NSW Department of Education

Arthur Phillip High School

ATTENDANCE Procedures

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Rationale

Arthur Phillip High School understands that student achievement starts with attendance. Regular attendance at school can have a meaningful impact on student wellbeing and academic achievement, as well as creating a foundation for future success.
Module 1: What works inside the gate (nsw.gov.au)

Attendance is a shared responsibility between the school, parents/caregivers and students. All students are expected to attend school each day it is open for instruction. Under the **Education Act (1990)**, **parents and guardians are legally responsible for the enrolment and regular attendance of all children in their care up until the age of 17.**

Arthur Phillip High School is committed to providing a safe environment that encourages positive attendance and recognises outstanding student attendance. We aim to use early intervention strategies and communication with parents/caregivers to assist those students where attendance is affecting their educational goals. We promote a positive attendance culture where we build on relationships demonstrating that every student is known, valued, and cared for.

Attendance is the gateway target. If we achieve this target, we make it possible for students to access all other targets.
Above 95% is our expected student attendance Every Day Counts – student attendance

Department Of Education Attendance Policy
https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policyprocedures/pd-2005-0259/pd-2005-0259-02
NSW Department of Education: Student Attendance in NSW Public School

How

Through building a positive attendance culture and quality, comprehensive and effective attendance strategies tailored to the schools' context. This involves a whole-school approach and the active engagement of the schools' leadership, staff, students, parents/carers and the broader community.

The school will support the regular attendance of students by:

- providing clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and consequences of unsatisfactory attendance.
- maintaining accurate records of student attendance using SENTRAL and implement effective roll marking procedures when variation to normal school routine occurs.
- updating the Attendance Register Codes when necessary and record attendance information on the Department's electronic attendance register, SCOUT.
- monitoring attendance patterns and providing early interventions as required to support improved attendance

Attendance is everyone's business.

Professional alignment

School Excellence Framework

Attendance is a key theme in Learning Culture element of the School Excellence Framework. In schools that are excelling in this domain, 'there is a high expectation culture of high attendance rates for all students. Teachers, students, parents/carers and the community work together to support consistent and systematic processes that ensure student absences do not impact on learning outcomes.' School Excellence Framework Version 3 p.3

Our Plan for NSW Public Education

Attendance is a key commitment in Our Plan for NSW Public Education, to ensure that every student learns, grows and belongs in an equitable and outstanding education system. Success will show an increased proportion of students completing Year 12 in public schools, as well as enhancing access to high-quality vocational education and training (VET) in schools, school-based apprenticeships and traineeships and HSC pathways and increased sense of students reporting a sense of belonging and increased attendance rates. Our Plan for NSW Public Education

Care Continuum

In line with the Care Continuum, an effective whole school attendance system promotes a positive and prevention-focused approach to meet the needs of all students. It includes universal, targeted, and individual interventions. The care continuum – NSW Department of Education

Roles and Responsibilities

Every day counts, as regular attendance helps students to:

- develop a sense of belonging.
- develop and maintain friendships.
- be more engaged at school.
- progress with their learning.
- be more aware of career and life options.

Supporting positive school attendance is a shared responsibility - everyone has a role. Your role in supporting attendance (nsw.gov.au)

Role	Attendance responsibility
Classroom teacher	Teachers must: ● follow the attendance systems of the school (outlined in these procedures also see flowchart). ● promote regular attendance through teaching and learning activities that are engaging and acknowledge the learning and support needs of all students. Differentiating work where necessary. ● recognise and celebrate improved and positive attendance of students by monitoring class attendance patterns in line with school systems to meet attendance targets. ● address persistent lateness to class with individual students. For instance if no improvement, assistance from KLA Head Teacher. should be requested. ● address truancy in the first instance with follow up with the student to reinforce expectations. This can also include phone calls, meetings with parents to re-engage student. Persistent truancy is to be referred to the KLA Head Teacher. ● communicate with parent/carers to establish expectations and build a productive partnership and ensure absences do not impact learning outcomes. Encouraging Student Attendance ● communicate with the Year Adviser/Welfare Head Teacher when a student's pattern of attendance is of concern, or if no explanation is received from the parent/carer within 7 days of the absence. ● Refer to the school learning and support team/wellbeing team (Year Adviser Referral and/or LaST referral where there are concerns and additional support can be implemented). ● ensuring Child Protection requirements are adhered to for any matter relating to school attendance where safety, welfare or wellbeing concerns arise for a student. Roll marking: Teachers must: ● accurately record school attendance in Sentral at the commencement of the school day. ● **period 1 rolls determine a student's whole day attendance at school** and are cross-referenced to student's biometric sign-in at the school turnstiles. ● record attendance at the beginning of each period. ● when a student arrives late or departs early, record the precise times of arrival or departure with the relevant code. ● Refer to Student attendance in NSW public schools procedures *Child Protection Concerns – if a member of staff suspects that a child or young person is at risk of harm, as a mandatory reporter, notify the Deputy and/or Principal in the first instance. This includes students with poor attendance or not attending school.*

School Administration Support Staff (SASS)	SASS Staff will: ● Support the attendance and enrolment systems of the school. ● Undertake administrative tasks as delegated by the principal. These could include, but are not limited to: o unexplained absences – notifying parents/carers where explanations have not been received. o send SMS for late and absent students after the roll for period 1 has been marked. o record explanations for absences within 7 days of each individual absence, however if received after 7 days the absence remains unexplained o When a student arrives late or departs early, they attend their homebase to sign in. Record the precise times of arrival or departure with the relevant Attendance Register Codes and issue student notes/passes. With early leavers, parents forward an email or send a note to the school, sent to student services on the students homebase level. o If a note is sent the student services admin officer will contact the parent to verify the authenticity. o once the leave has been approved the note/email will be uploaded on Sentral next to the day and a partial day absence will be created and a physical note given to the student to show their teacher. o students in Years 10 or below must have a parent or guardian to collect them. o refer any patterns of regular early leave/late explanations to the Year Adviser or Deputy. o monitoring and recording attendance explanations as received by phone, email, SMS, note or on the portal/app used by the school. o Refer to Attendance Register Codes when deciding on whether absences are absent, sick, leave, school business, flexible, shared enrolment or exemption. o When a shared enrolment notification is received, mark the shared student's attendance using the relevant attendance register code. o all SASS members on Homebases use Truancy report to detect anomalies in rolls (incorrect marking) or students who are legitimately truanting and refer to Year Deputy. o notify teachers of incorrect or unmarked/unsubmitted rolls. If occurring regularly, notify the Head Teacher. SASS Attendance: o to send letters (with information about attendance) home for students with ongoing unsatisfactory attendance upon verification with Year Advisors/HT Welfare. o to send lateness letters by twice a term and recorded as a data record and followed up with a phone call if no response. o to run fortnightly report, send letters home and make phone calls to parents/carers for students with 3 days unexplained absences in a fortnight period. Create a data record on Sentral. o refer any concerns from parent phone calls to Year Advisors, Head Teacher Welfare and/or Deputy Principal via a data record. o updates Attendance spreadsheet with comments from phone calls, attendance pattern analysis and data records, for referral back to Year Advisers and HT Welfare.

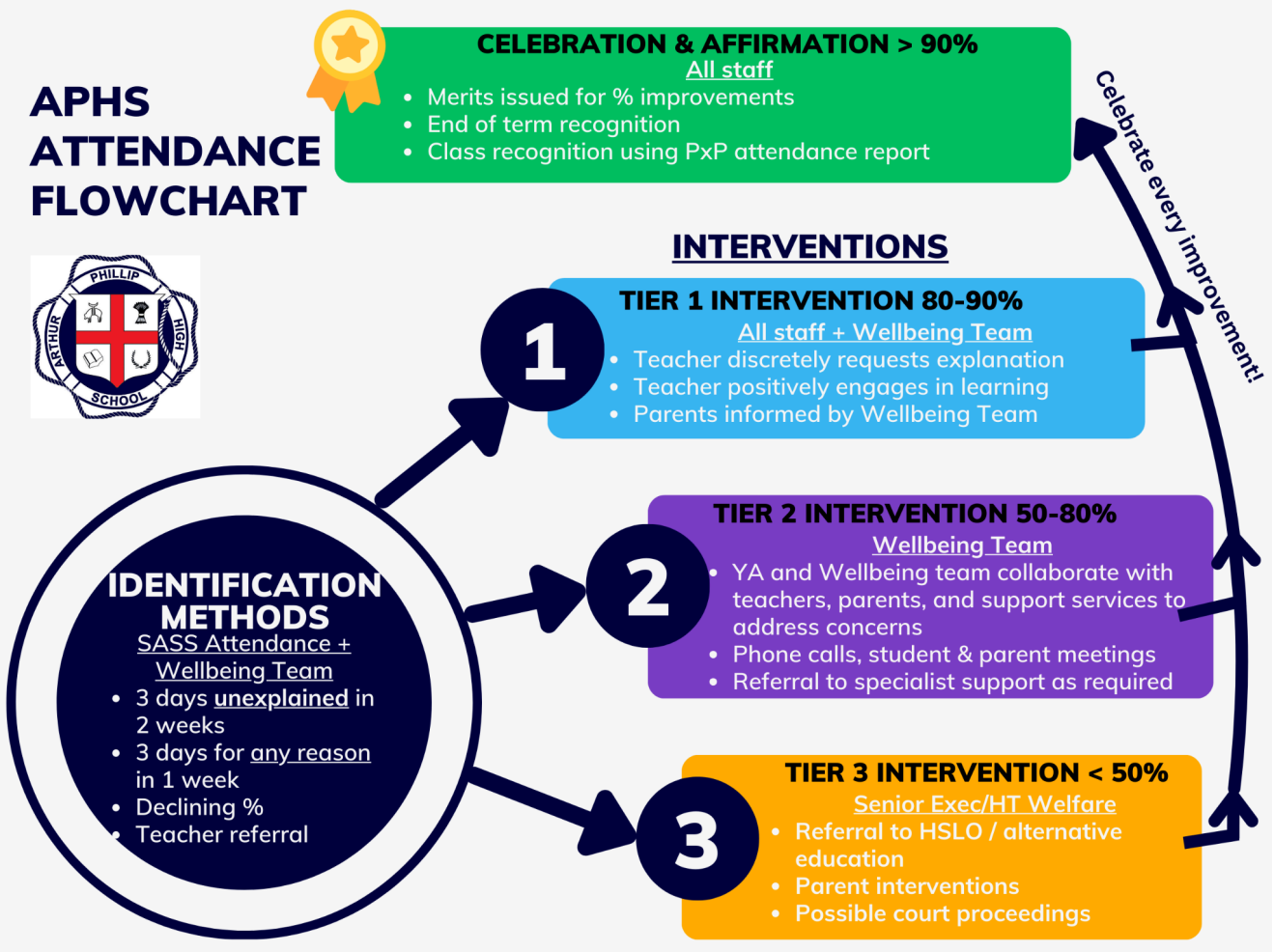
	Child Protection Concerns – if a member of staff suspects that a child or young person is at risk of harm, as a mandatory reporter, notify or inform the Principal and/or Deputy Principal. This includes students with poor attendance or not attending school.
Year Advisors	Year Advisers must: ● follow the attendance systems of the school (see flowchart example). ● promote regular attendance and support the wellbeing of students in their year group. ● recognise and celebrate improved and positive attendance of students in line with school systems to meet attendance targets. o STRIVE assemblies to celebrate above 90% or improved attendance rates. ● communicate with parent/carers to establish expectations and build a productive partnership and ensure absences do not impact learning outcomes. ● respond to referrals from staff for students, consistent absences and/or lates. ● action students of concern that have arisen from analysis of Attendance spreadsheet as well as fortnightly 3 day unexplained report. ● meet regularly with the School Attendance Team to analyse data, plan and implement whole school approaches to improving attendance. ● phone calls – communicate with parents/carers, both for positive attendance and concerns. A data record on Sentral should be created for all correspondence. ● facilitate student/parent conferences – to discuss the barriers to attendance ● develop a school-based attendance improvement plan (yellow attendance booklet) to support regular attendance. School based AIP template ● engaging the identified student/s or cohorts in programs that promote regular attendance. ● referring the student to the school counsellor (if appropriate and in consultation with parents and carers) ● requesting and sharing information and working collaboratively where appropriate with other government or non-government agencies ● where applicable, for Aboriginal students, seeking the support of the Aboriginal education team and/or the local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) *Child Protection Concerns – if a member of staff suspects that a child or young person is at risk of harm, as a mandatory reporter, notify or inform the Principal and/or Deputy Principal. This includes students with poor attendance or not attending school.*

School attendance team /School learning and support team / Wellbeing team
 	
(members include Deputies, HT Welfare, Student Support Officer, Year Advisors, School Counsellor, Careers Advisor, LaST, SASS)
	The school attendance team are involved with developing a whole school approach to attendance. The Attendance team will support by:
	● establishing clear and consistent school attendance systems.
	● supporting school staff to implement the day to day, school attendance systems including ensuring all staff understand their attendance responsibilities.
	● regularly analysing and monitoring student attendance data using Sentral and Scout Attendance and Engagement apps. This data should be tabled at Wellbeing/Learning and Support meetings fortnightly.
	● leading the implementation of evidence-based interventions to support school improvement planning.
	● facilitating communication with the school community, including:
	  o proactive – posters, data walls, digital media, newsletter articles, social media posts etc
	  o procedural – unexplained absence letters, compulsory school attendance etc
	  o positive – celebrating excellent and improved attendance.

Head Teacher Welfare	● coordination of attendance data production to facilitate analysis by SASS and YAs ● coordination of wellbeing and attendance meetings every fortnight to discuss students with attendance concerns and plan intervention actions ● meet with the HSLO fortnightly to discuss students of concern and request assistance ● complete referrals to the HSLO for non attendance/EDU/non enrolment when all other avenues to encourage attendance have been exhausted at school. EDU referral to be sent after 10 consecutive days of unexplained absence where contact with parents via phone and email has not been successful.
Principal/Senior Executive	School attendance is a shared responsibility, but school principals and executive teams have important roles to play in making attendance an area of focus in their communities. Principal must: ● make attendance a feature of their Strategic Improvement Plan where it has been identified as an area of improvement. ● include progress measures that represent the work the school is doing in support of their attendance improvement measure in the school's Strategic Improvement Plan. ● ensure staff responsible for monitoring attendance are trained in the use of Scout, and policy and procedures/roll marking codes. Universal resource Hub - attendance ● ensure there are processes to support staff in monitoring and escalating attendance concerns. ● ensure communication is made to parents and community that absence explanations must be provided to the school within 7 days of the absence. Principals and school executives should: ● emphasise the importance of student attendance in their annual planning. ● unite the whole school community, including local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups (AECGs) and external service providers, behind a shared goal of increasing attendance rates. ● provide professional development opportunities to support staff in understanding the complexities of school attendance as well as providing clarity around their role. ● develop and implement processes and strategies aimed at achieving positive student attendance. ● develop a school-based attendance improvement plan (yellow attendance booklet) to support regular attendance for identified students. ● engage respectfully and authentically with all parents and carers and community members to communicate the school's attendance initiatives and invite parents and carers to participate in the planning process in a culturally safe environment. ● request a parent or carer to provide a medical certificate if they have concerns with the explanation of an absence provided, or if there is a wellbeing concern. Where there are ongoing health concerns the principal can request for information sharing through a school letter or Chapter 16a where the parent does not consent. Before applying for HSLP support, principals should ensure that a full range of strategies to restore regular school attendance, and/or address chronic non-attendance, has been implemented by the school. A record of strategies implemented should be kept by the school and attached to the application for support. Attendance support program Principals should inform parents/carers of their intention to apply for support to the Home School Liaison Program, using Letter 1. Letter 1 Information and guidance on educational neglect, including the early signs, can be found here: Educational Neglect Information sheet - Habitual Absence What you need to know (Principals information sheet 5).

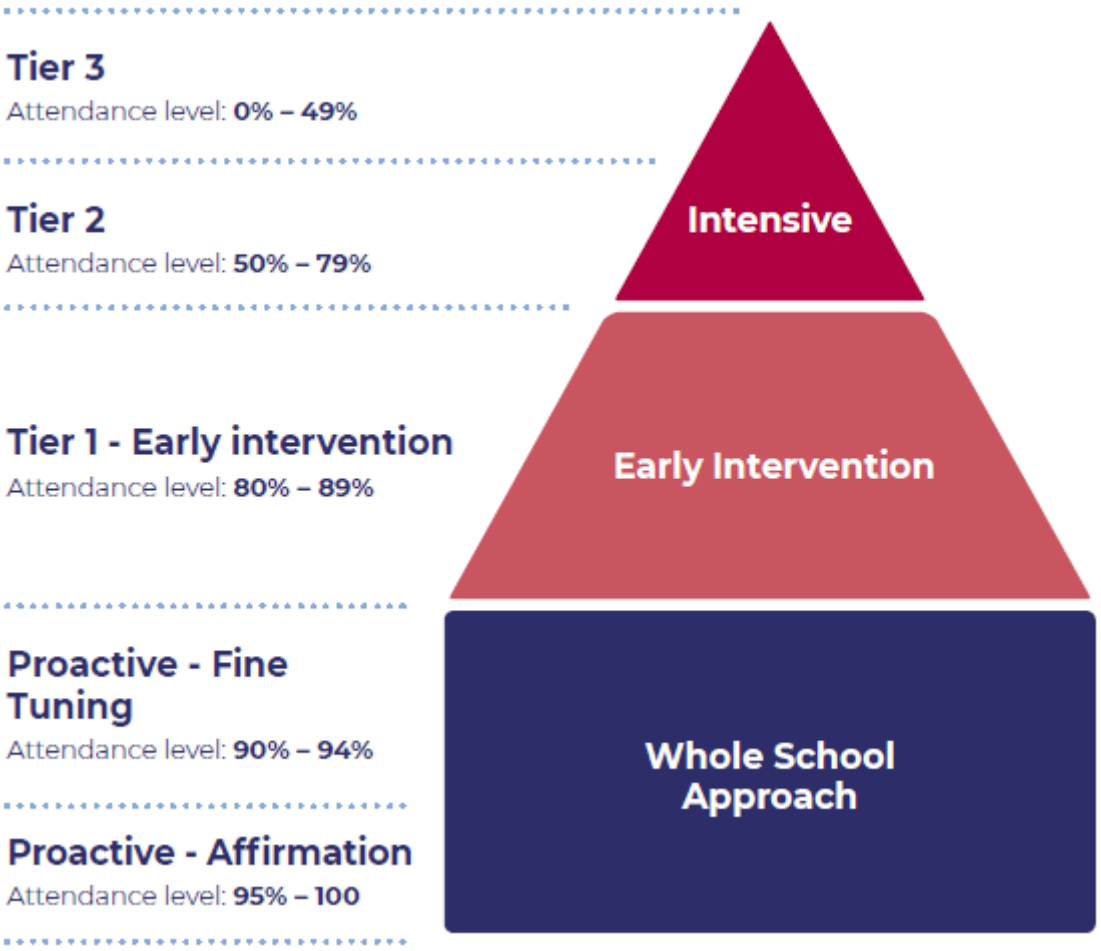
Home School Liaison Program - Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO) /	The Home School Liaison Program provides schools with the opportunity to apply for additional support and targeted strategies to foster improved attendance for students at risk of disengaging. Schools are able to apply for attendance support, based on the needs of their school, including: ● whole school strategy support and school planning ● cohort support ● individual student support. Home School Liaison officers create the connection between students, parents, school, and agencies so that students have the best possible opportunity to engage with their learning. Home School Liaison officer: ● meet with Head Teacher Wellbeing and Deputy Principal Inclusion and Support on a fortnightly basis. ● support attendance of compulsory school age students, between six and seventeen years. Compulsory school attendance ● monitor attendance registers, suggesting areas for development with school-based procedures and identifying emerging issues or concerns. ● support schools with the development and implementation of school-based strategies and school plans to improve attendance. ● collaborate with appropriate Team Around a School staff in the resolution of attendance issues. ● provide advice to appropriate Team Around a School and school staff on matters related to attendance; this may include information about attendance professional learning available to department staff. ● liaise with community, government, and non-government agencies.
Team Around a School support	To find the team in your network go to School Services Contacts Student Wellbeing Support (nsw.gov.au)

Attendance Flowchart



Tiered Approach to Attendance Monitoring

Any student with attendance below 90% may benefit from the strategies and resources outlined in the early intervention or intensive tiers of the Every Day Counts model of support.
[Every Day Counts – student attendance guide]



Affirmation: 95%-100%

- Monitor and reinforce importance of regular student attendance with students
- Regularly promote the importance and benefits of regular attendance in school communications
- Develop positive teacher-student relationships
- Implement a range of both formal and informal methods to celebrate excellent attendance
- Monitor attendance data for signs of slippage with regard to attendance rates

Proactive: 90%-94%

- Monitor and reinforce importance of regular student attendance with students
- Regularly promote the importance and benefits of regular attendance in school communications
- Develop positive teacher-student relationships
- Implement a range of both formal and informal methods to celebrate excellent attendance
- Regular monitoring of attendance data for signs of slippage with regard to attendance rates and make contact with student/parent if attendance level drops

Tier 1 Intervention: 80%-89%

- Collaboratively work with student and parent/carer to understand the underlying factors contributing to non-attendance such as literacy/numeracy, learning needs, disability, EAL/D (E.g. Interviews, direct correspondence, regular parent updates on attendance rates)
- Monitor and reinforce importance of regular student attendance with students & intervene if signs of slippage
- Regularly promote the importance and benefits of regular attendance with parents of identified students
- Develop positive teacher-student relationships – consider allocating an attendance mentor
- Implement a range of both formal and informal methods to celebrate attendance improvement
- Regular parent update on attendance rate until at or above 90%

Tier 2 Intervention: 50%-79%

- Senior executive collaboratively works with student and parent/carer to understand the underlying factors contributing to non-attendance such as literacy/numeracy, learning needs, disability, EAL/D (E.g. Interviews, direct correspondence, weekly parent updates on attendance rates)
- Implement an attendance contract with students and parents/carers
- Senior executive monitor and reinforce importance of regular student attendance with students and parents/carers
- Regularly promote the importance and benefits of regular attendance with parents of identified students
- Referral to learning support team (or equivalent) and allocate an attendance/learning mentor
- Implement a range of both formal and informal methods to encourage attendance improvement
- Given the individual circumstances of each child and the reasons provided for absence, consider a mandatory report regarding educational neglect
- Seek attendance support program advice or referral

Tier 3 Intervention: 0%-49%

- Principal collaboratively works with their DEL, student and parent/carer to understand the underlying factors contributing to non-attendance such as literacy/numeracy, learning needs, disability, EAL/D (E.g. Interviews, direct correspondence, weekly parent updates on attendance rates)
- Delivery Support team coordination. For example, Attendance support program referral (ASLO/HSLO),
- Network Specialist Facilitator, Learning & Wellbeing staff, NDIS Coordinator, Assistant Principal Learning & Support, Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer, Senior Psychologist, support teachers transition, behaviour specialists, Out of Home Care teachers, Non-Government organisations.
- Negotiate and implement an attendance contract with students and parents/carers
- Regularly promote the importance and benefits of regular attendance with parents of identified students
- Referral to learning support team (or equivalent) and allocate an attendance/learning mentor
- Implement a range of both formal and informal methods to encourage attendance improvement
- Given the individual circumstances of each child and the reasons provided for absence, consider a mandatory report regarding educational neglect

Attendance actions

These systems are aligned with the following Department of Education policy documents:
School Attendance (nsw.gov.au) Student attendance in NSW public schools procedures

Task	Responsibility / Action
Shared enrolments Student attendance in NSW public schools procedures Section 3.6	Students can attend a specialist education setting separate to a mainstream school on a sessional or full-time basis in line with the departments Enrolment of students in NSW Government schools policy. School staff must use the attendance register code 'H' when: ● a student is enrolled in a school and is required or approved to attend an alternative educational setting on a sessional or full-time basis. ● a student accesses education settings separate to their mainstream school, such as tutorial centre and programs, behaviour schools, schools in youth justice centres, hospital schools, distance education. Both census and host schools: ● mark the shared student's attendance as usual for the days the student is expected at their school. ● use the 'H' code for any full days or part days the student is not expected at their school. Host schools do not need to provide their shared student enrolments' attendance data to the census school via the Special Circumstances Register. The census school may still request details of attendance from the host school for their information, but it is not a requirement for attendance records. The transfer of attendance data from all schools to the department is now automated. Where the school marks the rolls manually, they must enter the attendance data into an approved attendance recording system.
Short-term Attendance	Students can only be enrolled in one school at any given time. However, a student enrolled at one public school may need to attend another public school for a short period of time. Examples may include, but are not limited to, family care arrangements, medical or mental health treatment, domestic or family violence, natural disasters or events, or due to cultural obligations for Sorry Business. When this happens, the enrolled school and host school must ensure compliance with the policy. The principal should refer to the policy for short term attendance located at section 3.5 https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2005-0259-02
Marking manual rolls	● manually marking of printed rolls may be required during the following times, e.g. when the school computer system is offline, evacuation, sports carnivals, special wellbeing activities and excursions. ● the teacher that is organising the activity is responsible for collecting rolls from SASS on LG, organising, distributing and marking the rolls accurately. ● for a whole school event the student services can select the year group and mark the role as a variation for school business for the day and the name of the event.

	● Evacuation rolls printed fortnightly and stored in the Gym and the Old School House. In the case of evacuation, the SAM will print the daily attendance register to take to the evacuation point for distribution to staff and SASS.
Students who leave school grounds during school hours Student attendance in NSW public schools procedures Section 3.7	Students are only permitted to leave school grounds during the day under the following reasons: ● accompanied by school staff on school sporting activities or excursions. ● participating in regular timetabled school activities in vocational education (TAFE) ● Approved Leave by Senior Executive: Flexible, TAFE, Early Leave etc.
Attendance systems training	School attendance is a shared responsibility. ● New SASS members are trained in systems by spending 2 weeks in the main office ● New teaching staff given a Staff Handbook and Attendance Procedures documents ● Annual review of attendance processes and presentation to all staff of procedures detailing staff obligations under the Department of Education policy

Resources

Policy Documents:

- School Attendance Policy
- Student Attendance in Government Schools Procedures
- Exemption from School Procedure
- Child Protection Policy
- Student Welfare Policy
- Attendance Register Codes
- Enrolment of Students in NSW Government Schools
- The Wellbeing Framework for Schools
- School Excellence Framework Version 3
- Achieving Excellence in Wellbeing and Inclusion tool

Professional Learning:

Positive Attendance Culture modules:

- Module 1 – What works inside the gate
- Module 2a – Strengthening high expectation
- Module 2b – Refining quality systems and processes
- Module 2c – Improving data use and practices
- Module 2d – Applying effective interventions

SCOUT Professional Learning:

- Getting Started with SCOUT
- SCOUT App and Report Explanations
- Exploring SCOUT - Designed to support education staff in their understanding of the department's Scout reporting platform.
- Scout Showcases – Includes quick reference guides, scout in practice, and webinar.
- Digital learning centre - you will find the following resources:
  - **Quick reference guides** - practical guides to using Scout features and functionality.
  - **Scout in practice** – a series of resources that use specific scenarios to demonstrate how to extract and analyse information purposefully from multiple data sources.

Research & Evidence:

- Universal Resources Hub – Universal Resources Hub provides staff with access to quality assured teaching, learning and school improvement resources.
- Attendance Matters – Resources for schools including policies, guidelines and procedures, principal toolkit, school refusal, school attendance procedure process maps, school staff sign on resources, roll marking, communication with community, primary/secondary posters & flyers, sample notes & notices, key research, people, and school planning.
- Aboriginal Education - Universal Resources Hub provides staff with access to resources to support Aboriginal students.
- Inclusive Practice Hub - Evidence-based practice resources for school to support students with additional needs.
- Every Day Counts - Student Attendance Guide: can help with refining attendance expectations; planning for improved attendance; ways to build teacher capacity with explicit classroom practices and professional learning resources; and working with the local community to raise expectations.
- CESE Understanding Attendance from the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation (CESE) – includes a research paper on positive attendance and a guide on using SCOUT reports to examine 'Tell Them From Me' measures linked to improved student attendance.
- CESE Library services page
- Student attendance in NSW public schools procedures – Attendance Procedural document aligned.
- Compulsory School Attendance in Government Schools
- Attendance Strategies - Whole school attendance modelled on a tiered framework of support and intervention, tailored to the school community, creating a positive environment for engagement and learning.
- 'Spotlight: Attendance Matters': (AITSL)