

Elizabeth South Primary School Policy

Attendance Policy

Please note this policy is mandatory and staff, students and parents are required to adhere to the content

Publication date	26/2/2016 (Based on existing policy)
Review date	26/2/2017
Related legislation/applicable section of legislation	Education Act 1972 Education Regulations 2012 Compulsory Education Legislation Children's Protection Act 1993
Related policies, procedures, guidelines, standards, frameworks	Policy Attendance requirements for schools
Author	Michael McVeity (School Counsellor) Stuart Knox (Deputy Principal)
Status	Approved- Minuted in Staff Meeting notes
Governing Council Ratification	3/3/2016

RATIONALE

At Elizabeth South Primary School we are committed to educational excellence. We work in partnership with families to provide children with learning opportunities that will provide a solid foundation for their future. Research shows that success in learning is directly proportional to regular attendance and participation in education programs. The Elizabeth South Primary School Attendance Policy places priority on the early identification of non-attendance and irregular attendance, and outlines practices to support regular attendance of students in our school community.

LEGALITIES

All children between the ages of 6 and 16 are required by law to attend school full time and children between 16 and 17 must participate in a full-time approved learning program (Education Act, 1972). If a child is 5 and enrolls to attend school, then they must attend full time, as any other student. If a student is going to be absent from school for an extended period of time, the parent/caregiver must inform the school immediately. If a child has been ill and has seen a doctor, a certificate from the doctor will assist in accounting for the absence. Classroom teachers are responsible for keeping an accurate and up to date roll book. Roll books are legal documents and must be an accurate reflection of a student's attendance. All notes and slips given to a classroom teacher to account for absences must be kept with the roll book and not destroyed.

RESPONSIBILITIES

FAMILIES

Parents/Caregivers must enrol their child in an education program from 6 years (the age of compulsion). Once a child is enrolled, even if it is prior to their sixth birthday, they are expected to attend school regularly. The primary responsibility of a student's attendance rests with the parent/caregiver. Having positive parenting in relation to schooling helps children to appreciate the importance of education and learning. Good habits such as structure and routine in the mornings assist children in getting used to getting up and ready for school.

When Parents/Caregivers enrol their child at school they accept the responsibility to:

- Provide information that may assist in planning for the child's learning; for example medical conditions, family issues, developmental milestones
- Enable their child to attend punctually and regularly. At Elizabeth South Primary School children are expected to arrive at school no earlier than 8:30am and no later than 8:50am
- Provide an explanation to the school whenever their child is absent via a letter, a telephone call, personal contact or a medical certificate. After three days a written explanation is required. Upon enrolment parents/carers are given a parent Attendance Information Pamphlet (APPENDIX 1) as well as an attendance note pad which is an easy way for parents/carers to explain absences (APPENDIX 2)
- Apply for an exemption whenever there is a planned absence such as a family holiday
- Let the school know if an extended absence is likely and negotiate with the class teacher if work is required
- When a child is late for school it is appropriate that the parent/caregiver explains the reason for the lateness and ensure a late slip is obtained from the front office
- Work with the school on intervention strategies to improve punctuality and attendance if required

STUDENTS

Students enrolled in school have responsibility for their attendance. The level of responsibility will be determined by the individual circumstances of the child.

Children are expected to:

- Attend school regularly
- Be punctual
- Go straight to class if arriving after the 8:50am bell
- Engage appropriately in the education program

TEACHERS

Staff are responsible for supporting the agreed attendance improvement processes for the site and will:

- Provide a relevant and dynamic learning program that seeks to engage all children and offers opportunity for success, thus encouraging regular attendance
- Record attendances/absences according to DECD requirements
- Contribute to the analysis of attendance trends and the development and implementation of school Attendance Improvement Plan
- After 3 consecutive days of unexplained absence attempt to contact the parent/carer at least 3 times if communication from the family has not been received
- Document any strategies/interventions to improve attendance and include these in the child's file
- Advise the Counsellor of frequent or prolonged absences through the documentation on a green attendance concern form (located in cupboard under screen in the staffroom) to raise concerns about frequent absences, late to school regularly and dismissed early too often.
- Work with Leadership Team and families to develop a Student Attendance Improvement Plan
- Co-ordinate the collection of work for students who are unable to attend school for acceptable reasons and for whom work is requested
- Make Mandatory Notifications as appropriate

LEADERSHIP TEAM/COUNSELLOR

The Leadership Team are responsible for developing and supporting the site attendance improvement processes.

The Leadership Team will:

- Ensure that absence data is processed according to DECD guidelines
- Ensure that the appropriate follow up has been completed before attempting to contact parents/caregivers
- Document interventions, strategies, home visits, phone calls and include them in the child's file
- Work with teachers and families to develop an individual Student Attendance Improvement Plan
- Work with teachers and families to determine underlying causes of frequent absenteeism and/or late arrival
- Refer to an Attendance Counsellor on an ED171 form if attendance issues are not resolved
- Meets each term with SAC to review referred cases and pre referral discussions, home visits with SAC, case management with SAC and other agencies and DECD Support Services. This sometimes results in student attendance plans being developed.
- Work with other agencies eg Centacare, ICAN, FSA to work with supporting families to get their children to school.

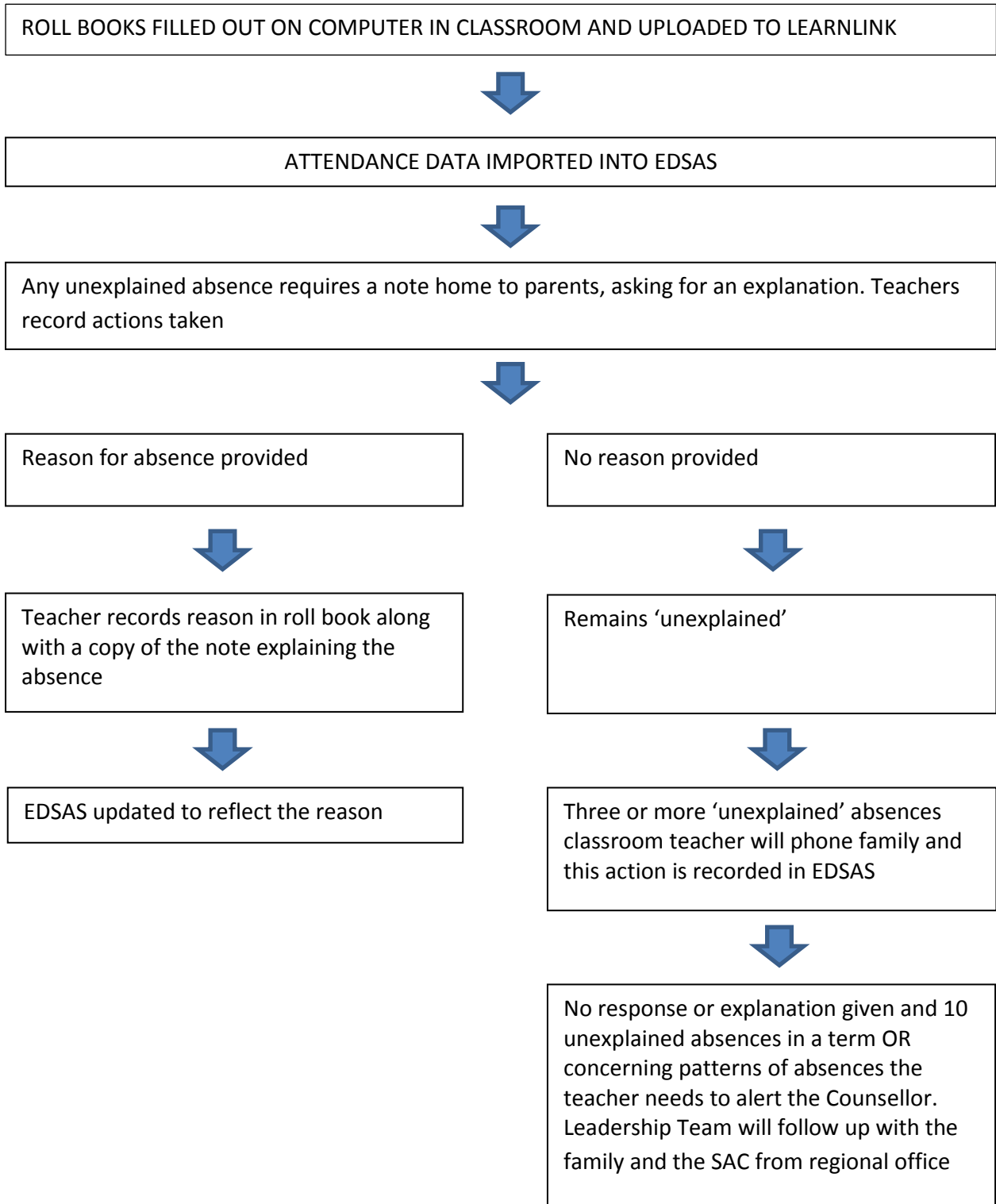
- Liaises with SAC about code clarifications and other anomalies
- Counsellor keeps Principal informed of any major issues relating to attendance

INITIATIVES TO INCREASE ATTENDANCE

- The Better Buddies Program
- Student lead Lunchtime Activities 3 per week
- Wakakirri (not 2015)
- Choir
- Student lead assemblies
- Discos
- Good Paedagogy
- Skilled staff
- Student Voice (Only 1 SRC in term 1 so far)
- Values initiative with Buddy Bear
- Post Cards initiative
- Excellent cooperative work with our support services staff
- Our engagement with outside agencies to support students and families
- Sports Day
- Curriculum and behaviour differentiation
- SAPSASA
- 7:1 Seven positives to every negative.
- The kitchen garden.



ATTENDANCE FLOW CHART





ELIZABETH SOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL



Absenteeism/ Lateness/ Early Dismissal

Please complete and submit to School Counsellor for follow up: PTO written response

Teacher _____ Date ____/____/____

I am concerned about _____ because s/he has been

- Away for 3 consecutive days with no explanation from parent/carer
- Absent frequently (_____ days in the last month)
- Late to school regularly (_____ days in the last month)
- Dismissed early too often (_____ days in the last month)

Tick box(es) as appropriate

- I have: sent an absence explanation note home. Not returned ____/____/____
- rung the parent without success 3 times ____/____/____, ____/____/____, ____/____/____
- spoken to the parent personally ____/____/____

Result/comment



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Result/comment

APPENDIX 2

 <p>ATTENDANCE INFORMATION RECEIVED</p> <p>Student Name: _____</p> <p>Room/Teacher: _____</p> <p>Date(s) absent: / / to / /</p> <p>Information received from: _____</p> <p>Reason for absence: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Medical/Dental appointment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sick, expected to return _____ (day)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other explanation, please specify: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Late—Time: _____ Reason: _____</p> <p>Initials of person taking message: _____</p>	 <p>ATTENDANCE INFORMATION RECEIVED</p> <p>Student Name: _____</p> <p>Room/Teacher: _____</p> <p>Date(s) absent: / / to / /</p> <p>Information received from: _____</p> <p>Reason for absence: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Medical/Dental appointment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sick, expected to return _____ (day)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other explanation, please specify: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Late—Time: _____ Reason: _____</p> <p>Initials of person taking message: _____</p>
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