

STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

*The Currajong School takes a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and is fully committed to ensuring that its strategies, policies, procedures and practices meet all **Child Safety Standards as specified in Ministerial Order No. 870 (2015)***

PURPOSE

To ensure all children of compulsory school age are enrolled in a registered school and attend school every day the school is open for instruction.

This Policy is contingent upon The Currajong School's Enrolment Policy.

POLICY

In accordance with the Education and Training Reform Act 2006, schooling is compulsory for children and young people aged from 6 – 17 years unless an exemption has been granted.

Parents/guardians must enrol a child of compulsory school age at a registered school and ensure the child attends school at all times when the school is open for instruction.

Students are expected to attend the school in which they are enrolled, during normal school hours every day of each term, unless:

- i. there is an approved exemption from school attendance or enrolment for the student or;
- ii. the student is registered for home schooling and has only a partial enrolment in a school for particular activities.

The Principal may authorise an exemption and provide written approval for student attendance or attendance and enrolment to be exempt or reduced to less than full time.

For absences where there is no exemption in place, the parent/guardian/caregiver must promptly provide an explanation on each occasion to the school. The school will determine if the explanation provided is a reasonable excuse for the purposes of the parent meeting their responsibilities under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006.

Schools must maintain attendance records, identify and follow up unexplained absences, and develop policies to support and maintain attendance.

ATTENDANCE RECORD

Schools must record student attendance twice per day in primary schools and in every class in secondary schools and record, in writing, the reason given for each absence.

All registered schools must ensure their system for recording student attendance meets the requirements above. The Currajong School uses the online system, Sentral, to record student attendance.

Parents/guardians/caregivers are required to provide an explanation for their child's absence from school, and a principal must record in writing the reason (if any) given by the parent/guardian/caregiver.

REPORTING AND RECORDING STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Parent/guardian/caregiver responsibilities:

Parents are required to ensure that their child attends school and to provide an explanation for their child's absence from school.

Parents should inform the school of the reason for their child's absence so that the school can:

- determine if the child's absence needs to be excused by the principal, in line with school policy and these guidelines.
- determine the appropriate follow up to ensure the child's education and wellbeing is supported.
- record if the parent has a reasonable excuse for not meeting their obligation to ensure their child attends school each day.

Where possible, parents should inform the school in advance of upcoming absences.

School responsibilities:

Attendance and absence is recorded twice a day. This is necessary in order to:

- meet legislative requirements.
- discharge the school's duty of care for all students.
- assist calculation of the school's funding.
- enable the school governing body to report on student attendance annually.

Teachers are required to record:

- student attendance twice per day for every student enrolled at the school.
- the excuse given for an absence and whether this is reasonable in accordance with the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*.
- an absence as unexplained if no excuse has been given. The attendance record can be altered once an excuse is provided or established.
- a student as present for a half day the student has attended at least two hours of instruction.

To meet duty of care responsibilities, the school attendance records will indicate whether the student was physically present in a classroom, or not present but attending a school-approved activity. In the latter situation, the teacher or staff member in charge of the activity will record attendance and ensure parents are notified of any absences in the same manner as for regular absences from school.

All students enrolled at Currajong are required to have their attendance recorded,

even if they only attend the school premises part time. Attendance for the times the student is not expected to attend should be recorded so that it does not count towards the absences for the school.

The attendance of students at curriculum programs outside school premises needs to be recorded by the provider and reported back and recorded by the school. Currajong staff will manage absences in conjunction with the provider of re-engagement programs or approved education provider.

Accurate and comprehensive student attendance records, including the reasons for any absences, allows staff to monitor the effectiveness of attendance improvement strategies and measure achievement against attendance targets. It also provides evidence for any further enforcement proceedings including issue of an Infringement Notice (and any appeal), and court proceedings if it appears a parent may not have met their legal obligations to ensure their child attends school.

Principal responsibilities:

The Principal will ensure at all times that the system for recording student attendance meets requirements.

The Principal will determine if the excuse provided for an absence is reasonable for the purposes of the parent meeting their responsibilities under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*.

As required, the Principal will report the annual rates of student attendance for the year to the school community at least once a year and also report information about student enrolment and attendance for funding requirements.

The School will work with parents and psychologists to support a student's regular school attendance.

MONITORING ATTENDANCE

In addition to accurately and consistently recording student attendance and absence, the Principal will ensure school attendance data is regularly monitored and analysed to identify student absence patterns on a school, class and individual basis.

This will enable early identification of students at risk of poor attendance and possible disengagement from school. Once identified as being at risk of poor attendance, students will be provided with timely targeted support to improve attendance or address underlying issues.

EXEMPTIONS FROM ATTENDANCE

Where a student:

- has reached 6 years but has not started school and will be enrolled in a second year of kindergarten; or
- has not reached 17 years but will leave school; or

- is absent from school due to employment in the entertainment industry and certain conditions are met, an exemption from attendance can be sought.

An exemption is not required for these absences, but if there is no exemption the student's absences will count towards the school's absences for reporting purposes. For example, a student with an exemption from attendance for one day per week, who attends the four days per week they are expected to attend, would have 100 per cent attendance, whereas if no exemption was in place the student would have 80 per cent attendance.

The principal will advise parents when an exemption from attendance is required and support parents to apply for the exemption.

RELATED LEGISLATION

- Education and Training Reform Act 2006

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed as per our three-year review cycle or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

Approval date	Approved by	Next review
February 2020	School Board	February 2023