TAS
THE ARMIDALE SCHOOL

Title:	**School Attendance Policy and Procedures**
Summary:	**Policy and Procedures outlining the management of Student Attendance**
Intended Audience:	**Teaching Staff, Parents, Students**
Author:	**Deputy Principal**
Updated:	**202607**
NESA Reference:	**B7.1** Schools must keep records of enrolments and attendance
Distribution:	**Internal**

Purpose

The Armidale School is committed to supporting regular school attendance and ensuring all students participate fully in their educational program.
The School recognises that regular attendance is essential for academic achievement, wellbeing and social development and engagement in school life.
This policy outlines the School's procedures for maintaining student attendance records, monitoring attendance, managing absences, implementing intervention strategies and exercising the Minister's delegation regarding attendance exemptions.

Legislative and Regulatory Requirements

The NSW Registered and Accredited Non-Government Schools Manual (B7.1) requires the Principal to maintain:

- A register of enrolments
- A register of daily attendance
- Attendance records using Minister-approved attendance codes
- Procedures for monitoring attendance
- Procedures for following up absences
- Procedures for identifying unsatisfactory attendance
- Attendance intervention procedures
- Procedures for exercising the Minister's delegation to grant or cancel exemptions from enrolment or attendance

Policy Statement

The Principal maintains a register, in a form approved by the Minister, of the enrolments and daily attendance of all students enrolled at The Armidale School.
The School will:

- maintain accurate enrolment and attendance records
- record attendance using Minister-approved attendance codes
- monitor student daily attendance and class attendance
- identify and follow up unexplained absences
- notify parents/carers regarding attendance concerns
- monitor attendance data to identify unsatisfactory attendance
- implement intervention strategies to improve attendance
- maintain records relating to attendance concerns and interventions
- process leave applications
- exercise the Minister's delegation concerning attendance exemptions where appropriate
- maintain all records relating to exemptions.

Attendance Register

The School maintains an electronic attendance register through Sentral.
The attendance register records:

- daily attendance or absence
- reason for absence
- evidence supporting the reason for absence
- partial attendance
- late arrivals
- early departures
- attendance variations using Minister-approved attendance codes.

Attendance records are retained for a minimum of seven years after the last entry.

Daily Attendance Monitoring and Procedures

1. Junior School

Attendance is recorded by the class teacher each school day.

Teachers:

- mark attendance each morning
- record late arrivals and early departures
- notify the Head of Junior School and Junior School Administrative Assistant of any attendance concerns.

2. Middle School and Senior School

Attendance is recorded by the class teacher of each timetabled lesson.

Teachers:

- Record attendance at the commencement of every lesson
- Identify students absent from class
- Update attendance records promptly
- Notify Head of Middle School for Years 6-8 and Director of Pastoral Care for Years 9-12 of attendance concerns.

Daily Attendance Review

Administration staff review attendance records each school day to identify:

- full-day absences
- partial absences
- unexplained absences
- repeated absences
- patterns of lateness

- students absent from scheduled classes.

Relevant attendance concerns are referred to:

- Class Teachers
- Heads of House
- Year Level Coordinators
- Heads of Sub School
- the Deputy Principal.

Documentation of attendance concerns is maintained within Sentral.

Identifying and Managing Student Absences

The School actively monitors attendance to identify:

- unexplained absences
- recurring absences
- prolonged absences
- frequent lateness
- partial attendance
- repeated absence from individual classes.

Parents/carers are expected to provide an explanation for all absences.

Where an absence remains unexplained:

1. the School will contact the parent/carer as soon as practicable on the day of absence
2. an explanation will be requested
3. supporting documentation may be sought where appropriate
4. attendance records will be updated upon receipt of satisfactory information.

Unexplained absences and attendance concerns are monitored and recorded by the School.

Monitoring Attendance Data

Attendance data is reviewed regularly by:

- Heads of House
- Year Level Coordinators
- Heads of Sub School
- Deputy Principal
- other relevant staff.

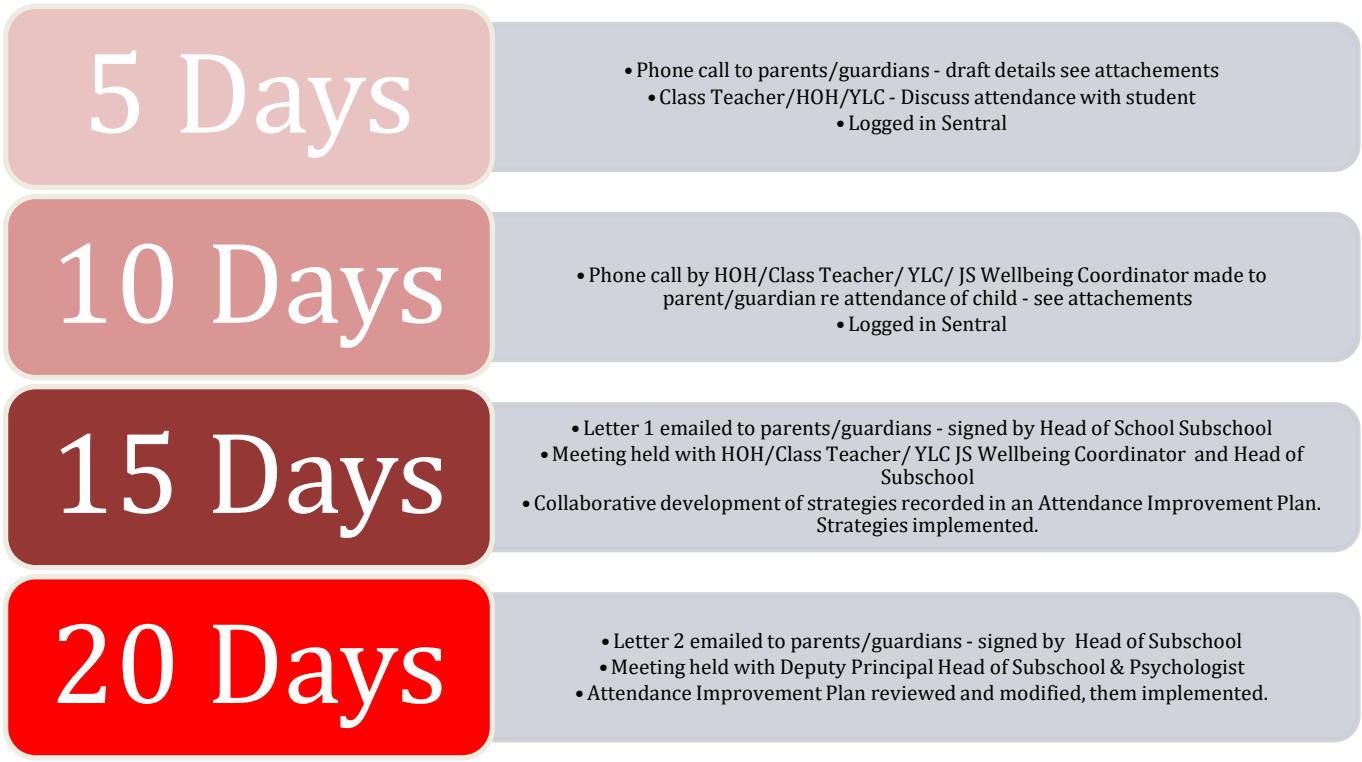
The review process examines:

- overall attendance rates
- attendance trends
- individual student attendance
- class attendance
- unexplained absences
- partial attendance
- student engagement concerns.

Students identified as having unsatisfactory attendance may enter the Attendance Intervention Process.

Attendance Intervention Process

The School adopts a staged approach to addressing unsatisfactory attendance.



5 Days Absence

Actions:

- Attendance review conducted.
- Phone call made to parent/carer.
- Attendance concerns discussed with student.
- Support strategies explored.
- Contact recorded in Sentral.

Responsible Staff:

- Class Teacher
- Head of House
- Year Level Coordinator
- Junior School Wellbeing Coordinator

10 Days Absence

Actions:

- Attendance review conducted.
- Further phone call made to parent/carer.
- Attendance concerns discussed.
- Additional support strategies considered.
- Communication recorded in Sentral.

Responsible Staff:

- Class Teacher

- Head of House
- Year Level Coordinator
- Junior School Wellbeing Coordinator

15 Days Absence

Actions:

- Formal attendance letter sent.
- Parent meeting arranged.
- Attendance concerns reviewed.
- Attendance Improvement Plan developed collaboratively.
- Intervention strategies implemented.

Responsible Staff:

- Head of Sub School
- Relevant pastoral staff

20 Days Absence

Actions:

- Formal attendance letter sent.
- Attendance Improvement Plan reviewed.
- Further meeting conducted.
- Additional supports considered.
- Strategies modified as required.

Responsible Staff:

- Deputy Principal
- Head of Sub School
- School Psychologist
- Relevant pastoral staff

More Than 20 Days Absence

The Head of Sub School informs the Deputy Principal.
Where appropriate:

- ISNSW advice may be sought;
- additional meetings may be arranged and
- further interventions implemented.

All attendance intervention actions are documented and retained by the School.

Student Leave During School Term

Parents/carers seeking leave during school term during school term must complete an Application for Exemption from School form available from the Parent Portal before the proposed leave.

The Principal or delegate will consider:

- educational impact
- attendance history
- duration of leave
- timing of leave
- individual circumstances

Parents/carers will be advised of the decision in writing.

Approved leave will be recorded using the appropriate Minister-approved attendance code.

Applications and decisions are retained on the student's file.

Exemptions from Enrolment or Attendance

The Principal may exercise the Minister's delegation under Section 25 of the Education Act 1990 to grant or cancel exemptions from enrolment and/or attendance where permitted by legislation and NSW Government procedures.

Applications for Exemption
Applications must:

- be submitted by a parent/carer
- be made in writing
- specify reasons for the request
- include supporting documentation where relevant.

The Principal may request additional information before determining an application.

Granting an Exemption
When satisfied that the legislative requirements have been met, the Principal may issue a Certificate of Exemption.
The Certificate of Exemption will specify:

- the reason for exemption
- the period of exemption
- any conditions applying to the exemption.

Cancelling an Exemption
The Principal may cancel an exemption where:

- the grounds for exemption no longer exist
- conditions are not being met
- information supporting the application is found to be inaccurate
- continuation of the exemption is no longer appropriate.

Records
The School maintains records of:

- exemption applications
- supporting documentation
- decisions
- certificates issued
- exemptions cancelled
- related correspondence.

Records relating to exemptions are retained in accordance with School record-keeping requirements.

Attendance Improvement Plans

Where attendance concerns persist, an Attendance Improvement Plan may be developed collaboratively with:

- the student
- parent/carer
- relevant pastoral staff
- Head of Sub School
- Deputy Principal.

Plans may include:

- attendance goals
- student responsibilities
- parent responsibilities
- school supports and interventions
- review dates
- monitoring arrangements.

Attendance Improvement Plans are retained on the student's file.

Record Keeping

The School maintains:

Enrolment Register
Including:

- student name
- date of birth
- address
- parent/carer contact details
- enrolment date
- leaving date
- destination school where applicable.

Attendance Records
Including:

- daily attendance
- absences
- attendance codes
- explanations for absences
- supporting documentation
- attendance intervention records
- attendance improvement plans.

All attendance records are retained in accordance with legislative and NESA requirements.

Resources

1. Suggested communication at 5 days absence

HOH/Class Teacher to make phone call once at 5 days absent

Good morning {parent/guardian name},

RE: NAME (YEAR HOUSE)

We have noted in a recent review of all student attendance that NAME has now been absent for 5 days in this academic year.

Are there any issues that NAME may be experiencing and to offer assistance and support if required.

Please do not hesitate to contact Class Teacher/ Head of House/ Year Level Coordinators/Wellbeing Coordinator to discuss any concerns that you may have.

Person to action: Class Teacher/Head of House /Year Level Coordinator

2. Suggested communication for class teacher/HoH/YLC at 10 days absence

HoH/YLC/Class Teacher to make phone call once at 10 days absent

Good morning {parent/guardian name},

RE: NAME (YEAR HOUSE)

We have noted in a recent review of all student attendance that NAME has now been absent for 10 days in this academic year.

Are there any issues that NAME may be experiencing and to offer assistance and support if required.

Please do not hesitate to contact ClassTeacher/HOH/YLC to discuss any concerns that you may have.

Person to action: Class Teacher/HOH/YLC

3. Head of Sub School Letter 1 at 15 days absence -sent prior to a Parent/Carer Meeting

Head of Sub School to send to parent/carer advising of intention to meet to develop an Attendance Improvement Plan

<Correspondence Name>
<Correspondence Address>

Dear <Correspondence Name>

I refer to the attendance of <Student Name> at school.

At a recent telephone call with their Head of House/Class Teacher/ Year Level Coordinator, <Student First Name>'s pattern of attendance was reviewed and despite the school implementing a number of strategies <Student First Name>'s lack of attendance remains a concern.

Regular attendance at school is essential if <Student First Name> is to achieve their educational best and increase social connectedness. School staff remain committed to working in partnership with you to address the issues which are preventing <Student First Name>'s from full participation at school.

The school will be in contact with you to confirm a time to meet and to collaboratively formulate an Attendance Improvement Plan. This is an opportune time to attempt to resolve your child's attendance issues and develop a plan that aims to restore your child's regular attendance at school.

I would like to remind you that The *Education Act (1990)* requires parents to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend school each day it is open for instruction.

It is important that we work together to improve <Student First Name>'s attendance at school.

Yours sincerely,

<Head of Sub School>

Junior/Middle/Senior School

<Date>

4. Deputy Head of School Letter 2 at 20 Days

Deputy Principal to parent/carer advising of intention to meet to review the Attendance Improvement Plan

<Correspondence Name>
<Correspondence Address>

Dear <Correspondence Name>

I refer to the attendance of <Student Name> at school.

<Student First Name>'s pattern of attendance was reviewed and an Attendance Improvement Plan put in place. Despite the school and home implementing a number of strategies, <Student First Name>'s lack of attendance remains a concern.

Regular attendance at school is essential if <Student First Name> is to achieve his/her educational best and maintain social connectedness. School staff remain committed to working in partnership with you to address the issues which are preventing <Student First Name>'s from full participation at school.

The school will be in contact regarding a suitable meeting time to review and discuss the Attendance Improvement Plan. This is an opportune time to attempt to resolve your child's attendance issues and develop a plan that aims to restore your child's regular attendance at school.

I would like to remind you that The *Education Act (1990)* requires parents to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend school each day it is open for instruction. If you do not meaningfully engage in the Attendance Improvement Plan, or there is no improvement in <Student First Name>'s attendance during this time, the school will need to pursue further action such as a Compulsory Schooling Conference.

It is important that we work together to improve <Student First Name>'s attendance at school. The meeting will take place with the Deputy Principal, the Head of Sub School and a school Pyschologist.

Yours sincerely,

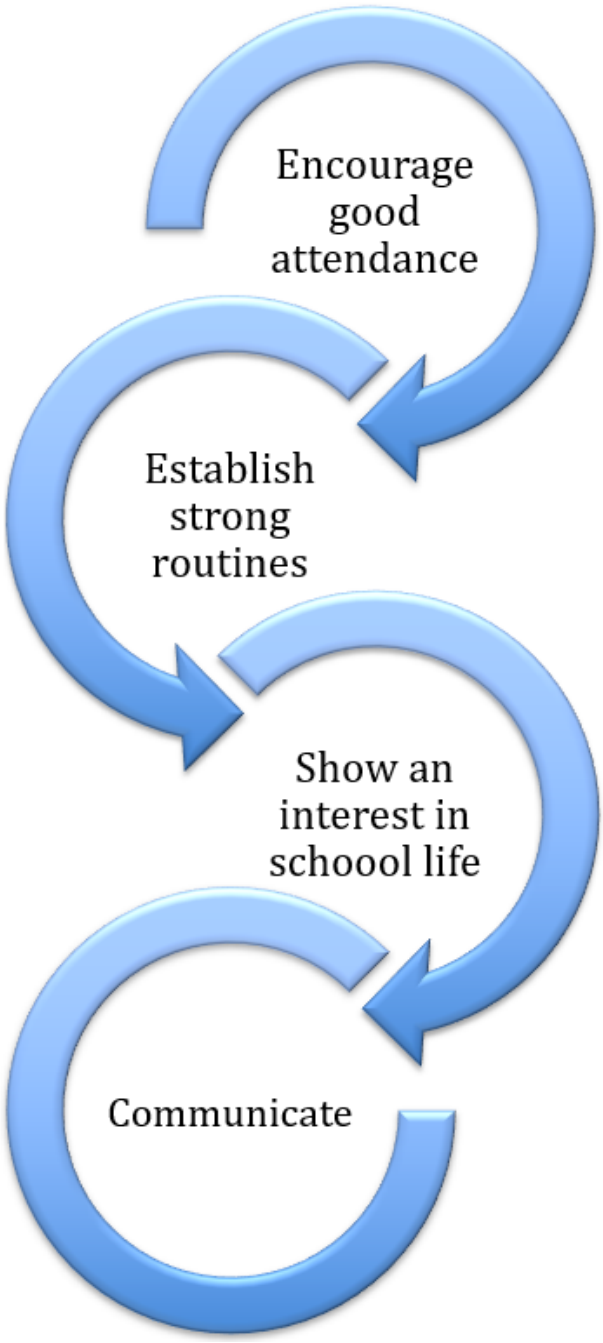
<Deputy Principal's Name>

Head of Junior/Middle/Senior School

<Date>

5. Attendance Tips for Parents

- Develop effective bedtime routines. Proper rest is vital! Go to bed 10 mins earlier and waking 10 minutes earlier.
- Set a reasonable time for devices to be removed from bedrooms overnight - buy an alarm clock.
- Blue light impacts on circadian rhythms and sleep patterns – turn off all devices 30 mins before bed.
- Making healthy eating choices for breakfast,



- Take a positive, active approach to the importance of attending school daily.
- Avoid inappropriate excuses for absences and lateness.
- Set firm boundaries and better habits

- Be informed. Attend information evenings, parent teacher nights and special events.
- Encourage your child to be more involved in the school through the cocurricular program.
- Become interested in your child's school life – ask questions about their day.

- Check your child's diary and sign it each week and check for relevant news items
- Contact the School if your child is absent.
- Ensure you provide Medical Certificates when assessments are scheduled (year 10-12 only).
- Contact a Class Teacher/Head of House/YLC if you have concerns.

Stress the IMPORTANCE of Good Attendance	Routine	Interest in School life	Communicate
Parents/guardians must take a positive active approach to the importance of attending school daily.	How does the morning look? Rushed? Do you need more time or to change current pattern. Try strategies like going to bed 10 minutes earlier and waking 10 minutes earlier.	Become involved and attend school events such as music performance evenings, drama productions, sporting events and carnivals.	Contact Junior School/Middle School/ Senior School when your student is absent and explain situation.
Break the cycle of poor attendance before Year 11 and 12.	Plan the night before: set lunch together, breakfast, uniform/PE clothes or other requirements. Establish positive organisational habits.	Attend all information evenings, parent-teacher nights, special events.	Provide Medical Certificates for illness – when assessments are due (year 10-12 only)
Become interested in your student's school life: "Where are you at in Mathematics at the moment?" "What was the theme of Assembly this week?" "What did the Senior Prefect talk about in Assembly today?"	Set a regular bedtime schedule with no technology. Buy an alarm clock so that smart devices can be left in the living room. Avoid blue screens for an hour minimum before bed. Build a strong habit. Proper rest is vital!	Encourage your student to be more involved in the school. Sign up for a variety of cocurricular. This promotes physical, emotional, and metal wellbeing and provides an opportunity for new social connections with likeminded people.	Make connections with other families who value education and time at TAS.
Check Student Diary/Tas Talks regular for news items and information. Encourage homework completion of tasks and take an interest in schoolwork.	Phones, gaming, TV off 30 mins before bed. Encourage reading, drawing, relaxing music and quiet time before bed.	Encourage your student to become involved in House carnivals. This will create a sense of belonging.	Ask teachers for encouragement to your child or advise.
Do not provide inappropriate excuses for your student to miss school. Do not let them take time off.	Have schoolwork completed and set to take to school night before.		Talk to your child about the importance of school.
Set firm boundaries and hold firm.	Set some family study times.		Work with your Class Teacher/Head of House/ Year Level Coordinator JS Wellbeing Coordinator when you are having difficulties.
Make a contract with your child each term and reward positive improvements.	Seek academic assistance at after school .		Take it a day at a time and celebrate improvement.

6. Tips and Table for Students for Reflection

IMPORTANCE of Good Attendance	Routine	Interest in School life	Electronic Devices	Diet	Eradication of Poor Habits	Communicate

7. Student Attendance Improvement Plan Proforma

STUDENT ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

SCHOOL:	**STUDENT:**	**YEAR:**
DOB:		

STRATEGIES:

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES		STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES	SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES	INTENDED OUTCOME

COMMENCEMENT OF PLAN: _____/_____/_____
END OF PLAN:_____/_____/_____

AGREEMENT: _____

Deputy Principal Parent
Student

REVIEW DATE: ___/___/___ PARENT HAS MEANINGFULLY ENGAGED WITH PLAN: YES/NO
PLAN IS TO BE EXTENDED: YES/NO
RECOMMENDATIONS:

Deputy Principal signature: _____ Date: _____