



Newbridge Heights Public School WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES & EXPECTATIONS

Policy Statement

This policy sets out the requirements for attendance of students in NSW government schools and can be found at:

<https://policies.education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/school-attendance-policy>

Context

This document is reflective of the NSW Department of Education School Attendance Policy. It outlines the legal requirements that the school is required to undertake. To ensure that we meet the requirements as a school we are all responsible.

Procedures and Standards

These are school based procedures only. They have been created with ongoing reference to the policy (link provided above) and the HSLO supporting Newbridge Heights Public School. As attendance is a legal requirement and all documentation can be subpoenaed to court, it is essential that rolls are marked and attendance records are accurately reflected daily.

The School

All staff members have the responsibility to:

- provide a caring teaching and learning environment that fosters student wellbeing and belonging and promotes regular attendance.
- Maintain ACCURATE records of attendance- including partial attendance.
- If after 3 consecutive days, a student is still absent, then the office staff will contact the parents to ensure the safety and well being of the child.
- Monitor your class heat maps. Are there patterns of absenteeism? E.G the child is away on Tuesdays and Fridays etc
- Contact the parents with initial concerns of absenteeism- including lateness, early departures and high percentages of absenteeism. All communication, and ongoing communication, must be recorded on a child's NCCD data record.
- Alert your supervisor, and the attendance team. It may also be necessary to inform the Learning & Support team and/or the Principal when a student's pattern of attendance is of concern.

The role of the delegate:

- is responsible for implementing the initiatives and strategies outlined in the *School Improvement Plan* to support the defined targets as per the Premier's Priorities.
- Absence notes will be generated and placed in pigeon holes ready for the classroom teacher to send home twice a week.
- will meet regularly with the HSLO to discuss student attendance and strategies to support families with attendance concerns.
- is responsible for referrals of students to the HSLO and working with the HSLO to support these students.

The role of the parent:

- They provide an explanation for absences by means such as a telephone call, written note, text message or email to the school within 7 days from the first day of any period of absence.
- They work in partnership with the school to plan and implement strategies to support regular attendance at school, including communicating with the school if they are aware of issues impacting on their child's attendance or engagement with school.

MARKING THE ROLL:

- The class roll **MUST** be marked **before 10:00am EVERY DAY** by the teacher taking the class. If a teacher does not have access to SENTRAL then a paper roll should be marked and returned to the front office by 10:00am. Paper rolls are available from the office.
- If a child is late or leaves early, the office staff will sign the child in and out. If paperwork is provided by the parent, the office will mark it on the roll and place the paper work in the teacher's pigeon hole. It is the responsibility of the teacher to check if the partial absence has been justified on the roll if paperwork has been provided.
- All absences **MUST** be justified within 7 days of the first absent day. If correspondence is provided after the 7-day window, then the absence is **EXPLAINED** but **UNJUSTIFIED**.
- When receiving correspondence from parents regarding absences, the teacher is required to:
 - Enter the reason onto Sentral against the date the child was absent.
 - Determine if the reason is justified (see guidelines)
 - If the reason given is justified (sick, leave, exempt, school business, suspended etc), select the appropriate reason from the drop-down menu. This will enter the correct attendance code.
 - If the reason is not justified (it does not comply with the DoE guidelines), then select *explained* and *A-unjustified* in the dialogue box.
 - The teacher needs to comment on what the reason was (religious event, sick) and how they were informed (dojo, phone call, note, doctors' certificate) and the date the information was supplied to them.
 - On the correspondence, the classroom teacher is required to- tick – to indicated that it has been seen, date the paperwork received, indicate and date when the paperwork is entered and store the paperwork for the end of year collection process.
- If a child is attending regular medical appointments, then the parents need to provide paperwork from the doctor or medical profession to indicate that this is the case.
- If a child is needing to attend regular appointments (e.g speech), then the parents must request permission from the learning and support team. An application for exemption will be forwarded to the Director.

Referring a child to the Home School Liaison Program (HSLP)

Classroom Teacher	Deputy Principal & Attendance Team	School
Phone calls or face to face meetings with the parent/carer re attendance concerns and recorded on NCCD data sheets	Student attendance referred to LST/wellbeing meeting	School has developed attendance processes
CRT has face to face meeting with student	School based face to face meeting with student	School has developed whole school attendance improvement plan
Where applicable CRT engages student by providing adjusted curriculum	School interviews/calls parents/carers re attendance	Situational analysis and recommended improvement such as rolls marked regularly
CRT discusses concerns with Assistant Principal, then if required then elevates to the Deputy Principal	Whole school assembly re attendance	School based attendance team meeting
	School staff meeting (e.g. staff PL) regarding responsibilities	
	School develops attendance rewards as part of whole school behaviour approach	
	Roll check/attendance report review (e.g. students below X%) and identified students supported	

ATTENDANCE CODES:

CODE	REASON
A	Absent 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	Sick The student's absence is due to sickness or as the result of a medical or paramedical appointment. In these cases: - 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.
E	Suspended The student was suspended from school
F	Flexible The student is participating in a flexible timetable and not present because they are not to be at school (Learning from home).
L	Leave An explanation of the absence is provided which has been accepted by the principal. This may be due to: - 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 - recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions.
M	Exempt The student was exempted from attending school and a Certificate of Exemption has been issued by a delegated officer (partial enrolment at school)
B	School Business 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: - school sport (regional and state carnivals) - school excursions (Transition to high school & ATSI excursions)
U	Unjustified This is when a student has returned a note or the absence has been explained outside of the 7-day period or the reason on the note does not fall under a reasonable category for non-attendance.
H	Shared Enrolment 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 an educational setting separate to their mainstream school such as: - hospital schools - distance education

WHAT IS JUSTIFIED AND

ED EXPLANATION?

Justified / Unjustified Explanations	
Absences for reasons such as some of the following may NOT be justified	Absences for the following reasons are justified sick or leave
shopping	medical or dental appointments
sleeping in	compassionate leave - funeral
working around the house	sick recognised day of religious celebration
minding siblings / other children / older relatives	Extreme weather conditions (flood or fire restricting access to school)
minor family events such as birthdays	
weather conditions: rainy/windy/ hot	
frequent car problems	
frequent late train/bus	
excursions / carnivals / sports / camps	
airport / visitors from overseas or other states	
other member of the family or sibling is sick	
sick explanations without medical documentation for excessive number of absences where attendance is not satisfactory – once the school has had the conversation with the parent that they can no longer accept explained sick without medical documentation	