

Attendance Policy and Procedures

Reviewed and updated: 24th July, 2024

Policy Statement

Section 22 of the Education Act (1990) states that it is the duty of the parent of a child of compulsory school age to enrol their child at, and to attend, a government school or a registered non-government school, or to be registered for home schooling with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESE) and to receive instruction in accordance with the conditions to which the registration is subject.

All students who are enrolled at school, regardless of their age, are expected to attend that school whenever instruction is provided.

Section 24 of the Act requires principals to maintain an attendance register (roll) in a form approved by the Minister. Attendance registers must be available for inspection during school hours by a Board Inspector or by an authorised person.

Context

Condell Park Public School believes regular attendance at school is essential to assist students to maximise their potential. We, in partnership with parents, promote the regular attendance of students.

Responsibilities & Delegations

Students

Students are required to:

- attend school each day unless there is an acceptable reason for absence
- make every day count in their learning
- report to the office if arriving to school after 9am
- never leave school grounds during school hours without permission from parents/carers and the school.

Parents

It is the duty of the parent of a child enrolled at Condell Park Public School to ensure their child attends school. Parents are required to:

- ensure their child arrives to school on time each day.
- explain the absences of their child from school promptly and within seven (7) days of the first day of any period of absence. This can be done by speaking to their child's classroom teacher, phoning the school, indicating the absence using School Bytes or responding to the absence email sent to families.
- provide the school with a medical certificate on the third (3rd) day of illness. If a medical certificate is not provided the absence will be recorded as unjustified.
- inform the school of any planned leave (both short and extended) during the school term.

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- inform the school if they need any support with fulfilling their responsibilities outlined with these policies and procedures. This may include initiating and attending meetings to seek support and discuss their child's attendance and participation.

School

Condell Park Public School is required to:

- undertake all reasonable measures to contact parents on the same day of an absence where parents have not contacted the school. Contact will be made by email through School Bytes.
- ensure their attendance records are maintained in an approved format and are an accurate record of the attendance of students.
- contact families of students with three (3) consecutive unexplained absences.
- provide clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance.
- ensure the school has effective measures in place to monitor and follow up student absences.
- seek approval to contact the student's doctor so the school has all relevant information regarding the student's health care needs.
- ensure that any matter relating to school attendance where safety, welfare or wellbeing concerns arise for a student are addressed in line with department procedures. This includes making reports to the Community Service Child Protection Helpline or contacting the Child Wellbeing unit as required.
- develop strategies to ensure regular attendance at school.
- ensure school staff are provided with information on attendance requirements and their obligation to monitor and promote regular attendance at school.
- work with attendance officers to monitor the regular attendance of students to develop and implement strategies to support students with identified attendance issues.

Attendance Motivator (AM)

The Attendance Motivator (AM) is required to:

- contact families of targeted students who drop below 80% after HSLO procedures have been initiated and explain the AM reward system.
- develop a relationship with the targeted student and their families.
- make weekly contact with families to discuss progress.
- communicate any important information to the Principal's delegate and the targeted student's classroom teacher.

Principal's Delegate

The principal's delegate are required to:

- support classroom teachers and Assistant Principals to implement the Attendance Policy and Procedures.
- complete a roll check every two (2) weeks to monitor whole school attendance and ensure the Attendance Policy and Procedures are implemented correctly across the school.
- initiate HSLO procedures when a student's attendance drops below 85%.
- meet with the HSLO as required.
- support the Attendance Motivator.
- monitor and update the automated attendance communications on School Bytes.

Principal

The principal or their delegate have the authority to:

- grant sick leave to students whose absences are satisfactorily explained as being due to illness.
- accept other explanations for absence and record the absence as leave.
- decline to accept an explanation for absence and record the absence as unjustified.

Justified Reasons for an Absence

On occasion, your child may need to be absent from school. The Department of Education states that justified reasons for student absences may include:

- being sick, or having an infectious disease – a medical certificate should be provided to the school on the third (3rd) day of absence.
- having an unavoidable medical appointment – these appointments should be made outside of school hours. If this is not possible, students should attend school before and after their appointment.
- being required to attend a recognised religious holiday – the Department of Education allows one justified absence per religious holiday.
- exceptional or urgent family circumstance (e.g. attending a funeral).

All these absences must be explained to the school through the forementioned methods. If the purpose for leave falls outside of these reasons, the absence will be recorded as ‘unjustified’.

Travel

Families are encouraged to travel during school holidays. If travel during school term is necessary, discuss this with the school. An application for Extended Leave may need to be completed. Absences relating to travel will be marked as leave on the roll and therefore contribute to your child’s total absences for the year.

In some circumstances, students may be eligible to enrol in distance education for travel periods over 50 school days. This should be discussed with the school.

Whole School Attendance Procedures

If...	Then...
a student is sick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● a parent or carer should inform the school. ● the school will record the absence as ‘sick’. ● on the third day of illness, a medical certificate should be provided to the school office or the absence will be recorded as unjustified.
a student has an infectious disease	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● this must be confirmed by a medical professional. ● a medical certificate must be supplied to the school office. ● the office will inform families when the student can return to school. This may be under the guidance of the medical professional (as displayed on the medical certificate) or relevant infectious disease information guidelines. ● the office will communicate appropriate information to the school community about the infectious disease.
a student has an unavoidable medical appointment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● all efforts should be made by the family to move this appointment outside of school hours. ● the family should contact the office to inform them of the medical appointment and times at which the appointment takes place. ● students should attend school before and/or after their appointment. If a student has a whole day absence, it could be recorded as unjustified.
a student is required to attend a recognised religious holiday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the family should contact the office to inform them of the religious holiday.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the student will be given one (1) day justified absence. any other absences will be recorded as unjustified.
a student has an exceptional or urgent family circumstance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the family should contact the office to inform them of the circumstance. all efforts should be made for students to return to school when possible. the absence will be recorded as either justified or unjustified, depending on the circumstance.
a student is required to take extended leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the family should contact the office to request extended leave. the family will need to complete an Extended Leave Travel Form and provide the school with the itinerary (including flight details). the school will provide a letter informing the family of whether the extended leave has been approved or not. if the leave is for more than 50 school days, alternative schooling arrangements will need to be made through distance education or a school at the destination of leave. the school will not provide any schoolwork for students on extended leave.
a student has three (3) consecutive unexplained absences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the classroom teacher will phone the family and request an explanation of the absence. The teacher will advise the family of the appropriate actions depending on the reason for absence. the teacher will make a record on the student file using School Bytes.
a student arrives after 9am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> they should report to the front office with the adult dropping them to school to explain the reason for being late. if the student reports to the office without an adult, the family will be informed and a reason will be requested. the lateness will be recorded as a partial absence.
a student leaves before 3pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a parent should report to the front office and provide the reason for leaving early. the early departure is recorded as a partial absence and will be recorded as either 'justified' or 'unjustified'.
a student drops below 90% attendance in a term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the classroom teacher will contact the family to discuss reasons for non-attendance and reiterate the importance of regular attendance. the classroom teacher will start a class reward for improved attendance. the classroom teacher will inform their supervisor and principal's delegate of the student and interventions being made. all communications and interventions will be recorded on School Bytes in 'Notes' > 'Attendance'.
a student drops below 85% in a term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Principal's delegate will send Letter 1a to the student's family – one note home with child and another mailed to family. the Principal's delegate will monitor attendance of student and initiate contact with the family if no improvement seen. At this meeting, attendance concerns will be discussed and strategies devised to be implemented. the classroom teacher will monitor student attendance on a LAMP sheet over a period of 20 days. if attendance does not significantly improve, the principal's delegate will contact the HSLO.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● all communications and interventions will be recorded on School Bytes in 'Notes' > 'Attendance'.
a student drops below 80%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● the actions for <85% should have been initiated.● Attendance Motivator (AM) will contact family and begin to develop relationships with the family.● the AM will develop a relationship with the student and introduce the appropriate attendance reward system.● the classroom teacher will continue to record on the LAMP sheet.● the principal's delegate will ensure the LAMP sheet is updated and HSLO is contacted if no significant improvement is seen.● the AM will continue to work with the students and their families to improve attendance. Contact will be made weekly.● all communications and interventions will be recorded on School Bytes in 'Notes' > 'Attendance'.

