



# ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES



## **POLICY UPDATE**

<b>POLICY</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>BY WHOM</b>
<b>Attendance</b>	18 July 2017	Leonie Martin

## **RATIONALE**

Recent research clearly shows the need to engage students and establish positive attendance behaviours in the early years of schooling and to raise parent and community awareness of the fact that, where academic achievement is concerned, every day counts. West Greenwood Primary School recognises that students need to attend school on a regular basis to gain the maximum benefit from schooling in order to optimise their life opportunities. At West Greenwood Primary School we understand that for maximum transfer of knowledge 95% percent attendance is necessary. Attendance rates lower than 95% could impact on student performance.

At West Greenwood Primary School there is an expectation that once enrolled, students will attend on a regular basis, and positive attendance patterns should be fostered.

## **GUIDELINES**

### **NOTIFICATION**

The School Education Act 1999 requires that an explanation of a student's absence is provided within three school days from the start of the absence.

Parents can notify the school on the day the student is absent, either in person, by phone, email or a written note. All records will be maintained electronically on Integris. There is no requirement for teachers to keep written notes or emails.

## **RECORDING ATTENDANCE**

West Greenwood Primary School will ensure that accurate attendance records are kept for each student enrolled at the school. This includes recording attendance at both morning (by 8:45am) and afternoon (by 1:15) sessions for all students. See **Appendix 1** for codes to be used. Teachers will enter a note into the 'notes' section on Integris to give further information about the absence and initial the entry.

A student who arrives after 8:40 am must report to the office to get a 'Late Slip' to take to their classroom teacher. This will be recorded as L (Late) on Integris by office staff.

School Office staff will also be responsible for entering notes into Integris, when phone calls, or emails are received through Reception.

If a student attends for any continuous 2 hour block before 12:30pm or after 12:30pm then it is considered that they are present. Students who arrive late but still meet this requirement are recorded as late and not included as a half-day absence.

Students who are on an excursion, participating in an off campus program or in some other school-approved activity are **not** to be counted as absent.

Students on suspension are to be recorded as absent during the period of suspension. The code Z will automatically appear on Integris.

Attendance records will be kept in electronic form and will be kept for a period of seven years.

## **MONITORING ATTENDANCE**

Teaching staff should make a habit of checking the previous week's records, to ensure data entered is up to date and accurate.

Admin will conduct random checks of Integris data to ensure notes are being entered by staff and to assist in the follow up of any ongoing unexplained absences.

When a student has been absent from school for two days and an acceptable explanation has not been forthcoming, the classroom teacher will contact the student's family to establish the reasons for non-attendance. If they are unable to make contact they will inform admin.

If a student's attendance rate falls below 90% over a ten-week period, the West Greenwood Primary School Deputy Principal will inform parents of the child's attendance status in writing.

If a student's attendance rate falls below 80% over a ten-week period, the West Greenwood Primary School Deputy Principal will further investigate the reasons why the student is not attending school.

West Greenwood Primary School will use a case management approach for attendance issues, resulting in an Attendance Plan being written to assist improvement, if deemed necessary. This will be monitored by the SAER coordinator

West Greenwood Primary School will consult with all stakeholders, and access support from other community groups and agencies if required.

Prior to making a formal referral to the school attendance officer, West Greenwood Primary School will make informal contact with the school attendance officer.

West Greenwood Primary School will keep detailed records of all contact, or attempts to make contact, with the student's family and the intervention strategies implemented to restore a student's attendance. This documentation will need to be made available to the school attendance officer and/or the School Attendance Panel.

## **DATA COLLECTIONS**

West Greenwood Primary School will present attendance data to the School Board periodically, as well as in the Annual Report.

## **STRATEGIES USED TO ENHANCE ATTENDANCE AT WEST GREENWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

In accordance with the Better Schools: Brighter Futures Policy schools are responsible for promoting to parents the importance of their children not missing school and by providing safe and welcoming learning environments. The following strategies are implemented to enhance attendance;

1. Target setting through DoE processes. In particular, cohorts identified by the previous year's data.
2. Telephone call home from class teacher after 2 days of unexplained absences.
3. Letters sent to parents once per term asking for an explanation of unexplained absence.
4. Attendance letters for indicated, moderate and severe at-risk attendees that highlight the child's attendance compared to West Greenwood PS expectation of 95% once per term.
5. Engaging and motivating curriculum.
6. Notifying the community about attendance issues in regular newsletter updates.
7. A case management approach wrapping additional support around students having attendance issues.
8. In addition to the above, West Greenwood PS staff will not provide work packages to students taking vacations during the school term, as this is seen as a way of supporting the absence.

## **APPENDICES**

1. Lesson Attendance Codes for Integris

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **LESSON ATTENDANCE CODES**

/ - Present code, this is the default setting in Lesson Attendance.

#### **E - Educational Activity**

This code should be used when the student is participating in an approved educational program off school site, where they HAVE NOT reported to school first. such as a PEAC excursion or high school orientation day.. This code is not classified as an absence. **L - Late**

To be used when a student is late to school but is not late enough to be recorded as a half day absence. This code is not classified as an absence.

#### **Codes for Authorised Absences**

##### **R - Reasonable Cause**

This code should be used when the principal has deemed the reason provided as acceptable other than an absence due to suspension, cultural absence, illness or family holiday (See code options below). Examples may include moving house or a death in the family. Teachers should use their professional judgment in determining reasonable cause and seek clarification from admin if in doubt.

##### **C - Cultural Absence**

Absences authorised for cultural or religious significance to the family. This leave must be discussed with the classroom teacher

##### **N - Notified as Sick**

Applied to a student whose reason for absence is due to illness. The principal may request a medical certificate.

##### **Z - Suspended**

This code is automatically recorded in Lesson Attendance by the Behaviour Module when a student is formally suspended. Schools do not have to record attendance for students when they are on suspension. This code is classified as an authorised absence.

#### **Codes for Unauthorised Absences**

##### **U - Absence – cause not yet established**

To be used when a student is initially absent from school and no explanation has yet been provided. Further follow up is required to establish a reason for the absence and once obtained, the code should be changed accordingly. Teachers should routinely audit a previous week's data to check for any ongoing unexplained absences.

##### **K - Unauthorised Vacation**

This code identifies students whose parents have taken them on an in term holiday.

##### **X - Unacceptable Reason**

This code is used when the school has sought an explanation but the response from the parent is not considered reasonable. Teachers entering this code should seek clarification from admin, so that the matter can be followed up with the parents.