



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Name of policy	Attendance Policy
Date of review	22 nd November 2021
Policy status	Approved
Date effective	2 nd February 2022
Contact person	Principal
Date for review	Every year or as required by legislative changes

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1.1. POLICY STATEMENT

The principal is responsible for the accurate and rigorous monitoring of the attendance of all students and for the implementation of appropriate strategies to maintain attendance at 90%.

1.2. WHO IT APPLIES TO

The CAPS Coolgardie attendance policy applies to all students and Guardian/Carers who enroll their child into CAPS Coolgardie.

1.3. LEGISLATIONS & OTHER REQUIREMENTS

School Education Act (1999)

Part 2, Division 3 of the WA School Education Act 1999 sets out attendance requirements that all Western Australian schools must satisfy.

Australian Education Act 2013 and Australian Education Regulations 2013

Part 1, Division 2 of the Australian Education Regulations 2013 sets out information about student attendance eligibility requirements for the receipt of Commonwealth funding. This information is also available from the Non-Government Schools Census Guidelines that are produced each year.

The Guide to the Registration Standards and Other Requirements for Non-Government Schools, January 2020 outlines the registration standards that Independent schools must observe, along with some brief explanatory information. Below are standards that are relevant to student attendance:

Standard 6: Enrolment and Attendance Procedures

6.1 Student enrolment and attendance procedures and practices comply with all legal requirements.

Standard 7: Critical and Emergency Incidents

7.2 The governing body ensures the Director General is notified of every reportable incident as soon as practicable, and in any event within 48 hours of the incident, using the form published by the Director General for this purpose.

This standard is relevant to attendance because one of the definitions of a reportable incident states that:

An incident requiring a police or other emergency services response when a student appears to have been taken or removed, or goes missing and cannot be accounted for, from the school or from a school-related activity without proper authority.

1.4. DEFINITIONS

All Absences – “excused” and “unexcused” - are still considered absences unless it is a school sanctioned event.

Excused: can include illness, funerals or family emergencies (must be discussed with the principal for approval). Note students will still be considered absence on the roll but reason explained.

Unexcused: Missing the bus, sleeping in, uniform dirty or wet, family event or personal appointments or problems, sick student after 2 days without medical certificate and absence due to attending a funeral without notice.

Medical certificate – 2 days absence because of sickness requires a certificate from a medical practitioner.

Funeral notice – An absence due to a family death requires a funeral notice to be submitted to the administration team.

1.5. RATIONALE

Attendance at school is the single most important determinant for learning. Attending school must become a priority as does a desire and enthusiasm to do their best at school each day that they attend. At CAPS Coolgardie there is an expectation that regular attendance occur rather than poor attendance and we aim for 90% attendance. Our vision is ambitious but essential for spiritual, academic and social development to occur.

CAPS Coolgardie values the role of parents and know that without parent support a child will not develop the gifts that God has blessed them. CAPS Coolgardie relies on the parents to ensure that the child attends school every day as it is ultimately the Parents responsibility. CAPS Coolgardie believes that more than three absences a term or more than 6 a semester to be excessive and detrimental to a student's development. The goal should be for all students to make it through the year with fewer than 10 absences. Please support this initiative by not allowing a child to miss any days of school except for a serious illness. Excessive absences will not be accepted.

1.6. EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

A study (1986) found that:

- There is a linear relationship between attendance and achievement, and between mobility and achievement (higher attendance and lower mobility were both associated with higher achievement)
- The relationship between attendance and achievement were stronger than the relationship between mobility and achievement
- Substantial proportions of the socioeconomic - achievement relationship can be explained by student mobility and attendance.

Other significant research highlights the importance of regular school attendance and the possible serious negative consequences of poor attendance, such as:

- Missing one day a week of school from Prep to year 10 means missing two years and one term of schooling
- There is a direct correlation between attendance and achievement
- Frequent absences make it difficult for teachers who have to continually re-teach information and skills
- Being half an hour late to school each day from Prep to year 10 equals missing one year and one and a half terms of schooling
- Students who are frequently absent from school are over-represented in the juvenile justice system
- Poor attendance makes it difficult for students to form positive relationships with their peers
- Students who are frequently absent from school are more likely to end up homeless

- Research shows that students who are often absent from school are likely to earn less than their peers as adults

“Information for Parents / Caregivers, Attendance Improvement Package” page 6.2, Department of Education and Children’s Services, Government of South Australia.

2. PROCEDURES

2.1. POLICY OUTCOMES

Through the implementation and regular review of this policy, the following outcomes are expected:

- The school administration will regularly and systematically monitor student attendance for the purpose of ensuring student receive the best opportunities afforded to them and ones they deserve.
- Improvement in students’ overall attendance and participation to meet yearly target. (90%)
- Improvement in learning outcomes of those students for whom attendance improves.
- Increased understanding of the importance of regular attendance by students and families.
- Monitoring and review processes allow on-going improvements in policy and procedures.
- Community awareness of the value of regular school attendance will be heightened.

2.2. RESPONSIBILITIES

2.2.1. Parents/Guardians

Research demonstrates the importance the family plays in encouraging a child’s regular attendance.

Parents/ Guardians are responsible for the following:

- Getting their children to and from school, and on time.
- Children should be arriving at school between 8:15 a.m. and 8:20 a.m.
- Children should attend school every day that instruction is offered unless there is a valid reason for being absent (illness, serious family matters, important appointments).
- Parents/ Guardians must provide the school with an appropriate explanation for non-attendance by phone and with a note.
- Parents/ Guardians must return the absence form with an appropriate explanation when a phone call and note have not been received. Failure to do so can result in attendance meetings.
- Parents/ Guardians must notify the school when there will be extended absences, providing reasons for the absence.
- Attending meetings and working in partnership with the school personnel to address issues of poor attendance

2.2.2. Teachers

Teachers are expected to:

- Keep accurate student attendance and late records through SEQTA.
- Form teachers are responsible for entering accurate attendance records into SEQTA by 8:50am.
- High school teachers are responsible for recording accurate attendance records in SEQTA within 15 minutes of class commencing.
- Primary school teachers are responsible for recording accurate attendance records into SEQTA within 15 minutes of class commencement for AM and PM roll.
- Teachers are to remember it is their responsibility to make sure that all rolls are completed each day this includes SEQTA and hard copy as well.
- All hard copies must be handed in every Friday before 3:30pm to student services officer.
- Students who arrive after the teacher records attendance must be sent to the office to receive a late note (both for form and class attendance)
- Students who arrive late to class but teachers have not recorded attendance must be recorded as late by the teacher.
- Monitor student attendance and send parent notes explaining reasons for absences or lateness to administration officers.

2.2.3. Principal, Deputy Principals and Student Services officer

The Leadership Team, Office Administrators and Student Support Services Team are responsible for:

- Ensuring the implementation of Attendance Policy and Procedures.
- Ensuring implementation of attendance recording protocols.
- Collecting and analysing relevant data regularly and contacting Parent/ Guardians to ascertain the reasons for absences and lateness.
- Identifying students displaying significant patterns of absence and/ or late arrivals and report to Principal.
- Organizing attendance meetings with parents/guardians and Principal or student services officer.
- Filling out individual attendance plans and filing away Individual Attendance Plans (Appendix 1).
- Sharing information regarding student attendance with Parents/ Guardians in school newsletter.
- Rewarding and recognising excellent attendance through a variety of strategies

2.3. SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PROCESSES

2.3.1. Monitoring Non-attendance and patterns of Non-attendance.

- **Missing school for appointments** – Parents/guardians are responsible for scheduling medical appointments, bank appointments and other personal appointments outside of school times. The best times are Friday afternoons as we finish school at 1:30pm or during school holidays. If an appointment cannot be organized whilst school is in operation, he or she should not be absent for the whole school day.

- **Suspensions are considered absences** – If a child is suspended as a result of their behavior those days will be deemed as absences but approved.
- **Early dismissal** – attending every class on every day becomes an important strategy in improving educational outcomes and therefore students who are picked up early can disrupt the child's learning environment. CAPS Coolgardie is committed to getting our students to be valuable contributors to their families and communities by developing the skills necessary for success. We believe this starts with attendance and CAPS Coolgardie requires prior notice if a child is to leave early from school. If a student must be dismissed early parents must provide a note. Calling in, unless it is an emergency, to inform the school is not acceptable.
- **Bus transport and attendance** – Missing the bus is not a valid reason for a student to miss a whole day of school. If a student does miss the bus because they have gotten up late parent/Guardians should have an alternative plan to get their children to school. Parents/Guardians should call the school immediately if their child misses the bus so that the school knows the reason and can work together to fix the problem.
- **Five absences to start the school year or during the school year** – If a student is absent for the first five days of a school term and no contact has been made between family and school to explain the reason, that child can lose their place and be considered no longer enrolled as a student of CAPS Coolgardie. If a student is absent for five consecutive days during the school term and no contact has been made between family and school to explain the reason, that child can lose their place and be considered no longer enrolled as a student of CAPS Coolgardie.
- **Attendance at after school events** – Student must be in school for the whole day in order to attend school events, unless the school has been given prior notice. In addition students whose attendance becomes a concern cannot attend school events or other school sanctioned events such as sporting competitions.
- **The school will track and follow up on student absences** – At the commencement of the school year staff will undertake a revision of the attendance policy and seek support from parents and Guardians. CAPS Coolgardie will audit attendance daily. If a student is absent the administration staff will make a reasonable effort to make contact with parents/guardians by telephone, text, writing or in person. The Deputy Principal or Principal will follow up ongoing attendance issues with the parents/guardians.
- **Assessments** – Any student absent when they are expected to undertake assessments such as exams, quizzes or other tests must take them when he or she returns.
- **Vacations** – Taking a child away on vacation is not acceptable unless prior arrangements have been made to catch up on missed work.

2.3.2. Consequences for Absences

No absences in a semester: Students and Parents/Guardians will be recognized.

3 absences in a term: If a student is away from school for this period of time it is considered a concern. A follow up meeting with the Deputy or principal and parent/guardian must occur. The meeting will focus on developing a solution together as well as an attendance plan. If a student misses another 3 days then another parent meeting will occur to develop a solution and attendance plan.

6 absences in a semester: If a student is away from school for this period of time it is considered a concern. A follow up with the Deputy or principal and parent/guardian must occur. The meeting will focus on developing a solution together as well as an attendance plan.

10 absences in a Year: If a student is away from school for this period of time it is considered a concern. A follow up with the Deputy or principal and parent/guardian must occur. The meeting will focus on developing a solution together as well as an attendance plan.

20 absences in a Year: If a student is away from school for this period of time he or she is considered truant and at risk. A follow up with the Deputy or principal and parent/guardian will occur. A student's enrollment at this point will be discussed and decided on.

Please Note: if a student attendance falls below 60% that student is at risk of being removed from the CAPS Coolgardie enrolment.

2.3.3. Lateness

Definition of lateness

The school opens every morning at 8:25. Students are expected to arrive at school between 8:20 and 8:25am. Students arriving after 8:30am are considered late. Those who are on the school bus and if it arrives late, those students are not considered late.

Consequences of lateness

Below describes the consequence for lateness

No lateness in a semester: Students and Parents/Guardians will be recognized.

Any lateness will result in parent notification via SMS on SEQTA or a phone call

3 lateness in a term: If a student is late for this period of time it is considered a concern. A follow up meeting with the Deputy or principal and parent/guardian must occur. The meeting will focus on developing a solution together as well as an time plan.

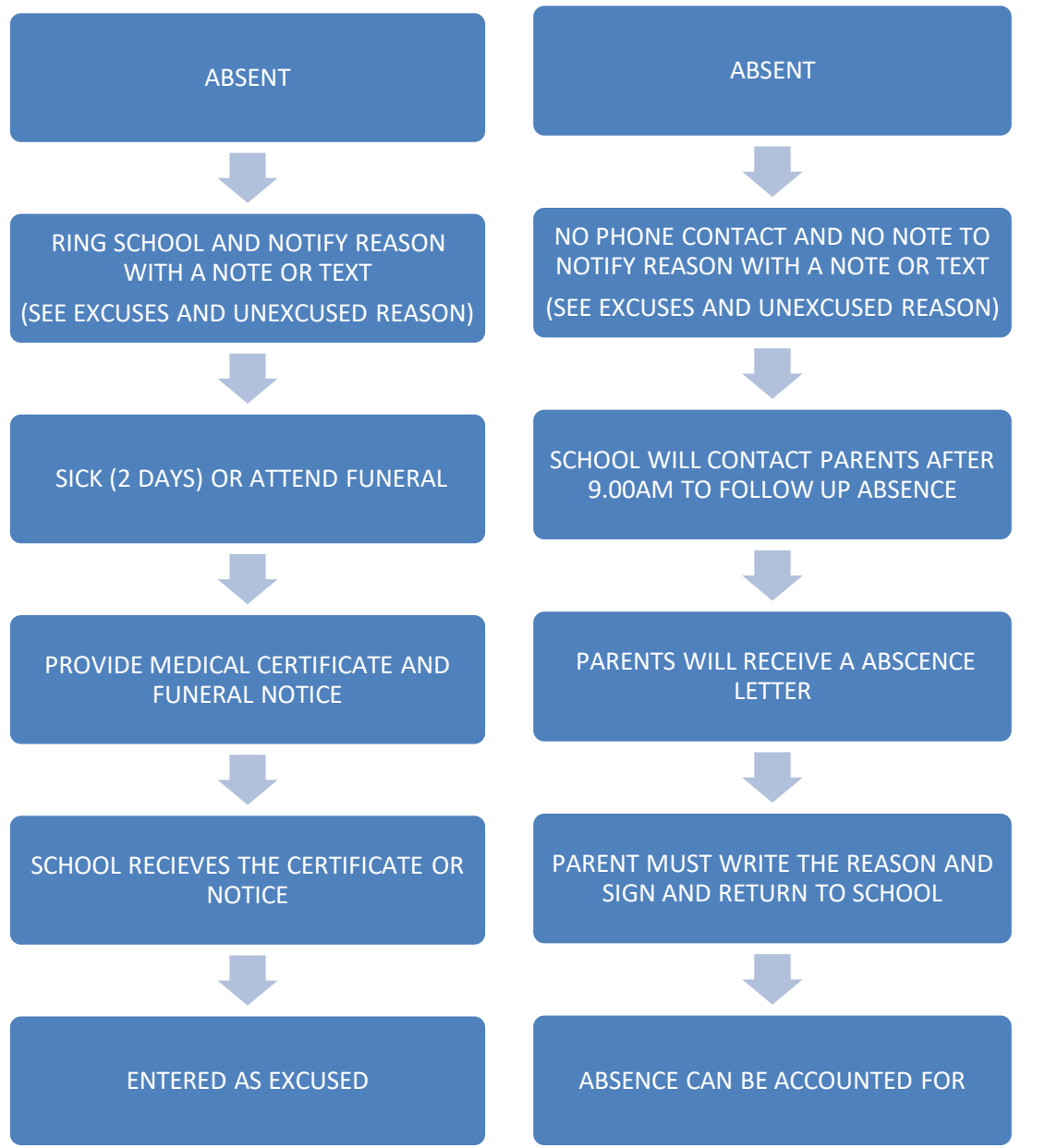
6 lateness in a semester: If a student is late for this period of time it is considered a concern. A follow up with the Deputy or principal and parent/guardian must occur. The meeting will focus on developing a solution together as well as an on time plan.

3 Lateness equal 1 absence: If a student arrives to school late three times it will equal one absence and be recorded as such on the student's records.

10 lateness in a Year: If a student is late to school for this period of time it is considered a concern. A follow up with the Deputy or principal and parent/guardian must occur. The meeting will focus on developing a solution together as well as a punctuality plan.

Every 3 late arrivals to school results as an official absence, excessive late arrival to school becomes a truancy problem.

C. PARENT COMMUNICATION FLOW CHART



3. ATTENDANCE STRATEGIES

1. Use resources to inform and engage parents and the wider community about the importance of attendance. (Fact sheets, newsletters and parent meetings)
2. Award 100% Attendance Certificates to those students achieving 100% attendance each term and the year. (Appendix 3)
3. Class celebration e.g. free dress day, pizza party, when they have the 90% attendance for the term.
4. Excursions, this includes the end of year reward trip and sporting teams have a prerequisite of 80% to participate.
5. Classes are awarded a trophy weekly for the highest attendance for the week during assembly.
6. Parents/ Guardians are informed of attendance rates for each year level via the school newsletter each term.
7. At enrolment interview parents/guardians and students discuss with principal attendance expectations.
8. Parents/guardians are given a parent handbook stating the attendance expectations.
9. Parents/Guardians are informed when students miss a day of school as well as attendance meetings with parent/guardian and principal after 3 absences.

