



**Student Attendance Procedures**  
Parent Guidelines

Revised December 2024

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## Introduction - Statement of Purpose

### Introduction - Statement of Purpose

Schools, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. Being at school every day and being on time counts. Regular attendance helps students to:

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

Did you know?

Students are expected to have above a 95% school attendance rate because days missed are years lost. That's why making sure your child comes to school every single day (unless genuinely sick) is so important. (DoE, Every Day Matters).

NSW Department of Education

## Why attendance matters

When your child misses school they miss important opportunities to...



Learn



Make friends



Build skills through fun

[education.nsw.gov.au](http://education.nsw.gov.au)



## Responsibilities and Delegations

### Parents and Carers

- must ensure their children are enrolled in a public or registered non-government school or, they are registered with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for home schooling (appendix 1)
- must ensure their children who are enrolled at school attend every day the school is open for instruction
- work in partnership with the school to plan and implement strategies to support regular attendance, including communicating with the school if they are aware of issues impacting on their child's attendance or engagement with school
- must provide an explanation for absences to the school within 7 days of each individual absence.

### School Staff

- promote regular attendance at school through teaching and learning activities that support the needs of all students
- must maintain accurate records of student attendance including roll marking using appropriate codes and recording absence explanations (see Record Keeping Requirements section)
- must alert their supervisor or principal when there are concerns about student attendance
- when nominated by the principal, liaise with external agencies, arrange referral and coordinate involvement of the school with other services and agencies working with students. Nominated staff provide feedback about outcomes to the principal and the school's attendance team.

## Principal

- must ensure all staff understand their obligations under the policy
- set high expectations for student attendance within their school
- promote regular attendance at school through teaching and learning opportunities that support the needs of all students
- have systems in place to maintain all attendance records including details of transfers and exemptions and make these accessible to the Director Educational Leadership, attendance officers and other personnel nominated by the Secretary of the Department of Education, Executive Director, or Audit directorate
- regularly inform students, parents and carers and the school community, in a language that is understood, of the importance of attending school. A range of resources, including telephone interpreters and translated documents, are available to support this process
- consult with their Director, Educational Leadership and/or Delivery Support, Team Around a School staff where they require additional advice and support around attendance-related concerns
- in determining a threshold for habitual absence, should consider factors such as the student's age, learning support needs, and whether absences are a secondary result of a primary child protection concern (for example, medical neglect, domestic violence or child is a danger to self or others). Principals do not need to wait until absences become significant if they believe they are child protection related. Principals should use the appropriate decision tree in the Mandatory Reporter Guide (MRG)[External link](#) and/or contact the Child Wellbeing Unit (CWU) where appropriate if they believe the student is at suspected risk of significant harm, to receive further guidance and support
- if there are child protection concerns underlying school attendance issues and a student has not been sighted, contact the CWU within 24 hours for advice.

## Home School Liaison Officer

- support schools to manage individual students who have been formally referred for support to the Home School Liaison Program
- assist the school to monitor attendance patterns and to identify students or cohorts in need of support
- support schools to implement school-based strategies to address attendance concerns in partnership with students, parents or carers, and the school community.

(appendix 2)











## Explaining Absences

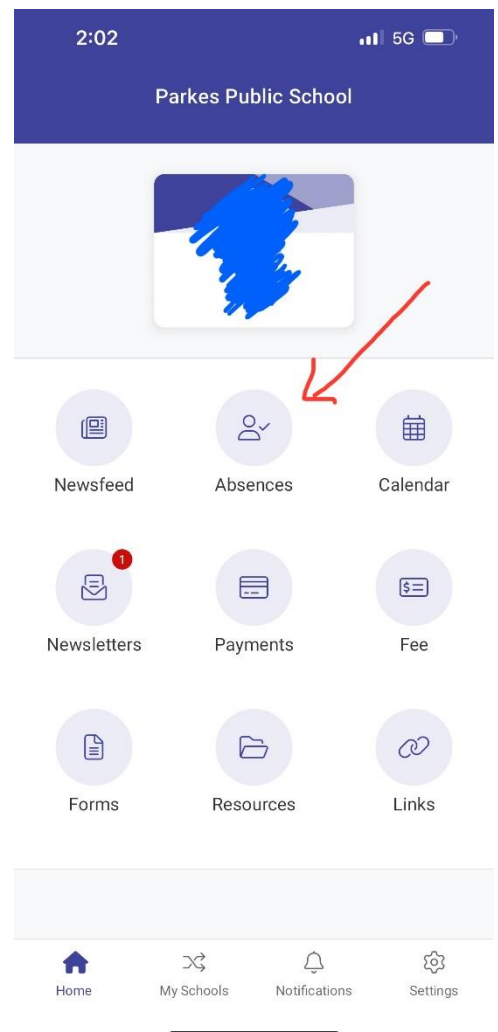
Occasionally absences are unavoidable. When absences do occur parents or carers are required to explain the absences of their children from school promptly. An explanation for absence must be provided to the school within 7 calendar days of the first day of any period of absence.

There are multiple ways you can explain your child's absence from school.

- You can call the school office on (02) 68621702
- You can explain your child's absence by logging in to the Sentral Parent Portal. If you require access to the portal please speak to one of our office staff.

### Detailed Instructions:

1. **Open the Sentral Parent app or portal:** Log in using your credentials. 
2. **Navigate to Absences:** Find and click on the "Absences" section. 
3. **Add a new absence (if it's a future absence or explanation):** Click the "+" button (usually in the top right corner). 
4. **Select the student:** Choose the student for whom you are explaining the absence. 
5. **Select the reason for absence:** Choose the appropriate reason from the list provided. 
6. **Specify the date(s):** Indicate the start and end date of the absence. 
7. **Add comments/details:** Provide a brief explanation for the absence, including any relevant information like who will pick up the student. 
8. **Submit:** Click the "Submit" button to send the explanation to the school. 
9. **If the absence is unexplained or past:** If you are explaining a past absence, locate the absence in the list and follow the prompts to add an explanation. 
10. **If you don't see the absence:** If you cannot locate the absence in the portal, it is recommended to contact the school directly. 



## Explaining Absences

- On the day your child returns to school after an absence you can an absence slip explaining why they were away. If you require additional slips throughout the year, please speak to our office staff.
- On the day your child returns to school after an absence you can send a note explaining why they were away to be handed to their teacher.

Date: _____
_____ of class _____
will be/was absent from school on the following dates: _____
_____
Note from Dr? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Reason:
<input type="checkbox"/> Sick: _____
_____
_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
_____
_____
Signature: _____

## Days missed = years lost

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

When your child misses just...

they miss weeks per year

and years over their school life

**1** day per fortnight  
 = **4** weeks  = Over **1** year missed

**1** day per week  
 = **8** weeks  = Over **2.5** years missed

## Attendance Recognition

### Most Improved Attendance

Awards for the most improved attendance are given out regularly. This allows students who have improved their attendance to be recognised by their peers and the school community.



### Term Recognition

At the end of each term students with 95% attendance and above receive an award and are celebrated during primary and infant assemblies.

Students with 100% attendance receive an award and a treat from the canteen. Some of these treats have been an ice block, a slushie or a hot chocolate.



### Yearly Recognition

Students who obtain 100% attendance for the year are celebrated by the school community with recognition in the newsletter, on the digital signs and a canteen voucher.

## Appendices

1. <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1990-008#sec.21B>
2. <https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2005-0259-02>