

TUGGERAH PUBLIC SCHOOL
Attendance Policy
Update – August 2017



At Tuggerah Public School we strive to have all of our students attend school each day. Rolls are marked every day by the classroom teacher who has the class for the first hour of the teaching day. When students are absent from school they are required by law to produce a note from their parents with a suitable reason for their absence. If a note is not produced within 7 school days from the first day of absence, or at the time the child returns, the absence is declared as 'unjustified' (**Taken from the DoE Attendance Policy: 4.2.3**) and a note is generated by the classroom teacher and sent home to be filled out. If no explanation is forthcoming upon return to school, the classroom teacher will contact the parent/carer and seek an explanation.

If a student has an unexplained absence of 2 days, it is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to make contact with the student's home to get a verbal reason for why the child is absent from school, no later than the second day of absence. This is to ensure there are no child wellbeing issues. **Taken from the DoE Attendance Policy: 4.1.2** Principals or their delegate will undertake all reasonable measures to contact parents promptly and within a maximum of two school days of an unexplained absence occurring.

At Tuggerah Public School, regular attendance is regarded as an important component in the achievement of student learning outcomes. Measures to establish acceptable attendance patterns include:

- acknowledging and encouraging good attendance
- early detection of poor attendance, and
- prompt, positive intervention measures.

Tuggerah Public School recognises and values the benefits of positive home/school relationships and seeks to involve parents in developing and maintaining the strategies that support the development of positive patterns of attendance for all students. Parent and care giver support will be sought in developing and maintaining the Attendance Policy, (in accordance with the Department of Education Attendance Policy [25/03/2016](#)).

Notes regarding attendance should be retained by the school for 2 years. The school will inform parents of attendance policies and procedures at the beginning of each new school year and include periodic reminders in the newsletter.

Procedures for Recording and Monitoring Attendance

1. Class Roll

- Class rolls will be maintained by the classroom teacher.
- The roll will be marked electronically using the Sentral Attendance Package daily within the first hour of the teaching day.
- If a casual teacher is on the class, a paper roll will be used and data transported into Sentral by the SAO.
- Rolls will be kept within school records for 3 Years. If a child has an accident requiring an accident report all attendance records should be retained until the child turns 25 years of age.
- Information detailing the student's absences each year should be kept on the student's file until 7 years after the student has left.
- Rolls will be available for inspection and use by Departmental officers in accordance with regulations.
- As this document is a legal document, its compilation should be professional and accurate. Only the approved codes listed in the Attendance Register Codes are to be used.
- Reasons for absences offered by parents or guardians should be provided in writing and will also be accepted via email, TPS APP or class Dojo. **Teachers may accept a verbal reason from parents provided they make a written notation (signed and dated) to add to their note file.**

- All notes explaining absences must be kept for two years from the date of receipt.

NB: At the end of the school year all class rolls and absence notes are to be sent to the Administrative staff for secure storage.

2. Change of Attendance Records

Removals/additions/corrections will be carried out by the class teacher. Names of students who leave the school to attend another school will be removed from the roll only when confirmation of enrolment at the new school has been received. This confirmation would be in the form of a transfer request from a government school or confirmation from an Executive member of a non-government school.

The HSLO is to be contacted if a student has received a transfer certificate and no request for Personal Record Card has been received after 10 days or if there has been a previous school intervention.

3. Early Leavers

Students will not leave school grounds without prior permission of the Principal or Delegate.

Students who leave before normal completion time must:

- Be collected from the school by a parent/caregiver or by a responsible adult who has written permission from the parent/caregiver to collect the child. (If the person is unknown to the administration staff an additional phone call to the parent/carer may be required and a ID challenge may be requested.)

The person responsible for collecting the student must call at the front office and sign an early release form, which will be retained as per other attendance notes.

4. Excursions/Sporting and Other Visits

Students attending off site Departmental activities/programs are to be marked as present, but on School Business.

At School Carnivals, rolls are marked in the usual way. Similarly, all Stewart House visits to be recorded on Students Record Card with dates.

5. Illness

Students who are ill and need to be sent home (with the permission of the Principal) will have the parent/caregiver sign an Early Release Note at the time of departure.

6. Lateness

Students who arrive after the bell must report to the office and follow the procedures set out below:

- Collect a printed late slip that is issued by the School Administrative Staff.
- Promptly proceed to class and present the late pass to the class teacher and/or Executive.

Details of all late arrival should be noted in the Sentral system by the School Administrative Officer and checked by the classroom teacher. The responsibility of ensuring the accuracy of classroom roles is the classroom teacher.

Parent/caregivers of persistent latecomers will be contacted by the class teacher and/or executive member.

Notes of explanation for lateness are filed with absence note

Verbal / Phone / Dojo reports of student absence from the parent must be recorded in the Sentral system and on a notification slip signed and dated by the classroom teacher.

7. Special Circumstances

- School refusers and students returning to school from extended absences need support. The classroom teacher may arrange a case conference through the Learning Support Team, this may also include the Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO).
- Strike / Industrial Action Disputes
Executive staff will enact roll marking procedures. Students who are absent from school will be classed as on 'leave', a special circumstance register is to be completed. If it is only a half day action and the student is away from the whole day a note will be requested as the child is to attend school after the action is complete.

Taken from the DoE Policy

4 Attendance Registers (rolls)

4.4 Special circumstance registers

4.4.1 Attendance registers must be maintained each day the school is open with the exception of:

- days on which there is part or full day industrial action involving teachers
- approved school development days
- days on which the school is inaccessible due to natural occurrences such as fire or flood. Principals should consult with regional personnel prior to deciding that a school is inaccessible.

4.4.2 Special circumstance registers are to be maintained on days as outlined in DoE Student Attendance in Government Schools Procedures 12.1. They should:

- specify the dates and times of the variation
- indicate the reason for the variation
- list students attending on that day
- be signed by the teacher maintaining the register
- be permanently attached to attendance registers (rolls).

4.4.3 For schools maintaining a manual attendance register (roll), a broken line must be ruled through that day's column and the notation 'Roll not marked - see special circumstance register' recorded within.

4.4.4 Electronic attendance registers (rolls) will automatically display a 'school development day' message on school development days. A similar notation must be made on hard copies of electronic attendance registers regarding other reasons for maintaining a special circumstance register (eg industrial action or school closure due to fire or flood).

4.4.5 Absences on these days are not to be recorded on student record cards or counted as absences for statistical purposes.

8. Variations in Routine

Exemptions from School Attendance (refer School Attendance Policy and Procedures 1991 Pg.24).

Exemption forms are available online and is completed by the Principal or delegate as stated in the School Attendance Policy.

Taken from the DoE Policy

4.2 Principals:

4.2.6 have the authority to grant:

- sick leave to students whose absences are satisfactorily explained as being due to illness

- an exemption from school attendance for periods totalling up to 100 days in a 12 month period for any one student
- part-day exemptions from school for periods totalling up to 100 days in a twelve month period (See Statements 1.3.2 and 1.3.3 of the [Exemption from School - Procedures](#)).

Specific Codes

Symbol	Meaning	Change in definition and description for 2015
A	The student's absence is unexplained or unjustified.	The revised description reinforces that 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.	Clarifies that the principal 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.	Now includes travel in Australia and overseas. The 15 day limit on the use of this code for an individual student in a year has been removed.
M	The student was exempted from attending school and a Certificate of Exemption has been issued by a delegated officer.	Family holidays are no longer an accepted category for exemption from school attendance. This is now recorded as leave using symbol 'L'.
F	The student is participating in a flexible timetable and not present because they are not required to be at school.	Now includes Kindergarten students participating in Best Start assessments and senior students in exam periods.
H	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.	Applies to students who are enrolled in a school but are required or approved to be attending an alternative educational setting.
B	The student is absent from the school on official school business.	The inclusion of student participation in international student exchange.

Tuggerah Public School Attendance Monitoring Process

If a teacher is concerned about a student's attendance they should speak with DPSW.

Parent contact is advised for:

- continued partial attendance
- patterns of attendance e.g – Most Friday's are absent
- 2 consecutive/non-consecutive absences with no home contact

All phone calls made should be positive, friendly and focus on what we can do as a school to help resolve attendance issues. It is important to thank the parent for their time and for working with us in delivering a quality education for their child.

- Students with 98% attendance and above (excluding history of late arrival or early departure) will receive an Attendance Award each semester. These students will be acknowledged in the School Newsletter and the Awards will be sent home with reports.

Attendance Notification Procedure

- Class teacher to provide an Absent Note Reminder Slip (if student does not return with a note from carer explaining absence) following Day 1. Note sent is logged on Sentral.
- Follow up communication – dojo, phone, email, face to face on Day 2. This to be recorded on Sentral.
- Class teachers to inform DPSW on Day 3 of unjustified absence and DPSW to confirm above procedure followed and contact family.

85% and below:

- HSLO meets with DPSW fortnightly and list of students 85% and below are identified.
- DPSW confirms if contact has been sought and recorded on Sentral by class teachers.
- DPSW to contact - Phone call home (Informal interview) – meeting recorded in the system even if no contact could be made. If contact can be made, DPSW to contact emergency contacts.
- Interview student
- Letters home – requesting an explanation of absences and possible medical certificate
- Check attendance on Sentral for previous year's data to see if there were any previous concerns with attendance.
- If attendance is an issue, students referred to the LST using the TPS Attendance Referral.
- The LST may implement an attendance plan, Learning Support Plan or seek specialist APLAS advice.
- DPSW to monitor students and ensure all CT s are making parent contact and data entered into Sentral.
- At executive meetings attendance is reviewed and discussed on a regular basis

If the matter of below 85% attendance is not resolved:

- The DPSW will report to the Principal – to ensure process is being followed by departmental standards.
- Issue of an attendance letter along with a copy of the child's attendance requesting information.
- Make parental contact and invite the parent to the school for an interview.
- Principal to evaluate: Possible CWU referral re educational neglect and or Police Welfare Check
- If unresolved DPSW will refer the child to the LST for possible access to the School Counsellor.

- The DPSW will add attendance notes to Sentral.
- At this point strategies will be discussed at length and possible educational implications and further actions.

If there is no success from the previous action:

HSLO Referral is to be completed by the Principal and submitted to Gosford Office.
The student will then be monitored by the CT, AP, DPSW & P for an unspecified period.

If a HSLO Referral is to be completed by the Principal and submitted to Gosford Office the following items should have been completed:

- Student interviewed and meeting recorded into Sentral .
- Parents Interviewed and meeting recorded into Sentral.
- Emergency contact called if necessary.
- Student referred to the LST – Meeting notes may be required.
- Motivational Scales included.(DPSW)
- School Counsellor comments.
- Environmental checklist conducted and strategies implemented.
- Health Care Plan developed if appropriate.
- Access to LaST and notes of intervention.
- Check to ensure we are meeting the National Disability Standards.
- Have we adjusted the curriculum to meet the specific needs of the student?
- Aboriginal Educational Officer required for the intervention.
- Does the student have a PLP in place?
- In school strategies implemented – Modified work, mentor, transition program.

Gosford Office

- Distance Ed discussion
- Access to APLAS
- Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer (ACLO)
- Learning and Wellbeing Officer
- Access Request for specialised placement
- Access Request for Funding Support

Outside Agencies

- Mental Health, Psychologist, psychiatrist, GP, Specialist, Health Care Plan (Circle)
- FACS Event Number / Outcome: _____
- CWU Event Number / Outcome: _____
- Family support agencies: _____
- Counselling: _____
- Police Welfare Check/Missing Event Number/Outcome: _____

Alternative Programs

- _____
- _____

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's Strategic Directions each year to remain aligned to updated policies and procedures issued by the Department of Education.