

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Legislative Requirements

The Regulations require that:

- All schools must maintain accurate admissions registers and accurate daily attendance registers for all students enrolled in the school.
- All schools must use an attendance register on the approved form (E19/1) to record student attendance unless the school has been given approval by the Secretary for Education to use an alternative register.

School Registers

School registers are legal documents which may be used in court proceedings. School registers must be retained for at least seven years from the date of the last entry.

Procedures for marking attendance:

1. Attendance is to be marked electronically by the teacher in the classroom each morning (by 9.05am,) and afternoon (at 1.35pm.)
2. If the teacher has definite knowledge of the reason why the student is absent then the appropriate code should be entered (refer attached appendix for an explanation of absence codes). If they are unaware of the reason, ? (unknown absence) is to be selected.
3. Each teacher is to keep an up to date hard copies (at least 2) of the class list in their register folder. **Should a reliever be in the class**, they will mark the paper register, and send it over to the office so the office manager can complete the electronic version.
4. The office manager will check that all registers have been marked electronically by 9.15am. If emails or parent notes have been received at the office, they will be entered by the Office Manager. The Principal will be informed of any teachers who have not marked the register. **Principal will notify the teacher of the oversight by visiting the classroom.**
5. Weekly roll totals will be collated electronically by the office manager.

Absences

1. Whenever possible, parents/caregivers will be encouraged to advise the school of an impending absence ahead of time. When this is not possible, then the parents/caregivers will be asked to inform the school as soon as possible after the event (eg by phone on the day of a student's illness, or by note on the first day when the student returns to school).
2. The following methods for explaining student absences, either before or after the event will be accepted from parents/caregivers:
 - i. A phone call
 - ii. A face to face explanation

- iii. A note
- iv. An email to school stating the student's name, date of absence and the reason for it.
- v. A certificate from a health professional.

Unexplained Absences

1. Half an hour after the start of morning and afternoon school, the office manager will use the attendance programme to identify students who are absent. In the case of those for whom no explanation has been received by the school, the office manager will contact a parent/caregiver by phone. If an explanation is received this will be recorded as the reason for the absence using the Absence Codes.
2. If the absence remains unexplained when the student returns to school, the class teacher will seek to obtain an absence note through the student. If that is unsuccessful after 2 days, the teacher will attempt to contact the caregivers by phone. If no satisfactory explanation for an absence has been received by the school after 3 days of the student returning to school, the parents will be contacted by the Principal. The Principal is responsible for judging whether absences are justified or unjustified. Where absences are deemed unjustified, the office manager will change the code to T and contact parents either by phone or letter. The aim of this contact is to alert parent/caregivers to the fact that the absence falls outside what is acceptable to the school and that any repetition of this will require further action. If absences continue (ie more than 3 unjustified absent days per term), the Principal will arrange a meeting with the parents. Should the absences continue, a referral to the Truancy Service will be made.
3. In order to comply with the requirements of a roll audit, class teachers will complete and retain paper returns for five days around 1 March and 1 July (ie for the two school days prior to the date in question, on that date, and for the two school days immediately after that date). On these days, in addition to recording student attendance and absences in the SMS as usual, the class teacher will also record this information on printed class lists, which (s)he will sign. These lists are to be stored centrally by the office manager and may be asked for during a roll audit.
4. In the case of a student who is engaged in learning that is taking place not under the direct supervision of the school, the Principal will use his/her discretion to decide as to whether the student will be marked as present or absent from school. Each case will be taken on its merits.

In the event of an emergency evacuation:

1. Each teacher has a register folder in the classroom in which they keep an up to date class list. In the case of an emergency, the teacher takes this folder with them to the evacuation assembly point on the court.
2. The office manager is responsible for maintaining an up to date print out of students who are absent each day. This is given out to teachers at the assembly point. The office manager also maintains a hard copy of current class lists in the emergency folder in case classes are outside when an emergency occurs.

Archives

1. The electronic attendance records are backed up on the server.
2. Added to this, at the end of each week, a paper copy of attendance records for each class is printed off and filed. The office manager is responsible for this.

Reporting to the Board of Trustees

1. The Principal is responsible for collating and analysing attendance data each term, noting any trends. This information is reported to the Board of Trustees each term.