

## Student Attendance

### Aim

This document aims to provide teachers, parents and community members with an understanding of the school processes to ensure that every student has the opportunity to attend school regularly. The school will record and monitor students' attendance, encourage regular attendance and improve poor attendance.

### Responsibilities

#### **Parents/Carers must ensure they:**

- Understand the legal requirements and educational necessity for regular school attendance.
- Accept help from the school and HSLO to overcome student attendance issues.
- Provide documentation explaining the reason for a student's absence within 7 days from the first day of any period of absence through means such as a telephone call, written note or email.
- Ensure they attend the office when picking up students early or dropping off students who are late to school.
- When possible, provide a written note of explanation prior to students being away – complete an 'Application for Extended Leave' form available from the office.
- Provide a valid medical certificate if a child is absent for more than three days due to illness or injury.
- Work in partnership with the school to plan and implement strategies to support regular attendance at school. This includes communicating with the school if they are aware of issues impacting on their child's attendance or engagement with school. ...

**Staff must:**

- Provide a caring, stimulating and successful learning environment which will encourage students' regular attendance.
- Maintain accurate records and carefully, efficiently and effectively monitor students' attendance.
  - Office staff will provide each staff member with a large orange envelop each term for collecting late slips and sick notes.
- Check parent communication via email at 8:30am each morning and mark accordingly.
- Ensure the roll is marked promptly each morning – by 9:15am.
- Ensure absence notes received are promptly recorded as per DET guidelines (e.g. L=leave) on the roll, stored securely and sent to the office at the end of the school year.
- Student attendance concerns discussed weekly in Stage meetings
- On special days (carnivals etc.) when parents sign students out early, liaise with the office staff so the electronic roll can be updated with the time the student left.
- Staff send out weekly unexplained absence letters for students with current unexplained absences.
- If a student is absent for more than 3 days without explanation staff will follow up with parents and notify the relevant attendance officer.
- Teachers going on school excursions are to photocopy class rolls and give a copy to the office prior to leaving. Administrative staff will immediately enter the attendance on Sentral
- Teachers will record verbal notifications of absence in writing and adjust the roll.
- Assistant Principals will run through attendance procedures with teams annually to ensure everyone understands roles and responsibilities
- In Weeks 6 and 10, Assistant Principals will analyse the attendance data sent out by the Attendance Officer and will contact parents to discuss concerns. A follow up email will be sent to parents with information on the importance of good attendance.

**The Attendance Officer must:**

- Regularly oversee the accurate recording of students' attendance
- The Attendance Officer will monitor rolls at 5 weekly intervals in Weeks 6 & 10 each term and bring any concerns (an attendance pattern of less than 90%) to the attention of the Learning Support Team, the Assistant Principals, the Principal and the HSLO (if required).
- Communicates with staff unexplained absences or attendance concerns every 5 weeks and send letters home to parents if concerns are still raised
- Check roll irregularities in week 6 and 10 and support teachers to amend the roll
- The Attendance Officer will track improved attendance for students with a previous attendance of below 90% and send names of students to the office to send out a SchoolBytes email to the parents to commend the improved attendance
- Attendance data will be updated fortnightly in Learning Support Meetings
- Liaise with the Principal, Learning Support team and the HSLO (Home School Liaison Officer) when attendance becomes an issue.
- In the event that a student becomes an attendance concern, the following strategies will be applied at the Attendance Supervisor's discretion;
  - Discussions with the student and teacher
  - Contact/meeting with Parent
  - Referral to HSLO
  - All records will be maintained so that they are easily accessible for the HSLO.

**The Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO) will:**

- Provide the school with support in its endeavours to improve school attendance.

**Administration staff must:**

- Record absence reasons if contacted by parents in Sentral
- Contact parents by phone (call/sms) from 9:20am if their child is marked as an unexplained absence on Sentral.

- On Friday, print unexplained absence letters and place letters in pigeon holes for teachers to deliver to students on Monday.
- Collect the paper copy of special day rolls and record early sign outs on the electronic roll and keep the paper copy of the roll.
- Record students who arrive late or leave early on the roll on Sentral and include the reason given by a parent/carer.
- File absentee notes from each class at the end of the year.

### **Students will:**

- Take pride in regular attendance.
- Be assisted in overcoming problems that contribute to poor attendance.
- Students who arrive after 9:00am must present to the office where they will be given a Late Arrival Slip. This must be taken to the classroom teacher.
- Students must not leave before 3:00pm unless collected by a parent/carer or their approved nominated representative. Parents or carers picking up students should attend the office. If a student consistently arrives late or leaves early, the relevant Attendance Supervisor should be alerted by the class teacher.

## **Arrival at school**

A teacher is on duty from 8:30am. Students should not be at school before this time unless for a specific reason (band, choir etc.) and under the supervision of a parent/teacher.

## **Casual teacher procedures**

Casual teachers are to mark the roll on a class list and send it to the school office for the office staff to enter through Sentral by 9:15am.

## **Promoting awareness of the importance of attendance to parents**

Throughout the year there are several opportunities to raise parent and community awareness of the need for excellent attendance and the impact of poor attendance on academic performance. These include:

- Inclusion of a session on attendance at the School Readiness, Kindergarten Orientation and Term 1 Parent Information Evenings.
- Reminders regarding the requirement of attendance in newsletters.
- Inclusion of attendance data on the semester reports.
- Phone call from an AP to discuss attendance below 90% twice a term (Weeks 6 and 10).
- Email to commend improved attendance sent out twice a term (Weeks 6 and 10)

## Procedures for Dealing with Unacceptable Attendance

### School Measures

Brookvale Public School implements a wide range of strategies to support the regular attendance of students, including extensive contact with parents to resolve issues of non-attendance. These strategies include letters, emails, phone calls, interviews and family support.

In the case of a student who has been identified with unacceptable attendance (an attendance pattern of less than 90%), it is necessary to document the measures taken to monitor and improve attendance. The school is required to provide documentary evidence of its interventions before making a HSLO referral.

When classroom teachers feel a student has an unacceptable attendance pattern, and the student is not already being monitored, they should make a referral to the Learning and Support Team (L&ST). The L&ST will discuss and implement strategies to improve attendance.

### ***Affirmation: 95%-100%***

- Monitor and reinforce importance of regular student attendance with students
- Regularly promote the importance and benefits of regular attendance in school communications
- Develop positive teacher-student relationships
- Implement a range of both formal and informal methods to celebrate excellent attendance
- Monitor attendance data for signs of slippage with regard to attendance rates

### ***Proactive: 90%-94%***

- Monitor and reinforce importance of regular student attendance with students
- Regularly promote the importance and benefits of regular attendance in school communications
- Develop positive teacher-student relationships
- Implement a range of both formal and informal methods to celebrate excellent attendance
- Regular monitoring of attendance data for signs of slippage with regard to attendance rates and make contact with student/parent if attendance level drops

***Tier 1 Intervention: 80%-89%***

- Collaboratively work with student and parent/carer to understand the underlying factors contributing to non-attendance such as literacy/numeracy, learning needs, disability, EAL/D (E.g. Interviews, direct correspondence, regular parent updates on attendance rates)
- Monitor and reinforce importance of regular student attendance with students & intervene if signs of slippage
- Regularly promote the importance and benefits of regular attendance with parents of identified students
- Develop positive teacher-student relationships – consider allocating an attendance mentor
- Implement a range of both formal and informal methods to celebrate attendance improvement
- Regular parent update on attendance rate until at or above 90%

***Tier 2 Intervention: 50%-79%***

- Senior executive collaboratively works with student and parent/carer to understand the underlying factors contributing to non-attendance such as literacy/numeracy, learning needs, disability, EAL/D (E.g. Interviews, direct correspondence, weekly parent updates on attendance rates)
- Implement an attendance contract with students and parents/carers
- Senior executive monitor and reinforce importance of regular student attendance with students and parents/carers

- Regularly promote the importance and benefits of regular attendance with parents of identified students
- Referral to learning support team (or equivalent) and allocate an attendance/learning mentor
- Implement a range of both formal and informal methods to encourage attendance improvement
- Given the individual circumstances of each child and the reasons provided for absence, consider a mandatory report regarding educational neglect
- Seek attendance support program advice or referral

### ***Tier 3 Intervention: 0%-49%***

- Principal collaboratively works with their DEL, student and parent/carer to understand the underlying factors contributing to non-attendance such as literacy/numeracy, learning needs, disability, EAL/D (E.g. Interviews, direct correspondence, weekly parent updates on attendance rates)
- Delivery Support team coordination: Eg. Attendance support program referral (ASLO/HSLO), NSF, Learning & Wellbeing staff, NDIS Coordinator, AP Learning & Support, ACLO, Senior Psychologist, support teachers transition, behaviour specialists, OOHc teachers, NGOs.
- Implement an attendance contract with students and parents/carers
- Regularly promote the importance and benefits of regular attendance with parents of identified students
- Referral to learning support team (or equivalent) and allocate an attendance/learning mentor
- Implement a range of both formal and informal methods to encourage attendance improvement
- Given the individual circumstances of each child and the reasons provided for absence, consider a mandatory report regarding educational neglect.

### **HSLO Intervention and Investigation**

Where the school has taken all reasonable action to support the regular attendance of a student of compulsory school age but the student continues to attend erratically, the matter should be referred to the Home School Liaison Program for investigation. The matter will be allocated to a

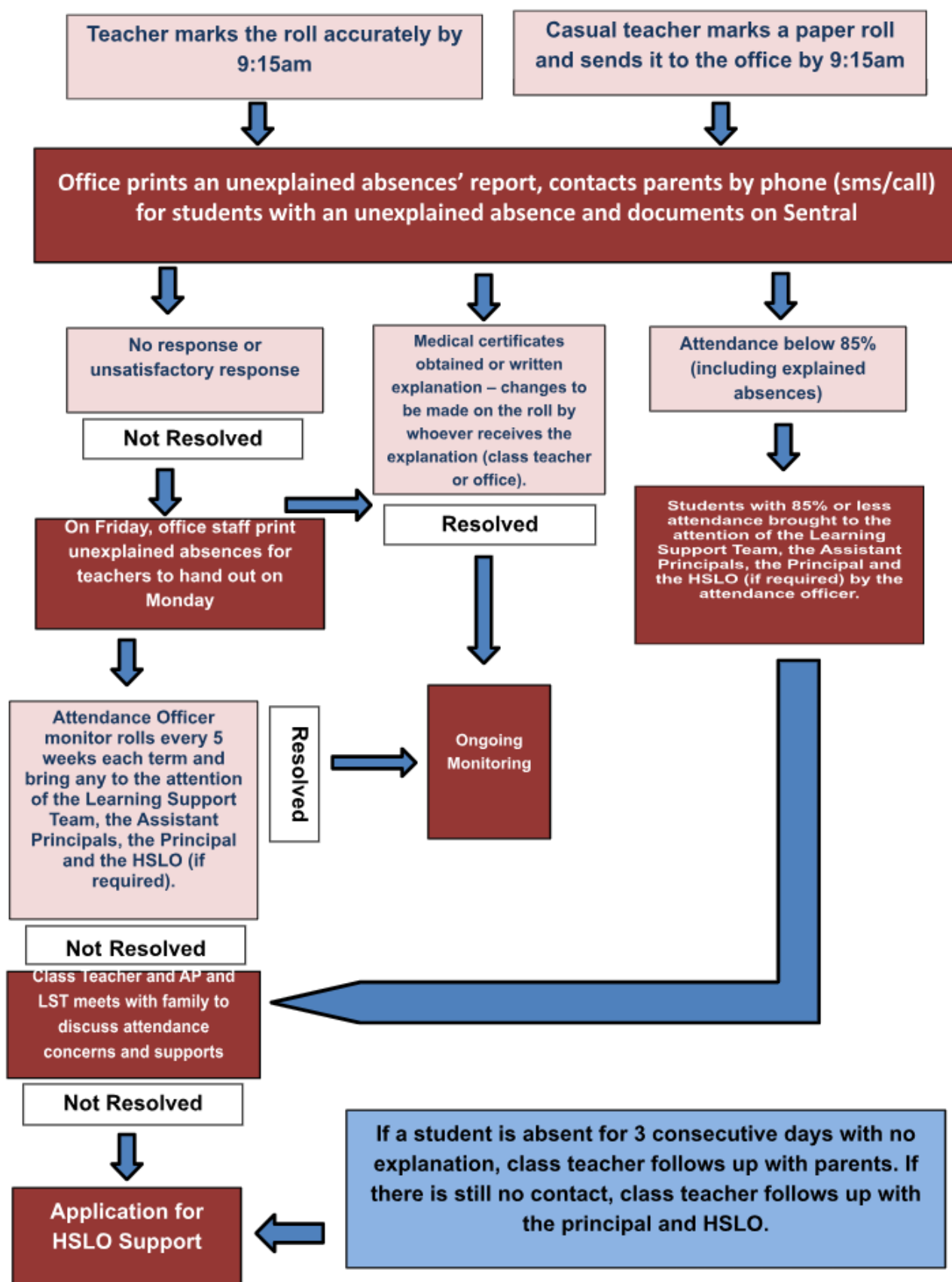
home school liaison officer for investigation within three school days of a report from the school. The home school liaison officer will complete an investigation within one school week of the matter being allocated.

Where the school has taken all reasonable action to support the regular attendance of a student but the student continues to attend erratically, the matter should be referred to the Home School Liaison Program for investigation. Investigation, including a review of school documentation, must be completed within five school days of referral. Home school liaison officers will develop an attendance improvement plan for the student. The plan will be developed in consultation with the school and will identify targets, strategies and timelines.

If the investigation indicates that home school liaison intervention is not warranted, the home school liaison officer must, within five school days, provide the school with advice on additional strategies to be implemented by the school.



## Brookvale Public School Attendance Flow Chart



## Attendance Register Codes

<b>Attendance Register Codes</b> <b>Symbols to be used for explanation of student absence</b>	
<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<b>A</b>	<p>The student's absence is unexplained or unjustified. This symbol must be used if no explanation has been provided by parents within seven days of the occurrence of an absence or the explanation is not accepted by the principal. It is at the principal's discretion to accept or not accept the explanation provided.</p>
<b>S</b>	<p>The student's absence is due to sickness or as the result of a medical or paramedical appointment. In these cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a medical certificate is provided or</li> <li>- the absence was due to sickness and the principal accepts this explanation.</li> </ul> <p>Principals may request a medical certificate in addition to explanations if the explanation is doubted, or the student has a history of unsatisfactory attendance.</p>
<b>L</b>	<p>An explanation of the absence is provided which has been accepted by the principal. This may be due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- misadventure or unforeseen event</li> <li>- participation in special events not related to the school</li> <li>- domestic necessity such as serious illness of an immediate family member</li> <li>- attendance at funerals</li> <li>- travel in Australia and overseas</li> <li>- recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions.</li> </ul>
<b>E</b>	The student was suspended from school

<b>Attendance Register Codes</b> <b>Symbols to be used to record a variation in attendance</b> (not counted as an absence for statistical purposes)	
<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<b>M</b>	The student was exempted from attending school and a Certificate of Exemption has been issued by a delegated officer.
<b>F</b>	The student is participating in a flexible timetable and not present because they are not required to be at school. This could include participation in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HSC Pathways Program</li> <li>- Best Start Assessments</li> <li>- Trial or HSC examinations</li> <li>- VET courses</li> </ul>
<b>B</b>	The student is absent from the school on official school business. This symbol is recorded where the principal approves the student leaving the school site to undertake, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- work experience</li> <li>- school sport (regional and state carnivals)</li> <li>- school excursions</li> <li>- student exchange</li> </ul>
<b>H<sup>1</sup></b>	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. The symbol is recorded where a student accesses education settings separate to their mainstream school such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- tutorial centre and programs</li> <li>- behaviour schools</li> <li>- juvenile justice</li> <li>- hospital schools</li> <li>- distance education</li> </ul>

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For further information please visit the [NSW Department of Education Website – Attendance Matters-resources for schools](#).

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