the year. This is given out on Presentation Day.

## **Attendance Action Plan**

1. Class Teacher to request absence note upon child's return to school and each day thereafter.
2. On third day after return and no note class teacher to send home the green WRPS Absence Note.
3. On the seventh day after return and no note, class teacher to complete and send home Letter 1
4. On the tenth day after return and no note, class teacher to ring requesting a note. If unable to contact parents Letter 1 is resent through the post. The letter is to be posted through the courier so it can be documented.
5. Class teacher to begin the Lateness and Attendance Monitoring Program (LAMP).
6. After 3-4 interventions over a 3-4 week period with no satisfaction class teacher is to request team leader to arrange a parent meeting within 1-2 weeks.
7. If attendance is still an issue the Principal is to post to parents Principal Letter 1 through the courier system and to notify the HSLO through the application for Home School Liaison Program Support.

### **Students who should be placed on the LAMP program have:**

- **Below the school average overall attendance rate**
- **More than 3 unexplained absences**
- **A regular pattern of unexplained absences**