

***GLENBROOK  
PUBLIC  
SCHOOL***



***SCHOOL ATTENDANCE:  
POLICY  
&  
PROCEDURES  
2010***

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE: POLICY AND PROCEDURES

### LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Government legislation requires that:

- students between the ages of six and fifteen to be enrolled at a government or registered non-government school;
- student attend school on each day that instruction is provided;
- it is the responsibility of the parent or care-provider of the students to ensure that these obligations are met; and
- absences must be explained within 7 days of the occurrence.

### SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Each school should address attendance as an important component of student welfare and encourage regular school attendance.

Important procedures requires the school to retain:

- **class rolls** for a period of 3 years;
- the **Register of Admission** permanently;
- **student records** for 2 years of student leaving school;
- records of student transfer;
- **notes** from parents or care providers **which explain absences** for 1 year from the date received;
- details of **partial absences**;
- retain copies of all notifications to the Home School Liaison Officer.

Schools are required to;

- develop attendance checking procedures to enable them to identify and assist students with unsatisfactory attendance;
- instigate early and positive intervention measures with poor attenders;
- ensure individual teachers monitor student attendance daily;
- advise parents of attendance requirements at the beginning of each year;
- follow the policy “**Enrolment in NSW Government Schools of Students from Overseas Countries**” when enrolling students from overseas countries;
- only remove a student’s name from the **Attendance Register** when the ‘new’ school requests the **Transfer Certificate** and/or **Student Record** or if a **Certificate of Exemption** has been granted;
- encourage parents to arrange extra curricular activities outside school hours;
- through the principal, to notify the Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO) in the event the school is unable to resolve any case of unsatisfactory attendance, (**A Referral form: Unsatisfactory School Attendance** (Sample Form 2) needs to be completed).

### ATTENDANCE MONITORING AND THE TEACHER

The teacher is responsible for:

- marking the Attendance Register (Roll) daily;
- ensuring that the regular attendance is maintained and inspected;
- adhering strictly to the instructions for marking the Roll printed on the inside cover;

- alerting the principal if no explanation is received from the parent where a student's patterns of attendance gives rise for concern;
- taking action within 2 days of the time they come aware of an unexplained absence.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRINCIPAL**

The principal must:

- establish structures and procedures so that teachers have support when dealing with attendance problems;
- arrange for the sending to parent or care-provider of an **Absentee Notice: Compulsory School Attendance** (Sample For 1) within 2 days of an unexplained absence;
- decide, in a case of unexplained or unjustified school absence:
  - i. what form of school intervention is appropriate; and
  - ii. when a student's absence should be reported to the Home School Liaison Officer. This is done using **Referral Form: Unsatisfactory School Attendance** (Sample Form 2):
- investigate all cases where a student has been absent without satisfactory explanation for more than 3 days in a school term;
- approve leave applications where appropriate;
- ensure that all attendance records are accessible to Director of School Education and Home School Liaison Officers;
- ensure that details of transfers are recorded and made available to the Home School Liaison Officer on request;
- when required by the Director-General (Region) or other approved officer, complete a **Certificate Under Section 123 of the Education Reform Act 1990** (Sample form 3).

## **SCHOOL INTERVENTION IN THE CASE OF POOR ATTENDANCE**

In investigating cases of poor attendance, consideration should be given to any factors relating to the student, the student's family and the school itself, which may be contributing to the poor attendance. These may include:

### **The Student**

- pattern of absences, including poor health;
- academic performance;
- academic potential;
- social integration within the school:
- staff/student relations;
- social integration outside the school; and
- peer pressure.

### **The Student's Family**

- family composition and dynamics; and
- family socio-economic situation.

### **The School**

- relevance of the school curriculum to the student's needs; and

- relationship of the student body to the school administration.

A consideration of these factors in some detail should enable teachers to identify possible reasons for poor attendance and provide a basis for the school to take remedial action.

### **AUTHORISATION OF UNIFORMED POLICE AS A ATTENDANCE OFFICERS**

Uniformed police have the authority to:

- act as attendance officers within the context of the Home School Liaison Program and **Section 122 of the Education Reform Act, 1990;**
- approach a student, even if in the company of an adult, and ask for information relating to the student's name, address and name and address of his/her school;
- accompany a student either to the school or the home; and
- direct the student to return to school if outside the officer's patrol district.

### **TRANSFER OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL TO SCHOOL**

Procedure when a student fails to report involves:

- the principal after 5 days of the intended date of arrival, completes the **T2 Student Failed to Report** (Sample form 5) and returns to the original school;
- the principal, receiving the T2 Student Failed to Report Form, completes after an investigation, a **Referral Form: Unsatisfactory School Attendance** (Sample Form 2) and forwards to the HSLO; and
- not transferring a student under suspension in or out of a government school.

### **EXEMPTIONS FROM SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

Application for leave in excess of 12 school days must be considered as applications for exemption from school attendance.

Exemption may be sought due to:

- domestic necessity;
- health of the student;
- age;
- employment in the entertainment industry;
- extended vacations; and
- overseas trip etc.

General principles for granting exemptions include:

- granting only in the case of exceptional circumstances;
- the fact that the welfare of the student should be paramount in the assessment process;
- the fact that there should be a positive replacement of school activities by other equivalent educational programs; and
- the issuing of a **Certificate of Exemption from School Attendance** which can be withdrawn at any time should the conditions of the Certificate not be met.

### **THE ROLE OF THE HOME SCHOOL LIAISON OFFICER (HSLO)**

While the school retains the major responsibility for overseeing the regular attendance of all students, the HSLO provides a supportive resource to students, parents and schools to encourage the full participation of all students in schooling.

Support provided by the HSLO includes:

- conducting periodic checks on Attendance Registers and other attendance and enrolment information;
- providing advice to Principals and teachers on legislation, policy and procedures relating to attendance;
- liaising with Principals and teachers on attendance problems and other matters that may require direct contact with the home;
- working on cases of non-attendance referred by a school to the Home School Liaison Program;
- liaising with students and parents on attendance issues;
- making home visits where necessary;
- providing assistance to schools in identification of school-based factors contributing to non-attendance;
- assisting schools in the development of a school attendance policy;
- working with Department of Community Services officers where family and welfare issues are present;
- working with uniformed Police Officers in addressing attendance issues.

During school hours officers in the Home School Liaison Program are authorised under Section 122 of the Education Reform Act 1990 to:

- approach any child who is apparently of or above the age of 6 and below the age of 15 and is apparently not in attendance at school as required by this Act;
- request the child to provide to the officer the name and home address, and the name and address of the school attended by the child; and
- accompany the child to his/her home, or to a school, to verify the information provided to the officer by the child.

## **REFERENCES**

NSW Department of School Education, 1991. **“School Attendance: Policy and Procedures.”**