

# Student Attendance Policy

## GENERAL STATEMENT

SPCC DALE & SPCC DALE Young Parents is committed to the success of all students and to the belief that all students can learn. We believe that daily school attendance contributes to students' success and helps them develop habits of punctuality, self-discipline and responsibility.

The law in NSW states that all children between the ages of six and below the minimum leaving age<sup>1</sup> are required to attend school regularly. (Education Act 1990).

Parents/Carers are legally responsible for their child's attendance.

The School is responsible for maintaining and monitoring the Attendance Register.

## 2. AIM

This policy sets out to clarify the responsibilities of staff in encouraging attendance, reporting and dealing with absenteeism of students at SPCC DALE & SPCC DALE Young Parents.

## 3. OBJECTIVES - POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1 The NSW Education Act, Section 22 (1990) states that it is the duty of the parent of a child of compulsory school-age \* to cause the child:
  - (a) to be enrolled at, and to attend, a government school or a registered non-government school, or
  - (b) to be registered for home schooling with NESA and to receive instruction in accordance with the conditions to which the registration is subject.
- 3.2 All students who are enrolled at SPCC DALE & SPCC DALE Young Parents, regardless of their age, are expected to attend the School whenever instruction is provided.
- 3.3 Section 24 of the Education Act requires the School to maintain an attendance register (roll) in a form approved by the Minister. Accurate attendance registers must be available for inspection during school hours by any authorised person (see Registered and Accredited Individual Non-Government Schools (NSW) Manual, Section 3.8 (Attendance), pg 36, 37 for requirements of register). This register is to be retained for seven years after the last entry was made.

## 4. AUDIENCE AND APPLICABILITY

All students, staff and parents of SPCC DALE & SPCC DALE Young Parents.

## 5. CONTEXT

- 5.1 Regular attendance at school is essential to assist students to maximise their learning. It is the responsibility of the parent/caregiver to make sure that their child attends school every day. The School along with parents, is to encourage regular attendance of students.
- 5.2 The school attendance register should be completed daily and must be accurate and reflect the highest professional standards.
- 5.3 The common code approved by the NSW Minister for Education is used by the School for all attendance registers

<sup>1</sup> See Compulsory School Age, NSW Education Act (1990) Section 21B  
[http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol\\_act/ea1990104/s21b.html](http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_act/ea1990104/s21b.html)

- 5.4 In 2010 the NSW Minister for Education, under section 25 of the Education Act 1990 delegated the power to the principal of a non-government school to grant and cancel a certificate of exemption from being enrolled and attending school in certain prescribed circumstances. (See Exemption Procedures)

## 6. RESPONSIBILITIES AND DELEGATIONS

### 6.1 Principal

- 6.1.1 Provide clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance.
- 6.1.2 Has the authority to grant:
- a student permission to be absent for “extended leave for travel purposes” during school term
  - an exemption from school attendance for periods totalling up to 100 days in a 12 month period for any one student
  - exemptions under Section 25 (1) of the Education Act (1990) from being enrolled and attending school for an indefinite period for students who have completed Year 9 of secondary education and who have been approved to undertake a full-time apprenticeship or traineeship.
- 6.1.3 Maintain records of any exemptions under Section 25 including certificates and other relevant documentation.
- 6.1.4 Refer students who require exemptions greater than 100 days in one school year to the Minister for Education’s delegate at the Student Welfare Directorate, NSW Department of Education and Communities Welfare.
- 6.1.5 Ensure that the School maintains accurate records of daily attendance and absences of students, the reason for the absence and documentation to substantiate the reason for the absence. The Principal is to ensure that these records are appropriately retained for seven years after the last entry was made.

### Deputy Principal

- 6.1.6 Ensure that copies of the information in the register of enrolments and register of daily attendance are backed up at regular intervals.
- 6.1.7 Appoint and continue to train a specially designated role (Admin Assistant) to implement and monitor Attendance policies and roll marking procedures
- 6.1.8 Refer to Community Services if there is a concern that a student maybe educationally neglected due to habitual absence.
- 6.2.9 Inform the Principal if a student’s absence is chronic and
- Organise an attendance meeting with the Head of Campus, parents and AIS consultant if required.
  - Establish a Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) or Health Plan if poor attendance is due to ill health.
  - If attendance continues to be poor, inform the DET Home School Liaison Officer and report situation to Community Services
- 6.1.10 Inform staff of attendance requirements and their obligation to monitor and promote regular attendance at school

### Registrar

- 6.1.11 Notify the DET Home School Liaison officer and Community Services if the whereabouts of a student under 17 years of age is unknown, their last known name, age and address.
- 6.1.12 Update online TASS records if the student is unenrolled this includes removing the student from rolls etc.

### 6.2 Head of Campus

- 6.2.1 Oversee, monitor and report to Deputy Principal on Roll Marking procedures and attendance issues.
- 6.2.2 Inform staff of their legal obligations to mark rolls accurately.
- 6.2.3 Ensure their sub-school maintains accurate and approved attendance records of student attendance.
- 6.2.4 Provide clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance.
- 6.2.5 Inform staff of attendance requirements and their obligations to monitor and promote regular attendance at school
- 6.2.6 Set strategies to actively encourage student’s school attendance in association with the Principal
- 6.2.7 Monitor frequent unexplained absences, lateness, illness when informed by teaching/administrative staff. After 10 non-consecutive days within a term make a telephone call to the Parent/Carer and/or email. Records of this communication with be saved to student files.
- 6.2.8 Unexplained absences exceeding 10 consecutive days or ongoing attendance issues that have not been resolved through phone or email communications then require formal written communication to be sent to the parent/carers. The Deputy Principal must also be informed.
- 6.2.8 Monitor patterns of unsatisfactory attendance such as frequent and follow up with relevant Head of Campus and/or Principal.

## **6.4 Teachers**

- 6.4.1 Provide clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance.
- 6.4.2 Encourage students to regularly attend school.
- 6.4.3 Maintain an accurate daily attendance register/roll.
- 6.4.4 Mark class roll at commencement of each day and contact Head of Campus if a student is absent from class for an unexplained or extended period of time.
- 6.4.5 Ensure the Head of Campus is notified of any regular patterns of absence or other absence concerns.

## **6.5 Roll Clerks/Administration Assistant**

- 6.5.1 Maintain accurate daily attendance registers, noting absences, reason for absence and any documentation pertaining to this.
- 6.5.2 Send an SMS to parents whose child has been recorded as absent for the day.
- 6.5.3 Follow up all unexplained absences on a daily basis. If after seven (7) days no satisfactory explanation has been forthcoming from the parents/carers the absence is recorded as "Unexplained".
- 6.5.4 Complete all administrative tasks required for attendance registers.
- 6.5.5 Inform Head of Campus/Principal of frequent lateness and unexplained absences or if problems with roll marking.
- 6.5.6 Monitor that the correct codes are used when declaring and explaining absences on the rolls.
- 6.5.7 Remove the student from NESA enrolments if they are un-enrolled.

## **6.7 Parent/Carers**

- 6.7.1 Parents of children of compulsory school age are legally responsible for their enrolment and regular attendance at school.
- 6.7.2 Parent/Carers are responsible for assisting, transporting and encouraging their enrolled child/children to be punctual, attend daily and participate in regular class instruction or the like, at SPCC DALE & SPCC DALE Young Parents whenever it is offered.
- 6.7.3 Parents/carers are to take effective measures to resolve attendance issues involving their children
- 6.7.4 Parents are to ensure that their children are in a fit state to attend class.
- 6.7.5 When an exemption from enrolment or attendance, parents are required to submit an application (on the appropriate form) and any relevant supporting material at least two weeks prior to the required dates.
- 6.7.6 Parents are required to explain all absences of their children from school promptly and within seven (7) school days to the school.
- 6.7.7 If holiday leave has not been applied for prior to leave the leave will be classified as unexplained.
- 6.6.8 Parents are to seek permission for extended leave due to travel or for periods where a child's absence is greater than one school week. This must be done in writing and when seeking exemption for extend leave, on the appropriate form, submitted at least two (2) weeks prior to the event.
- 6.6.9 If a student has been absent for a period of 10 continuous school days and no communication has been forthcoming from the parent/carer then the enrolment of the child may be terminated and the matter referred to the home/school liaison officer.

## **6.8 Students**

- 6.8.1 To regularly attend school and participate in all classes/excursions/activities as directed by the School.
- 6.8.2 Be punctual to all classes and activities.
- 6.8.3 Senior students are required to make alternative arrangements with staff regarding NESA assessment tasks if absenteeism prevents them from completing set tasks on time.

## **7. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

This policy will be evaluated and reviewed every three years or as needed in line with legislative changes.

## **8. DOCUMENT DETAILS AND HISTORY**

This document supersedes Student Attendance Policy 5-10 (2015)

## **ADDITIONAL MATERIALS**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School Enrolment Policy and Special Enrolment procedures for students with unique circumstances and the Procedures for Roll Marking.

## NSW Education Act (1990)

[http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol\\_act/ea1990104/](http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_act/ea1990104/)

### Compulsory School Age

Section 21B of the NSW Education Act (1990)

[http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol\\_act/ea1990104/s21b.html](http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_act/ea1990104/s21b.html)

#### Compulsory school-age

(1) For the purposes of this Act, a child is of [compulsory school-age](#) if the child is of or above the age of 6 years and below the minimum [school](#) leaving age.

(2) The minimum [school](#) leaving age is:

- (a) the age at which the child completes Year 10 of secondary education (subject to participation required by subsection (3)), or
  - (b) the age of 17 years,
- whichever first occurs.

(3) A child who completes Year 10 of secondary education but who is below the age of 17 years is of [compulsory school-age](#) unless the child participates on a full-time basis in:

- (a) approved education or training, or
- (b) if the child is of or above the age of 15 years—paid work or a combination of approved education or training and paid work.

(4) A child ceasing to be of [compulsory school-age](#) because of that participation does not revert to being of [compulsory school-age](#) because of a cessation in participation for any reason so long as the interruption in participation does not exceed a total period of 3 months in any 12-month period or such other period approved by the Minister.

(5) The completion of Year 10 of secondary education is:

- (a) the completion of Year 10 of secondary education in this State (whether by [school](#) education or [home schooling](#)), or
  - (b) the completion of a course provided by the TAFE Commission that is approved by the Minister as the equivalent of Year 10 of secondary education in this State, or
  - (c) the completion, outside of this State, of the equivalent of Year 10 of secondary education in this State, or
  - (d) the completion of education in any special circumstances approved by the Minister.
- (6) Participation in approved education or training is participation in any of the following:
- (a) a higher education course within the meaning of the [Higher Education Act 2001](#),
  - (b) a vocational course within the meaning of the [Vocational Education and Training Act 2005](#),
  - (c) an apprenticeship or traineeship within the meaning of the [Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act 2001](#)
  - (d) any other education or training approved by the Minister.
- (7) The regulations may prescribe rules and criteria that are to be applied for the purposes of this section in determining:
- (a) whether a child has completed Year 10, or
  - (b) whether a child is participating in paid work, or
  - (c) whether a child is participating in approved education or training, or
  - (d) whether such participation is on a full-time basis.

Subject to the regulations, participation on a full-time basis in paid work is participation for an average of 25 hours per week

## Registered and Accredited Individual Non-Government Schools (NSW) Manual Sept 2016

### Section 3.8 Attendance

The principal of a registered non-government school must keep a register, in a form approved by the Minister, of the enrolments and daily attendances of all children at the school.

The attendance registers must be in a form approved by the Minister for Education. In 2010 the Minister approved a common code for the attendance registers of all New South Wales schools. The codes must be used from the start of the 2012 school year. The codes for use in either manual attendance registers or electronic attendance registers are published on the websites of the NSW Association of Independent Schools (AIS) and the NSW Catholic Education Commission (CEC).

The register of enrolments and/or the register of daily attendances may be maintained in print or electronic form.

Copies of the information in the register of enrolment and the register of daily attendance should be stored off-site at regular intervals. In 2010 the Minister under Section 25 of the Education Act delegated the power to the principal of a non-government school to grant and cancel a certificate of exemption from being enrolled and attending school in certain prescribed circumstances

## Evidence of compliance

The principal of a registered non-government school must:

- maintain a register of enrolments that includes the following information for each student
  - name, age and address
  - the name and contact telephone number of parent(s)/guardian(s)
  - date of enrolment and, where appropriate, the date of leaving the school and the student's destination
  - for students older than six (6) years, previous school or pre-enrolment situation
  - where the destination of a student below seventeen (17) years of age is unknown, evidence that a Department of Education officer with home school liaison responsibilities has been notified of the student's full name, date of birth, last known address, last date of attendance, parents' names and contact details, an indication of possible destination, other information that may assist officers to locate the student, and any known work health and safety risks associated with contacting the parents or student
- have in place and implement policies and procedures to
  - monitor the daily attendance/absence of students
  - identify absences from school and/or class(es)
  - follow up unexplained absences
  - notify parent(s) and/or guardian(s) regarding poor school and/or class attendance
  - transfer unsatisfactory attendance information to student files
- maintain a register of daily attendance that includes the following information for each student
  - daily attendance, which may be recorded by noting daily absences
  - absences
  - reason for absence
  - documentation to substantiate reason for absence. Note: The common code approved by the Minister must be used.
- have in place and implement policies and procedures for exercising the Minister's delegation under Section 25 of the Education Act
- maintain records of the exercise of the above delegation including copies of all certificates issued under the delegation.

The register of enrolments must be retained for a minimum period of five (5) years before archiving. The register of daily attendances must be retained for a period of seven (7) years after the last entry was made.

## Standard 11: Monitoring Attendance

### Requirements

- This standard has been split into different requirements for different sectors. The requirements below are those which apply to schools.
- The school must record the attendance of each student for the scheduled course contact hours for the course in which the student is enrolled.
- The school must have appropriate documented attendance policies and procedures for each course which must be provided to staff and students, and should specify:
  - requirements for achieving satisfactory attendance, which at a minimum, requires overseas students to attend at least 80% of the scheduled course contact hours
  - how attendance and absences are recorded and calculated
  - process for assessing satisfactory attendance
  - process for determining the point at which the student has failed to meet satisfactory attendance, and
  - procedures for notifying a student that he/she has failed to meet satisfactory attendance requirements.
- The school's attendance policies and procedures must identify the process for contacting and counselling students who have been absent for more than five consecutive days without approval or where the student is at risk of not attending for at least 80% of the scheduled course contact hours for the course in which he or she is enrolled (i.e. before the student's attendance drops below 80%).
- The school must regularly assess the attendance of the student in accordance with the registered school's attendance policies and procedures.
- Where the school has assessed the student as not achieving satisfactory attendance, the school must notify the student in writing of its intention to report the student for not achieving satisfactory attendance. The written notice must inform the student that he or she is able to access the registered school's complaints and appeals process as per [Standard 8 - Complaints and appeals](#), and that the student has 20 working days in which to do so.
- Where the student has chosen not to access the complaints and appeals processes within the 20 working day period, withdraws from the process, or the process is completed and results in a decision supporting the school, the school must notify DEST through PRISMS that the student is not achieving satisfactory attendance as soon as practicable.
- Schools can choose not to report a student for breaching the 80% attendance requirement where:
  - the student produces documentary evidence clearly demonstrating that compassionate or compelling circumstances (e.g. illness where a medical certificate states that the student is unable to attend classes) apply, and
  - that decision is consistent with its documented attendance policies and procedures, and
  - the school confirms that the student is attending at least 70% of the scheduled course contact hours for the course in which he or she is enrolled.
- DIAC will not make an assessment of whether there are compassionate or compelling circumstances that have led to the breach of attendance. The school will make the assessment as part of its appropriate documented policies and procedures for monitoring attendance.



*For the Whole of Their Life*