



CANLEY HEIGHTS PUBLIC SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Rationale

The NSW Department of Education requires all schools to establish and implement an attendance procedure. Regular attendance at school is essential to ensure uninterrupted progress and to enable children to reach their potential.

At Canley Heights Public School we expect every student to attend school every day of the school year unless prevented by reasonable circumstances (i.e. sick, natural disaster). The school's aim is to work with parents to maximise student engagement in all learning programs and promote regular attendance for all students. Canley Heights Public School commits to:

- Developing a safe, supportive and positive school culture
- Identifying and analysing student absences
- Following-up absences promptly
- Educating students and parents about the importance of attendance

Policy Statement

Section 22 of the Education Act (1990) states that it is the duty of the parent of a child of compulsory school-age to cause the child:

- to be enrolled at, and to attend, a government school or a registered non-government school, or
- to be registered for home schooling with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and to receive instruction in accordance with the conditions to which the registration is subject.

Applicable NSW Department of Education Policies and Procedures

School Attendance Policy.

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2005-0259>

School Attendance Procedures.

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2005-0259-02>

Applicable school documents

CHPS Learning and Support Procedures

CHPS Anti-Bullying Procedures

CHPS Anti-Racism Procedures

Responsibilities

Canley Heights Public School has a responsibility to record student attendance and respond to instances of irregular attendance. It is important for our school to investigate the patterns and underlying causes of non-attendance so that appropriate strategies addressing the specific type of absenteeism can be implemented.

Canley Heights Public School, and by virtue of their employment, our teachers, are legally required to monitor and record attendance of students in their care on a daily basis, whether absent or present in class, on excursion or at a school-based activity.

Legal guardians of children have a legal obligation, as set out in the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006, to ensure a child is enrolled at and attends school.

Class rolls, whether electronic or paper based, can be required as evidence in court and assist in establishing that a school has met their common law duty of care to students. Attendance records are required as part of a school's Workplace Health and Safety requirements and can be a critical factor in identifying serious student protection concerns.



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Parents

School absenteeism and truancy can impact significantly on students' learning and wellbeing. Research shows, higher student attendance is associated, on average, with higher student achievement. Additionally, attending school every day helps children to build social and emotional skills such as communication, teamwork and resilience. Under the law, parents must make sure their child is enrolled and attends school on all school days unless there is a reasonable excuse. Schools must monitor attendance of students and follow up with parents and caregivers any unexplained absences.

It is important that everyone works together to help children obtain the best possible start in life with a good education. Parents should work in partnership with the school, notifying the school of the reason for any of their child's absences and highlighting any areas of concern they may have so they can be addressed promptly.

Parents/Carers are responsible for the following:

- Ensuring that their children are at school and on time. Children should arrive at school between 8:30am and 8:55am, ready for learning to begin at 9.00am. It is expected that all children will attend school every day unless there are reasonable circumstances for being absent (i.e. sick, natural disaster).
- Informing the school with an appropriate explanation for non-attendance by email, phone, note or in person.
- For extended absences, parents/carers must notify the school, providing reasons for the absence.
- Attend meetings and work in partnership with the school administration to address issues of poor attendance.

Students

Students are expected to:

- Be at school on time every day ready for learning.
- Go directly to the office after 9am to receive a late slip, which must be handed to the class teacher
- Hand any absence notes to teachers if they have been absent from school.

Teachers

Teachers will:

- Accurately mark rolls by 9:15am in accordance with school procedures.
- Actively promote attendance with both students and families.
- Regularly liaise with families regarding attendance.
- Monitor student absence and follow-up attendance in accordance with school procedures.
- Monitor and review class attendance data with whole class on a regular basis.

Deputy Principal and Principal

Leadership will work with other Executive staff and the school attendance team to:

- Review and implement the Canley Heights Public School attendance procedures, ensuring they reflect Department policy and procedures.
- Inform parents of their legal obligations regarding enrolment and attendance.
- Ensure all staff adhere to attendance recording protocols.
- Collect and analyse school attendance data.
- Identify and implement support for students displaying significant patterns of absence and/or late arrivals.
- Reward and recognise excellent attendance through a variety of strategies.
- Create Attendance Support Plans for students as needed and review as required.
- Work with Department personnel and other external resources to engage with the student and their family.
- Follow processes for enforcing parental obligation regarding attendance and compulsory participation.



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General Procedures

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| Attendance Marking | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rolls must be marked each day by 9.15am via School Bytes.• Rolls will be checked by the admin staff by 10.00am each day. A call will be made to teachers if their rolls are not marked or unsubmitted. If rolls are frequently not marked this information will be passed to the Attendance Supervisor for follow up with the teacher.• The Attendance Supervisor and Principal monitor attendance marking and the teacher responsible for the class will be asked to amend rolls as required. |
| Present Categories | Students who are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In class will be marked 'Present', denoted on roll as a green square• Participating in school activities (excursion; camps etc.) will be marked accordingly by the teacher or administrative staff as on 'School Business'. |
| Absent Categories | Students who are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Absent and notification <i>has</i> been received from a legal guardian advising the student is unwell, will be marked 'Explained – Sick'. Other absence reasons such as 'Explained- Leave' and 'Explained- Unjustified' will be marked accordingly as advised by Principal or Attendance Supervisor.• Absent and notification <i>has not</i> been received from a legal guardian, will be marked 'Unexplained– Absent' until such time as an explanation for the absence is received. Absences that remain unexplained after 7 days automatically convert to 'Unexplained' on School Bytes.• All explanations teachers and administrative staff receive from legal guardians will be entered into School Bytes. All documents containing explanations for absences will be retained by staff as advised by Principal.• Copies of medical certificates will be uploaded for each student as they are received.• Administrative staff should enter any information regarding future planned absences of students by entering the planned absences on School Bytes.• Students will only be marked as 'Explained – Suspended', 'Explained – Flexible', 'Explained – Shared Enrolment' or 'Explained- Exempt' upon instruction from Principal or Attendance Coordinator. |
| Unexplained Absences | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An unexplained absence occurs when the student is not present at school and the legal guardian does not contact the school.• An SMS/email message will be sent automatically via School Bytes to the main contact at 10.00 am each day.• Parents may send explanations for absences via the School Bytes Parent Portal. In this instance, administrative staff review and edit the explanation if needed before approving. |



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| Late Arrivals | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A student is considered to have arrived late any time after the 9.00 am bell.• All students arriving late must be signed in at the school office and will be given a late slip. This slip needs to be presented to the teacher when arriving in class. If they do not have a late slip, they are to be sent to the school office to sign in.• If it is deemed a disadvantage to have a student attend the office to obtain a late note, the teacher calls the office and inform a member of the administrative staff.• The late arrival information will be entered into School Bytes by administrative staff. |
| Early Departures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A student is considered to be leaving early any time before 3.00pm.• All students leaving early must be signed out at the school office by a legal guardian. Students will be released into the care of another individual only when the school has been advised by the legal guardian. Note: This may be different in cases involving Court Orders.• The early departure information will be entered by administrative staff. |
| SMS/Email Messages | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An email message will be sent to students' main contact by 10.30am each day advising of any 'Unexplained' absences. Any incorrect messages caused by incorrect roll-marking will be made known to the Principal or Attendance Supervisor. The teacher will follow up by contacting the student's legal guardians. |
| Non-marking of electronic roll | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If the school computer system is offline, hard copies of all class rolls will be marked. Once the system is online the teacher will mark the roll in School Bytes. This may be done the next day if necessary.• In the event of an evacuation, hard copies of rolls will be taken to the evacuation area to be marked by teachers. Teacher will advise the Deputy Principal of any unexplained absentees.• The electronic roll can be accessed by teachers in an emergency via the School Bytes app on a smart phone. |
| Excursions | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Roll marking for excursions includes three categories:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attending excursion (School Business)• Present at school (Present)• Absent• Rolls should indicate where the non-attending students will be located within the school for the day ie: where they are 'split' to.• Rolls should indicate who is present or absent irrespective of whether they are attending the excursion.• A copy should be sent to the school office, and another retained by the teacher to mark before leaving the excursion venue.• School Bytes rolls should be updated as soon as possible. |
| Attendance Marking Training | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• School leadership will provide attendance marking training to teaching staff annually.• School leadership will ensure all staff receive a written copy of the School Attendance Procedures document and will review this document annually.• A copy of the School Attendance Procedures document will be included in casual folders. |



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| Casual Staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Casual staff will be provided a paper copy of the class roll to mark.• Attendance data will be entered by administrative staff. |
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School Administrative Staff

Administrative staff are an integral part of monitoring and maintaining student attendance. Their responsibilities include:

- Recording absence reasons, including extended planned leave, communicated by parents against students. This includes making judgements about leave type in consultation with senior executive when required.
- Recording late arrivals as they present to the office or are notified by teaching staff. This includes making judgements about leave type in consultation with senior executive when required.
- Recording students leaving early with the reason for the early pick-up. This includes students who are being picked up early at the request of the school due to illness or injury.
- Uploading doctor's certificates and other documents supplied by parents and carers to support explanations for absences.
- Ensuring all rolls are submitted in a timely manner and informing teacher responsible for the roll if it is not.
- Entering absences from paper rolls submitted by day-to-day casuals and teaching staff, particularly for offsite events.
- Contacting parents as requested by teaching staff, especially after 2-3 days consecutive absence. All effort to communicate with parents will be recorded as a *Data Record- Attendance* for the student in School Bytes.



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Consecutive absences

First day of absence

An automated email is sent home for each unexplained absence via School Bytes. Parent may provide an explanation through the portal, by phone or email.

Third day of consecutive absence and subsequent days

Teacher requests administrative staff to contact primary carer. If contact **is** made, then appropriate information is entered into the roll and a data record created in School Bytes. If contact **is not** made, the administrative staff will enter a data record as evidence of an attempt to contact the carer. In this instance an attempt to personally contact should be made each day until an explanation is received or the student returns to school. Teachers will notify the administrative staff in each instance that contact needs to be made. Teaching staff may choose to contact the parent/carer themselves.

Scheduled reminders

Weekly requests for absence explanation

Each week an automated email is sent home via School Bytes requesting an explanation for any unexplained absences from the previous week. This provides the parent with additional follow-up within a 7-day period.

Attendance Monitoring

Deputy Principal runs report at least fortnightly and shares with teaching staff. May communicate students of concern that require additional follow-up. Supports teachers and APs with case management. DP meets regularly with HSLO.

Assistant Principals review stage attendance and discuss concerns with teachers individually and at team meetings. APs provide support with developing and implementing interventions and classroom supports.

Teachers review class attendance regularly and follow-up absences according to school procedures. Assistant Principals notified of concerns.

Recording of interventions and communication with student and parents

Attendance data records

An attendance data record is created on School Bytes and updated with each new action taken for an attendance event. A new data record will be created and maintained for a new attendance event. All actions/communications are entered as a record of follow-up and interventions put in place. This ensures easy communication amongst staff and serves as a record for accountability purposes (HSLP/DEL/Audit).

Documents

All attendance related documents are uploaded to the student's profile as school-based Attendance Support Plans are uploaded on School Bytes.

Keeping parents informed

In addition to regular communications between the school and home the school offers regular opportunities for parents to discuss their child's attendance at parent-teacher conferences held at least once a year. At this time parents are presented with their child's attendance "heat map" to support discussions. A copy of the heat map is provided to parents who do not attend.

Student attendance data is also included in the student reports issued each semester.

Parents are able to view their child's attendance heat map at any time in the School Bytes Parent Portal.

Child protection concerns

Where the school knows or has identified child protection concerns for a student or family the principal or delegate will use their professional judgement and knowledge of the student's circumstances when determining level and type of contact. A student wellbeing check may be requested from HSLO/local police. The principal will consider whether frequent absences are a secondary result of a primary child protection concern such as, medical neglect or child being a danger to self or others and refer to the appropriate decision tree in the Mandatory Reporter Guide (MRG) and/or contacts the Child Wellbeing Unit if it is believed the student to be at risk of significant harm.