

Guise Public School

"Educating and caring for the whole child"

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Student Attendance Policy

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Rationale

Students will develop and maintain friendships and achieve their educational best, increasing their career and life options through regular attendance at school.

Section 22 of the **Education Act (1990)** states that it is the duty of the parent of a child of **compulsory school- age** to cause the child to be enrolled at, and to attend, a government or a registered non-government school.

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

School staff, as part of their duty of care, are responsible for recording and monitoring student partials and absences. Parents and caregivers are responsible for ensuring their child attends school every day.

Parents and carers must provide verbal or written justification within 7 days, from the child's first day of absence from school. Lateness and early leavers are recorded as partial absences and must also be explained by the parents or carers.

Schools, with support from attendance officers (Home School Liaison Officer) monitor the regular attendance of students and develop and implement strategies to support students with identified attendance issues.

Strategies to Encourage Regular Attendance

Guise Public School provides a high-quality teaching and learning environment where expectations are high and students are provided with opportunities to achieve their personal best. Each morning at assembly, rewards are distributed for punctual arrival and full school uniform by drawing four names out of a bag, who go into a draw to win a canteen voucher at the end of the week. Students who receive 100% attendance every 5 weeks receive a persistence award and at the end of term are rewarded with special events.

Attendance Register Codes through Ontrack+

Only the following attendance register codes must be used to record the: explanation of student absence, and/or variation in student attendance.

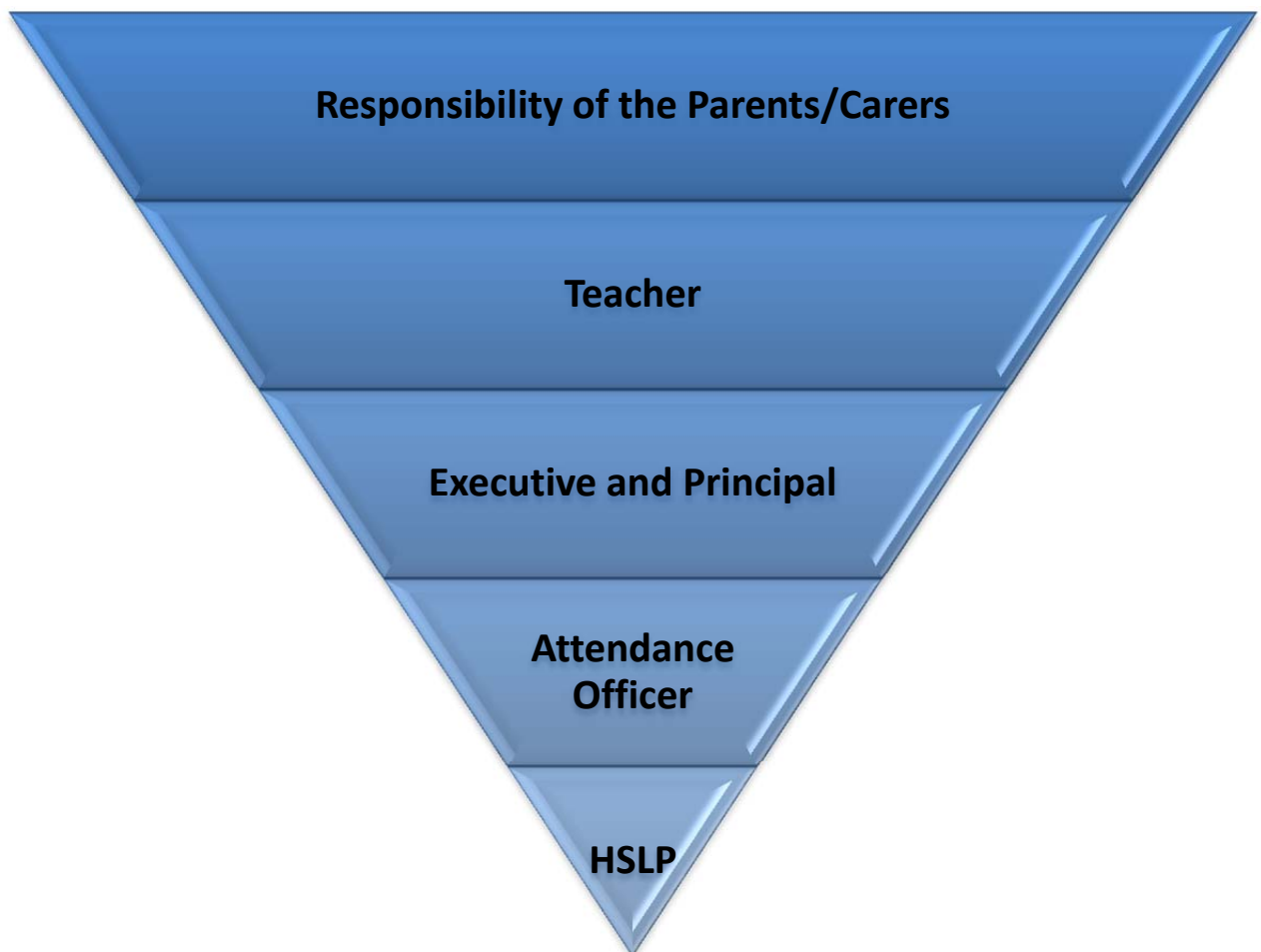
<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Description</i>
A	Unjustified absent	The student's absence is unexplained or unjustified. This symbol must be used if no explanation has been provided by parents within seven days of the occurrence of an absence or the explanation is not accepted by the principal. It is at the principal's discretion to accept or not accept the explanation provided.
S	Sick	The student's absence is due to sickness or as the result of a medical or paramedical appointment. In these cases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a medical certificate is provided or - the absence was due to sickness and the principal accepts this explanation. Principals may request a medical certificate in addition to explanations if the explanation is doubted, or the student has a history of unsatisfactory attendance.
B	School Business	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"> - work experience - school sport (regional and state carnivals) - school excursions - student exchange.
F	Flexible	The student is participating in a flexible timetable and not present because they are not required to be at school.
L	Leave	An explanation of the absence is provided which has been accepted by the principal. This may be due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - misadventure or unforeseen event - participation in special events not related to the school - domestic necessity such as serious illness of an immediate family member - attendance at funerals - travel in Australia and overseas - recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions.
H	Shared enrolment	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.
+	present	The student is present at school.

Procedures for Monitoring Student Absences

If no note/ explanation is received:

- First day of the student's return following an absence: the teacher is to give a verbal reminder to the student.
- Second day the student's return following an absence: the teacher is to provide the student with a 'Guise Absent Note' to take home to his/ her parent/ carer.
- Seventh school day of the student's return following an absence: the absence will be recorded as 'unexplained' – this happens in Ontrack+ automatically.
- If a student is absent for two consecutive days and there is no knowledge by any member of staff at the school about the reason for that absence, the teacher must make contact and record details on Sentral.
- If absences persist, contact parent/ carer. Verbal explanations from parent/ carer must be documented on 'Guise Absent Note' to be filed by office staff.
- The school attendance officer will send home a letter to develop a meeting regarding any absentee concerns.
- The school attendance officer will contact HSLO intervention.

Responsibilities



Responsibility of the parents/ carers:

- ✓ Ensure that their child attend school regularly and for the whole day.
- ✓ Wherever possible organise appointments outside of school hours.
- ✓ Ensure that their child arrives to school on time.
- ✓ Students who are late are required to report to the office to collect a late note which is given to the class teacher.
- ✓ Explain absences of their child from school promptly.
- ✓ Work with school to improve attendance.

Responsibility of the Teacher:

- ✓ Mark roll and record absences before 9:15am on Ontrack+.
- ✓ Receive notes from students explaining absences and record on Ontrack+ within 7 days of absence. At the end of each week, late notes and absent notes are to be given to the office for secure storage.
- ✓ Identify students who have irregular or unsatisfactory patterns of attendance, including late arrivals and discuss with parents/ carers promptly. If a student has had more than 2 days off, the teacher must contact and record details on Sentral.
- ✓ Discuss attendance concerns with supervisor.
- ✓ Work with parents/ carers to improve attendance.

Responsibility of the Assistant Principal /

Deputy Principal:

- ✓ Ensure that student attendance concerns are discussed on a regular basis at stage meetings.
- ✓ Implement strategies to encourage regular attendance of students of concern.
- ✓ Refer attendance concerns to the Learning Support Team.
- ✓ Guide the development, implementation of attendance plans.
- ✓ Issue letters to parents for child's unsatisfactory patterns of attendance.
- ✓ Refer students to the Home School Liaison Program (HSLP).

Responsibility of the Principal:

- ✓ Ensure that attendance requirements are actively explained and promoted to parents and carers.
- ✓ Ensure that the School's Attendance Policy and Procedures are reviewed on an annual basis and that staff are informed of their roles and responsibilities.
- ✓ Analyse whole school attendance.
- ✓ Manage exemptions from school in line with DoE Policy and Procedures.

Responsibility of the Attendance Officer:

- ✓ Regularly meets with the Home School Liaison Program (HSLP) to monitor whole student attendance with a focus on students falling below 85% attendance.
- ✓ Contacts parent/ carer of students monitored by phone and works with classroom teacher to put interventions in place to support regular attendance.
- ✓ Completes and notifies parents formally through attendance letters of student attendance concerns.
- ✓ Attends meetings with parents/carers and HSLP to resolve attendance concerns, on occasions.

Home School Liaison Program:

- ✓ If school based interventions have not been successful in resolving attendance concerns, a referral may be made to the Home School Liaison Program.
- ✓ Legal action may be taken in cases where all internal and external interventions have not resolved serious attendance problems.
- ✓ The act requires that parents/ carers attend a conciliation conference and participate in an attendance improvement program.
- ✓ If these strategies are not effective prosecution may occur.

Supporting Regular Attendance at School

Parents and carers should contact the Principal or classroom teacher to arrange a meeting if they are experiencing difficulty getting their child to school.

Strategies to help improve attendance will be embedded, linking the student with appropriate support networks. Principals, and school staff, in consultation with students and their parents, will usually be able to resolve problems of non-attendance.

While parents should be reminded of their legal obligations under the **Education Act 1990**, the welfare of the student must be the focus of the consultation.

The most effective means of restoring and maintaining regular attendance includes sound attendance monitoring practices and regular follow-up of unexplained absences by contacting parents promptly.

Resolution of attendance difficulties may require a range of additional school based strategies:

1. Student and parent interviews
2. Referral to the school counsellor or outside agencies
3. Support from school based personnel

If a range of school based interventions has been unsuccessful, support may be requested by referring individual cases of unsatisfactory attendance to the Home School Liaison Program.

Student Attendance in Government Schools: Procedures (PD/2005/0259/VO7)