



HUNTERS HILL PUBLIC SCHOOL

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

2025

Hunters Hill Public School Attendance Guidelines

Rationale

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. Encouraging regular school attendance is a core school responsibility.

DET Policy Statement / The Law

- 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:
 - a) to be enrolled at, and to attend, a government school or a registered non-government school, or
 - b) be registered for home schooling with the Board of Studies and to receive instruction in accordance with the conditions to which the registration is subject.
- All students who are enrolled at school, regardless of their age, are expected to attend that school whenever instruction is provided.
- Section 24 of the Act requires principals to maintain an attendance register (roll) in a form approved by the Minister. Attendance registers must be made available for inspection during school hours by a Board inspector or by any authorised person.

Aims

- To promote regular student attendance and punctual arrival to school.
- To ensure accurate attendance registers are maintained.
- To act promptly in the follow up of absences.
- To refer individual cases to Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO) if necessary.
- To develop and monitor attendance improvement plans, if required, in consultation with parents /carers/student/ district HSLO.

Responsibilities

Parents/Guardians must ensure:

- their children of compulsory school age are enrolled in a government or registered non-government school, or registered with the Board of Studies for Home Schooling.
- their children who are enrolled at school attend every day the school is open for instruction.
- they provide a written explanation for absences to the school within 7 days from the first day of any period of absence through means such as a written note, email, or via School Bytes. The 7 day timeframe for explaining absences is a requirement of the *Education Act (1990)*.

- they work in partnership with the school to plan and implement strategies to support regular attendance at school. This includes communicating with the school if they are aware of issues impacting on their child's attendance or engagement with school.

Class Teachers must:

- provide a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the school community.
- promote regular attendance at school through teaching and learning activities that acknowledge the learning and support needs of students.
- maintain accurate records of student attendance.
- mark class roll accurately at the beginning of class time. (Please refer to Roll Marking Procedures in Appendix A and Attendance Register Codes in Appendix B).
- ensure students who are late to school or have a partial absence are signed in/out by their parents at the school office.
- after 2 days unexplained absence, phone home checking student wellbeing and seeking written parent explanation and amend roll as appropriate. Repeat this process every two days.
- after 4 days if no satisfactory response, refer to Assistant Principal to follow up.
- after 6 days unexplained absence, report to Assistant Principal and Learning and Support Team (LST) representative.
- in the case of a student returning to school after an absence, advise the school office of any absence that remains unexplained after six (6) days for seeking of written explanation.
- Monitor and report to Assistant Principal and LST representative ongoing periodical absences that may be less than two days and explained eg repeatedly being absent for a day or two each week/fortnight.

Assistant Principals must:

- set attendance and roll procedures as a regular item for team meetings.
- ensure new staff members are inducted in school attendance and roll marking procedures.
- request and conduct official meetings with parents/guardians of students whose attendance is of concern.

- refer problem cases to Principal if no attendance/punctuality improvements as a result of interventions.

Principal/ Deputy Principal must:

- ensure departmental, as well as school policies and procedures related to attendance are being followed by all staff.
- coordinate and supervise regular roll checks and LAMP monitoring to ensure early identification of students at risk of developing poor school attendance.
- ensure all records including details of transfers and exemptions are accessible to the Director Public Schools NSW, attendance officers and other personnel nominated by the Secretary Department of Education or Audit Directorate.
- promote open communication on issues affecting student attendance, including the availability of interpreters and translated materials relating to school attendance.
- plan and implement effective strategies to contact parents where there is a pattern of attendance concerns.
- send letter to parents expressing seriousness of attendance and warning of referral to HSLO.
- refer cases to HSLO if no attendance improvement.
- liaise regularly with HSLO in regard to referred cases.
- help develop, implement and evaluate individual attendance improvements plans with HSLO, AP, Class teacher, student and parents.
- collate and analyse whole school attendance data. Share with staff and send relevant data to district/regional centres when required.
- complete required forms for students requesting exemption from school. Send forms to School Education Director, if required.

Justified Reasons for Student Absences

Absences for reasons such as some of the following may be justified:

- Unavoidable medical or dental appointments (encourage appointments outside of school hours or close to home time)
- Religious holiday
- Urgent family situation (e.g. funeral)
- Sick or infectious disease

Children are not absent if they are:

- Representing the school at approved activities
- Attending alternative programs/schools
- Attending Stewart House
- Temporarily enrolled at another school

Their non-attendance at the school site should be marked as appropriate to the reason as per the attendance register codes (Appendix B).

Unjustified Reasons for Student Absences

Full day or partial absences for reasons such as, but not limited to, the following are not justified:

- Shopping
- Sleeping in
- Working around the house
- Mind siblings/other children/older relatives
- Minor family events such as birthdays
- Haircuts
- Weather conditions: rainy/windy/hot
- Frequent car problems
- Frequent late train/bus
- Airport/visitors from overseas
- Other member of family is sick
- Hospital visits to relatives/friends
- Head lice

APPENDIX A: ROLL MARKING PROCEDURES

This guide will show you how to mark a roll call.

The attendance module is a comprehensive attendance management solution. You can mark a roll call, manage late and early absence records, manage communication for absence records and run absence reports.

When using the School Bytes attendance module as an administrator, you will be able to view all roll calls in your school.

In the roll class list, you will have visibility of student flags to help in showing attendance related details for each student.

Summary of steps

- 1. Select attendance, roll call, then select roll call (admin).**
- 2. Search for the roll call.**
- 3. Select mark.**
- 4. Select absent for any absent students if needed.**
- 5. Select all day or part day.**
- 6. Select mark.**
- 7. Select OK.**

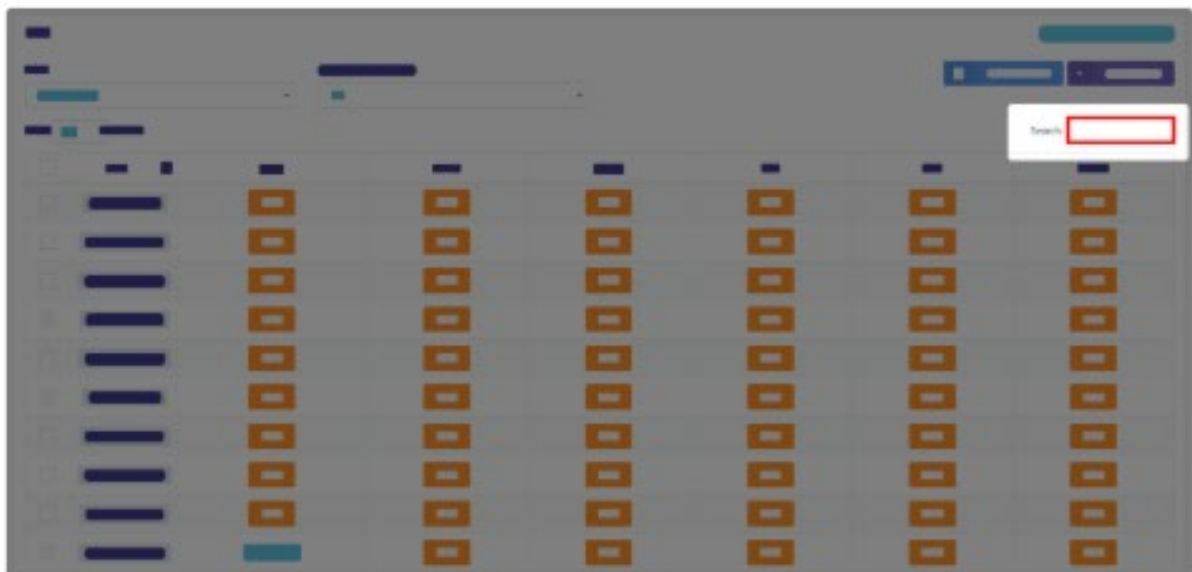
Detailed steps

1. Select attendance, roll call, then select roll call (admin).

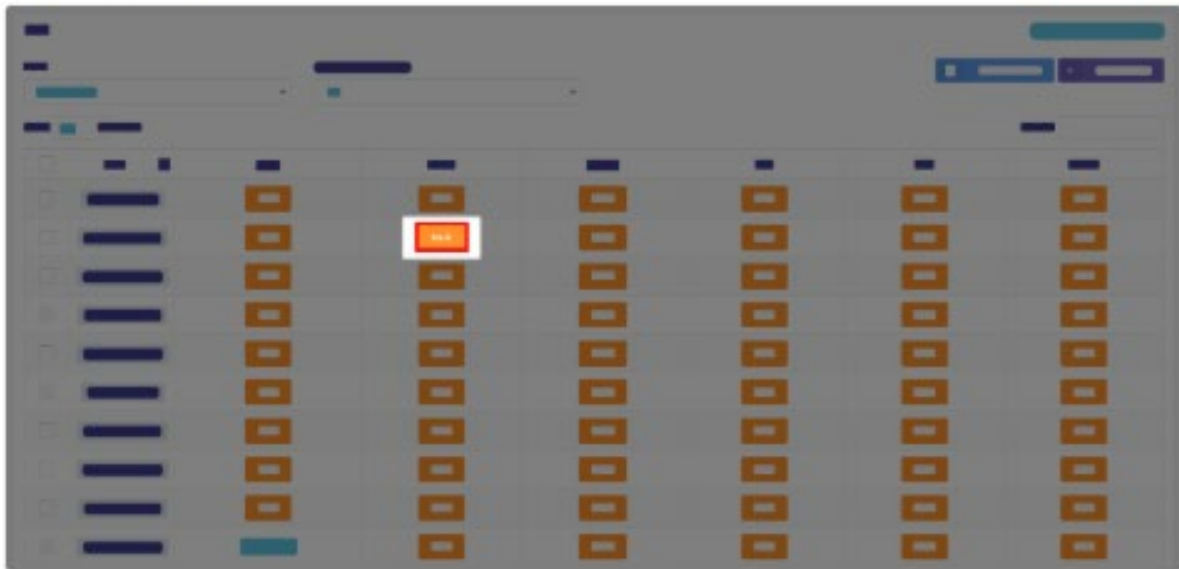


2. Search for the roll call.

You can use the search box if needed.

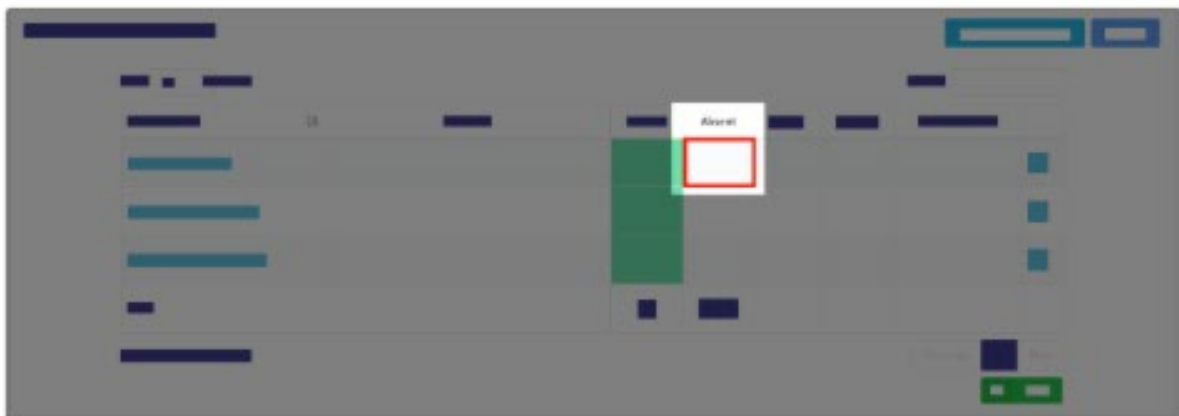


3. Select mark.



4. Select absent for any absent students if needed.

All students will be defaulted to present.



5. Select all day or part day.



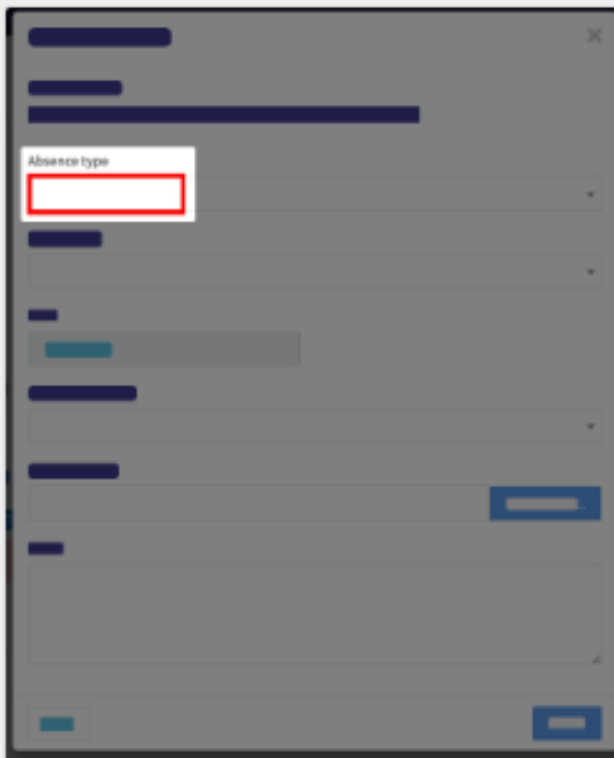
▼ All day

You can optionally enter an absence reason if the absence reason is already known.

1. Select the plus button.

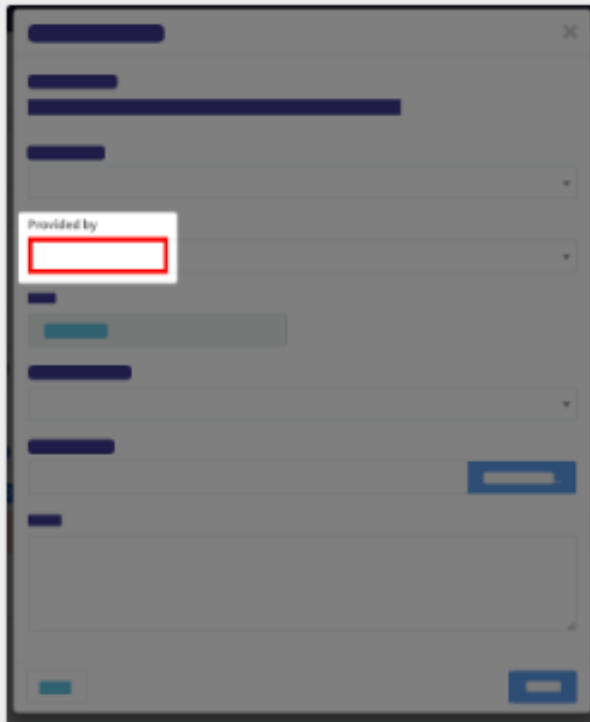


2. Select the absence type.



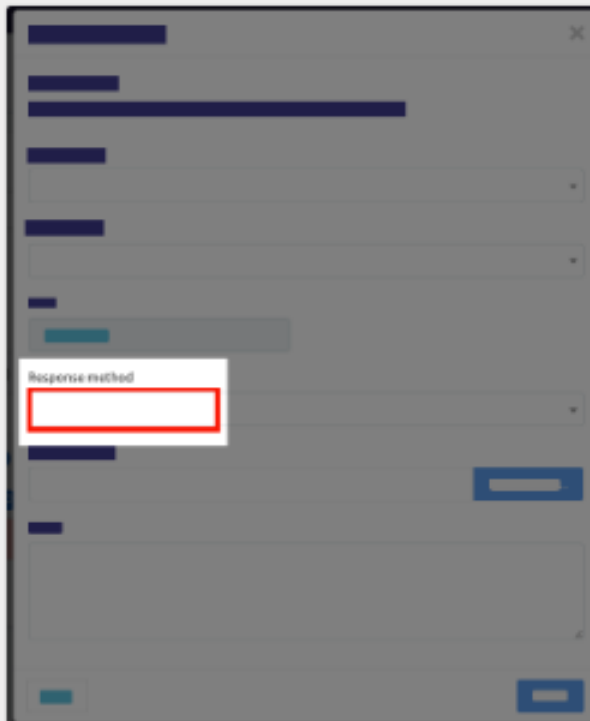
3. Choose an option in the provided by field.

The provided by field is used to identify the person that has provided the absence reason.



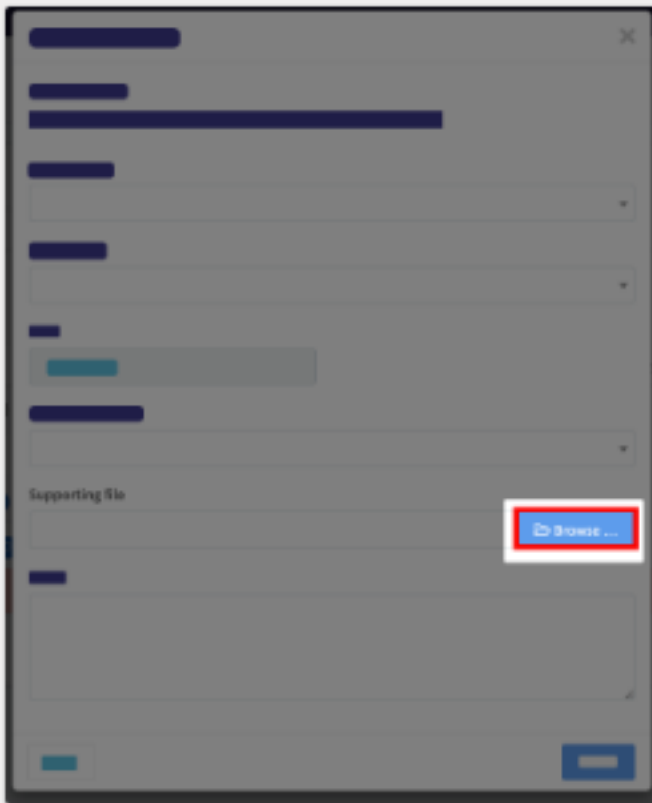
A screenshot of a mobile application form. The form is displayed on a grey background. At the top, there is a close button (X). Below it, there are several input fields, some with blue bars. The 'Provided by' field is highlighted with a red box. Below the 'Provided by' field, there are more input fields and a blue button. At the bottom, there is a blue button and a small blue bar.

4. Select the request method.



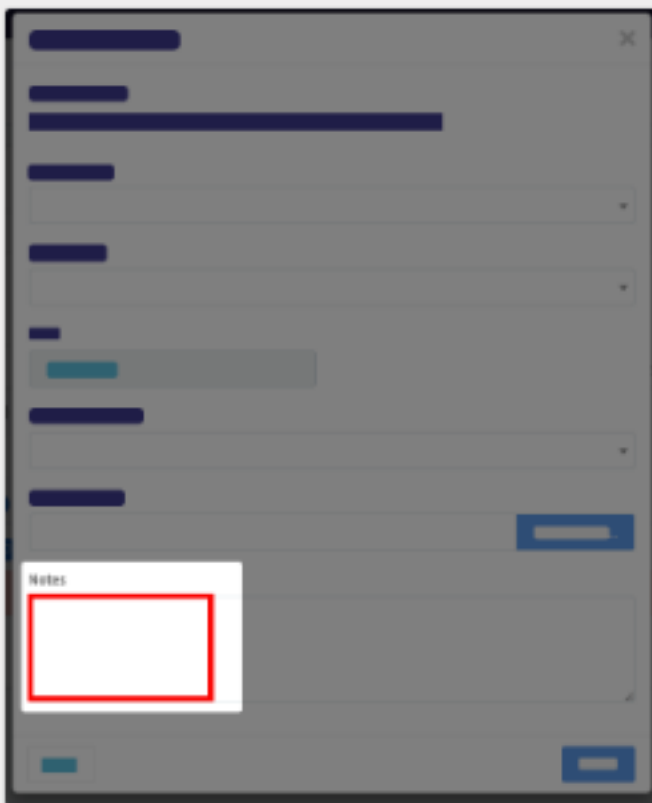
A screenshot of a mobile application form, similar to the one above. The form is displayed on a grey background. At the top, there is a close button (X). Below it, there are several input fields, some with blue bars. The 'Response method' field is highlighted with a red box. Below the 'Response method' field, there are more input fields and a blue button. At the bottom, there is a blue button and a small blue bar.

5. Optionally upload a copy of the absence note.



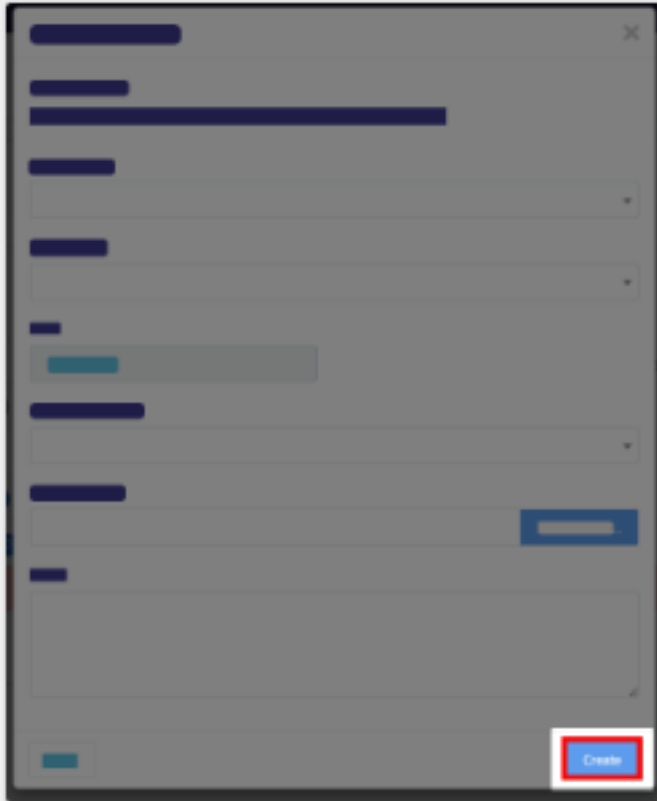
A screenshot of a web form with a dark grey background. The form contains several input fields, some with blue bars representing text. Below the input fields is a section labeled "Supporting file" with a "Browse..." button highlighted by a red rectangle. At the bottom right, there is a blue button.

6. Optionally enter any notes.



A screenshot of the same web form as above. The "Supporting file" section is now hidden. A new section labeled "Notes" is visible at the bottom, containing a text input field highlighted by a red rectangle. A blue button is visible at the bottom right.

7. Select create.



APPENDIX B: ATTENDANCE REGISTER CODES

Attendance Register Codes Symbols to be used for explanation of student absence	
Symbol	Meaning
A	The student's absence is unexplained or unjustified. This symbol must be used if no explanation has been provided by parents within seven days of the occurrence of an absence or the explanation is not accepted by the principal It is at the principal's discretion to accept or not accept the explanation provided.
S	The student's absence is due to sickness or as the result of a medical or paramedical appointment. In these cases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a medical certificate is provided or - the absence was due to sickness and the principal accepts this explanation. Principals may request a medical certificate in addition to explanations if the explanation is doubted, or the student has a history of unsatisfactory attendance.
L	An explanation of the absence is provided which has been accepted by the principal. This may be due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - misadventure or unforeseen event - participation in special events not related to the school - domestic necessity such as serious illness of an immediate family member - attendance at funerals - travel in Australia and overseas - recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions.
E	The student was suspended from school

Attendance Register Codes Symbols to be used to record a variation in attendance (not counted as an absence for statistical purposes)	
Symbol	Meaning
M	The student was exempted from attending school and a Certificate of Exemption has been issued by a delegated officer.
F	The student is participating in a flexible timetable and not present because they are not required to be at school. This could include participation in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HSC Pathways Program - Best Start Assessments - Trial or HSC examinations - VET courses
B	The student is absent from the school on official school business. This symbol is recorded where the principal approves the student leaving the school site to undertake, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - work experience - school sport (regional and state carnivals) - school excursions - student exchange
H¹	The student is enrolled in a school and is required or approved to be attending an alternative educational setting on a sessional or full time basis. The symbol is recorded where a student accesses education settings separate to their mainstream school such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - tutorial centre and programs - behaviour schools - juvenile justice - hospital schools - distance education

¹ Note: In most cases this code will only be used by Department of Education and Communities schools, with the exception of students from non-government schools attending hospital schools.

In addition to recording the reason for an absence or the reason for a variation in attendance, the duration of the absence or variation must be recorded.

Manual Attendance Registers

Department of Education and Communities schools that maintain manual attendance registers and do not use electronic means for maintaining student attendance must use the following symbols with the appropriate attendance register code for recording the reason for absence or a variation in attendance:

- a** - The student was absent on that day.
- Pa** - The student was late or was absent for part of a day. The time of arrival or departure must be recorded.

Note: The symbol X is to be used for the first and last day that the student attended for each term.

Electronic Attendance Registers²

For Department of Education and Communities schools using electronic means for maintaining student attendance (OASIS, ebs4 or compliant third party systems), when recording a partial absence, the precise time of arrival and/or departure must be documented.

When information is transferred to OASIS from other compliant electronic systems, or from manual attendance registers, whole day absence (a) will be shown as W and partial absence (Pa) will be shown as P.

² Note: This only applies to Department of Education and Communities Schools.

APPENDIX C: PARENT INFORMATION



Student Absence

If your child is away from school, you are obliged to advise the school of the reason for the absence within 7 days. To make this process easier, you will receive a notification via School Bytes on the day of any absence for your response.

Please:

- Note that partial absences cannot be submitted via School Bytes and will be managed by the office staff on student late arrival/early departure.
- Notify the school if your child will be absent for more than two days via email (huntershill.p.school@det.nsw.edu.au) or telephone (9816 4404). This is important in assisting us to meet our attendance monitoring obligations, and for us to know that your child is safe.
- If you receive a notification from the school seeking explanation of an absence, take responsive action at your very earliest opportunity.

You have seven (7) days to provide an explanation of a student absence, or the absence will be recorded as unjustified and unexplained.

Any planned absence of six days or more must be applied for in advance and approved by the principal.

Days missed = years lost

A day here and there doesn't seem like much, but...



Minutes lost = days lost per year

A couple of minutes here and there doesn't seem like much, but...



Access School Bytes via <https://support.schoolbytes.education/hc/en-us> .

Select 'Parent Guides'.

Select 'Parent Portal: Set up your parent portal account'.

Towards the bottom of the page you will find the heading 'Detailed Steps'.

Steps are clearly detailed and should be followed to create and set up your account.

Please note that it is important to use the same email address as the one provided to the school.

APPENDIX D: HOME SCHOOL LIAISON DOCUMENTS

GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORTING STUDENT ATTENDANCE - Appendices School Attendance Policy PD/2005/0259/VO5



Education &
Communities

Public Schools NSW

Appendix D

Application for Home School Liaison Program Support

- Please forward completed applications to the local manager of the Home School Liaison Program
- Incomplete applications cannot be accepted
- Home school liaison officer or Aboriginal student liaison officer intervention can only proceed when a range of school based interventions have been implemented and this application has been signed by the student welfare consultant
- Please attach the copy of *Example Letter 1* sent to the parents
- The form must be **signed** by the principal or relieving principal.

SCHOOL: _____ (Insert school name)

Section A: Student Details

Surname: _____ Given names: _____

Date of Birth: ____/____/____ Sex: Male Female

Year / Class: _____ ERN: _____

Background: Aboriginal / TSI Language Background Other Than English Other

Language spoken at Home: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Name of parent: _____

Phone: (H): _____ (W): _____ (M): _____

Section B: Record of Student's Absences for Previous 20 School Weeks

Type of absence	Sick	Leave	Unexplained	Exemption	Suspension
Whole Day					
Part Day					

Please attach a photocopy of the roll indicating student's attendance for previous twenty school weeks

