



WALPOLE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Procedures 2015

BACKGROUND

Walpole Primary School recognises that students need to attend school regularly to gain the maximum benefits from schooling. We also acknowledge that early identification and intervention into attendance issues maximises remediation. The School Education Act 1999 (the Act) requires that the student attends on site or in an educational program as directed and approved by the principal.

Consistent attendance and participation at school are essential factors in achieving social and academic learning outcomes. Walpole PS develops a supportive learning environment and an engaging and relevant curriculum which creates conditions conducive to regular school attendance. School procedures are informed by the Department's Attendance Policy.

PROCEDURES

The Principal holds ultimate responsibility for the school's attendance strategy, however, teachers and office staff assist in implementing it in the school.

MONITORING ATTENDANCE

If a student is absent from school for a legitimate reason and appropriate notification/explanation is forthcoming, the school authorises this absence on its records system. The school records the manner of explanation, which can include, written notes, telephone call, SMS messages and so on. If the reason for the absence is accepted as legitimate then it becomes an Authorised absence.

If the frequency and/or number of absences gives the school cause for concern, further action involving, for example, a meeting may be undertaken to address the absences, with the view to remediation.

When a student has been absent from school and an acceptable explanation has not been forthcoming within 5 days, the school requests an explanation for the absence.

It is important to keep a positive relationship with families and to support parents. Where a student's attendance falls below 90 per cent over a term and there is a concern over reasons for non-attendance, the Principal will organise a parent meeting, at the earliest opportunity, to identify the issues related to the non-attendance and plan for improvement.

ATTENDANCE RECORDS

Teachers- keep daily records of attendance and send to the office.

Office Staff- input data to Integris daily and send notes home weekly for follow-up. Office staff issue leave passes that allow students to be readily recognised by the community, police and other agencies when legitimately off school site during school hours. The leave pass is issued in instances such as medical appointments or special activities requiring a student to leave the school during the school day.

The Principal contacts families when reasons for absence are not given or attendance is falling below 90%.

RETENTION OF RECORDS

The school keeps records of all contact, or attempts to make contact, with the students' families. Documentation is kept of all intervention strategies implemented and attempted to restore regular student attendance; and records are retained in accordance with the School Education Regulations 2000 (Regulations) and the Retention and Disposal Schedule for Department of Education School, College and Campus Records.

Individual records of attendance intervention are made in the following manner:

- Attendance is recorded on Integris.
- Letters requesting reason for absence are generated by, and stored on, Integris.
- Individual letters home generated by the Principal are stored on the shared drive and filed in the student's file.

RECORDING LATE ARRIVALS

Late arrivals are documented on Integris and the child takes a late note to the classroom.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES/REWARDS

At Walpole PS a range of strategies are used to ensure that students are engaged and motivated to attend school. These range from intrinsic encouragement through to extrinsic rewards.

Our strategies include:

- Providing an engaging and relevant curriculum.
- Providing a safe and friendly environment in which to play and learn.
- Encouraging the reaching of personal best and individual accountability.

Our rewards include

- Encouragement and praise.
- Class rewards in the form of Dojos, stamps, prizes and notification home.
- School rewards including merit certificates, as well as Aussie of the Month and book awards.

PERSISTENT UNAUTHORISED ATTENDANCE

At Walpole PS, students who are at risk/of concern regarding attendance issues are subject to a range of strategies and measures aimed at restoring acceptable attendance levels. The range of interventions are listed in the section "Pre-Attendance Advisory Panel Checklist". Samples of the letters, case management recording system and recognition certificates are included as an appendix to this document.

Walpole PS follows the Department of Education “Attendance Intervention Flowchart” in dealing with students with any absences. The flowchart is included as an appendix to the document.

FORMAL MEETINGS

If a student has been identified as being an irregular or chronic non-attende and repeated efforts to work with parents to restore attendance have not been successful, the Principal will arrange a meeting with parent/s to develop or revise any attendance improvement plan.

At the formal meeting, the principal will ensure any factors preventing attendance or participation are explored; request the parent engages with alternative strategies to improve attendance, and document a formal attendance improvement plan.

In the eventuality that acceptable attendance is not restored, the Principal may recommend and offer a Responsible Parenting Agreement.

RECOMMENDING AN ATTENDANCE ADVISORY PANEL OR PROSECUTION OF THE PARENT

Where our school’s many strategies have not been successful in securing an improvement in school attendance (or engagement in another educational program); an Attendance Advisory Panel will be offered. The Panel is a group of independent people [convened under S39 of the School Education Act] which considers all efforts and measures made by the school to improve attendance, and also assesses the responses made by the parent/caregiver and child. The Panel is convened with the intention of advising on attendance improvement and recommending attendance improvement. The Panel has the authority to inquire into the reasons for a child’s failure to attend school and also to advise or assist the family to try and restore satisfactory attendance.

Where failure to accept the offer of a Panel or follow advice and engage with assistance provided by a panel persists, the Panel may issue a certificate to commence prosecution procedures pursuant to Section 42 of the School Education Act 1999.

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Date of next review:	August 2018

Revision History		
Date	Author	Reviewed

Sample Letter of Concern: regarding attendance

School Letterhead

Name

Address

Dear

I have recently reviewed student attendance for this term. I have attached a summary of the attendance information for [redacted] that is currently on the school's records.

I am writing because I am concerned about the number of unexplained (U) absences from school that [redacted] has had since the beginning of this term. Students are required to be at school on every day that the school is open and a high number of absences make it difficult for students to achieve to their potential. In the period [redacted] to [redacted], [redacted]'s attendance percentage is [redacted].

I would be happy to talk to you regarding his/her attendance and to discuss any support we can offer. In the meantime please encourage [redacted]'s attendance at school and call or write to the school to explain each absence.

Yours faithfully,

Name

Position

Date

SAMPLE LETTER FROM PRINCIPAL TO PARENT ADVISING OF CONSULTATION WITH NETWORK OR REGIONAL ATTENDANCE OFFICER

School Letterhead

[Parent First Name] [Parent Last Name]
[Address]
[SUBURB] WA [POSTCODE]

Dear [Title] [Parent Last Name]

I am writing regarding the attendance of your son/daughter, [Student Name] at school. The *School Education Act 1999* requires parents to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend school on each day that the school is open for instruction. If children are absent from school, a parent or responsible person must provide the school with an acceptable explanation within three days of the absence. Attendance requirements do not apply for students undertaking home education.

I have previously advised you that [Student Name]'s attendance is a matter of concern. We have tried to work with you and implemented a range of strategies to encourage [Student Name]'s regular attendance at school without success. Strategies attempted include the following:

- [insert a list of strategies offered or attempted here]

I have recently reviewed [Student Name]'s pattern of attendance and it is clear that absences without a good reason being provided are still at an unacceptable level. A summary of absences is attached for your reference. It is very important that we work together to resolve this issue and I intend to consult with [Name and Role of Appropriate Network or Regional Officer], at [Location of Officer] to provide additional support and advice. I will ask the officer to assist me to review the case and provide advice to the school. As part of this process, the officer may contact you directly and arrange a meeting to discuss [Student Name]'s attendance or attend a planning meeting so we can develop further strategies together. If [Student Name]'s attendance does not improve through these strategies, I may ask you to attend a formal meeting to discuss the situation and will advise you in writing if this will happen.

In the event that we are unable to resolve this situation together it may be necessary to refer the matter to the Department's solicitors for legal action. It is important that we work together to resolve the issue.

Yours sincerely

[Principal Name]

Principal

[Date]

Attach. [Attach SIS Lesson Attendance report documenting unauthorised absences]

CC: [Appropriate Network or Regional Officer]

Student Attendance

All policy and procedural statements contained within this document are lawful orders for the purposes of section 80(a) of the Public

Sector Management Act 1994 (WA) and are therefore to be observed by all Department of Education employees.

SAMPLE LETTER FROM PRINCIPAL TO PARENT REGARDING FORMAL MEETING

School Letterhead

[Parent First Name] [Parent Last Name]
[Address]
[SUBURB] WA [POSTCODE]

Dear [Title] [Parent Last Name]

NOTIFICATION OF FORMAL MEETING REQUIRED

I am writing regarding the attendance of your son/daughter, [Student Name] at school. The *School Education Act 1999* requires parents to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend school on each day that the school is open for instruction unless there is good reason for them not to attend. If students are absent, a parent or responsible person is required to provide the school with an acceptable explanation within three days of the absence. Parents who fail to ensure that their children attend school regularly or who fail to provide satisfactory explanations for absences may be committing a serious offence. The maximum penalty is \$1 000 for each offence.

I have previously advised you that [Student Name]'s attendance is a matter of great concern. I have also consulted with [Name and Role of Network or Regional Officer] to provide additional advice and support and develop alternative strategies with us to improve the situation. I am very concerned that [Student Name]'s attendance is still at an unacceptable level and that we need to work together to resolve this issue.

I am now asking you to attend a formal meeting to discuss this matter. At this meeting it will be important for you to talk about any problems that might be preventing [Student Name]'s attendance. A plan will be developed with you to improve [Student Name]'s attendance and it will be expected you take all reasonable steps to ensure your child attends school.

[Name of Organising Officer] will be contacting you shortly to arrange the formal meeting. Alternatively you may wish to make contact on telephone number [Phone Number]. It is very important that you attend the formal meeting and work closely with the school to avoid the matter being referred to the Department's solicitors for legal action.

Yours sincerely

[Name of Principal]
PRINCIPAL
[Date]

Student Attendance

All policy and procedural statements contained within this document are lawful orders for the purposes of section 80(a) of the Public Sector Management Act 1994 (WA) and are therefore to be observed by all Department of Education employees.

Pre-Attendance Advisory Panel Checklist

Student details: Name, date of birth and year level	Parent(s) details:
School level case manager:	

Strategies applied to date: (Not all strategies will be appropriate. *List date(s) action taken*)

Strategies	Used	Comments / Not Applicable
School policies and procedures documented		
Telephone calls to parents/caregiver		
Teacher mentoring		
Student peer mentoring / shadowing		
Parent/caregiver/student interview		
Attendance reward system applied		
Modified timetable or learning program		
Documented attendance improvement plan		
School Psychologist/Chaplain involvement		
School case conference		
Interagency case conference		
Letters sent to parent/caregiver		
Home visit by Badged Attendance Officer		
Police / CPFS involvement		
Consultation with regional Attendance Coordinator or Engagement & transitions Manager		
Alternative education arrangements considered		
Convening of formal meeting		
Offering of Responsible Parenting Agreement		

Other strategies implemented:

ATTENDANCE ACTION SHEET

Homeroom Teacher	:			Homeroom	:	
Student's Name	:					
Year Coordinator	:		Date Referred	:		

LEVEL OF ACTION TAKEN

<i>Homeroom Teacher</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Check (✓)</i>	<i>Year Coordinator</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Check (✓)</i>
Phone calls			Student Interview		
Messages left/Contact returned			Phone calls		
Letters of Concern			Letter 1		
Absentee Note			Home Visit		
All contact entered on SIS			Letter 2		
Absence explained			Formal meeting		
Attendance improved			Attendance Improvement Plan		
Referral to Year Coordinator			Letter 3		
			Formal Meeting Regional		
			Modified Timetable		
			Letter 4		
			Responsible Parenting Agreement		
			Panel		

Data Entry

DATE	SUMMARY

Student Attendance Intervention - Individual Student Overview

Agencies involved or contacted	<input type="checkbox"/> Albany Regional Office - Attendance Coordinator. <input type="checkbox"/> Albany Regional Office - ETM / Participation <input type="checkbox"/> Albany Regional Office - Aboriginal Education <input type="checkbox"/> School Psychology Services <input type="checkbox"/> DCP <input type="checkbox"/> CAMHS <input type="checkbox"/> headspace <input type="checkbox"/> Kids Central <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Connections <input type="checkbox"/> Family GP <input type="checkbox"/> Reconnect <input type="checkbox"/> Strong Families <input type="checkbox"/> Police <input type="checkbox"/> Palmerston <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal Health <input type="checkbox"/> Wanslea <input type="checkbox"/> Other -
Interagency case management	<input type="checkbox"/> No - reasons: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes - [names] Outcomes - actions
Continuing impediments	
Successes	
Resolution	



Individual Attendance Plan

Student		Year:
Attendance Rate:		Date Range:
Reasons for attendance issues		
<input type="checkbox"/> Illness <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health <input type="checkbox"/> Transport <input type="checkbox"/> Family carer <input type="checkbox"/> Low value of education <input type="checkbox"/> Homelessness	<input type="checkbox"/> Bullying <input type="checkbox"/> Mistreatment <input type="checkbox"/> Family violence <input type="checkbox"/> School Refusal <input type="checkbox"/> Social difficulties	<input type="checkbox"/> Injury <input type="checkbox"/> Family/own transience <input type="checkbox"/> Family dysfunction <input type="checkbox"/> Substance <input type="checkbox"/> Learning Disability
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please describe):		
School-based actions		
<input type="checkbox"/> Regular / daily attendance checks <input type="checkbox"/> Family contact in instance of non-attendance <input type="checkbox"/> Modified curriculum <input type="checkbox"/> AIEO/School Mentor/contact person allocated <input type="checkbox"/> Positive recognition for attendance <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please describe):		
Partners and Support Networks who will support this plan		
<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom teacher[s] <input type="checkbox"/> Principal or Deputy <input type="checkbox"/> Student/peer	<input type="checkbox"/> School-based Mentor <input type="checkbox"/> Chaplain	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Carer <input type="checkbox"/> AIEO
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please list): 1.		
Support groups and Agencies		
<input type="checkbox"/> Albany Regional Office - ETM /Aboriginal Education/Psych Services <input type="checkbox"/> DCP <input type="checkbox"/> headspace <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Connections <input type="checkbox"/> Reconnect <input type="checkbox"/> Police	<input type="checkbox"/> CAMHS <input type="checkbox"/> Kids Central <input type="checkbox"/> Family GP <input type="checkbox"/> Strong Families <input type="checkbox"/> Palmerston <input type="checkbox"/> Wanslea <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal Health	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please list):		
Review Date:		
Parent/Carer:	Teacher:	Principal:

Attendance Intervention Flowchart

