



BALARANG PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mrs Tina Duffield
Principal

Government Road
Oak Flats N.S.W. 2529
Phone: (02) 4256 1846
Email: balarang-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au

Balarang Public School – Attendance Policy and Procedures

Rationale

Regular attendance at school is essential for students to access quality teaching and learning experiences that will increase career and life opportunities. Schools, in partnership with parents are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students.

While parents are legally responsible for student attendance, school staff, as part of their duty of care, record and monitor attendance. Schools provide a caring teaching and learning environment, addressing the learning and support needs of students, including those with additional learning needs and health conditions. We work to promote a sense of wellbeing and belonging to the school community.

Link to Department Policies:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/student-wellbeing/attendance-behaviour-and-engagement/school-attendance>

https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/exempt_gui.pdf

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/school-attendance-policy>

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/Student-Attendance-in-Government-Schools-Procedures-2015-word-version.docx.docx>

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This procedure aims to establish guidelines regarding the recording and monitoring of student attendance at Balarang Public School in line with Department of Education policies. This includes:

- Ensuring our school procedure aligns with the Departmental Attendance Policy in regard to collecting, monitoring and reviewing reasons for student absence, inclusive of whole and partial days, to ensure students are in regular attendance.
- Following up with parents and caregivers as well as discussion with the Home School Liaison Officer if required.

IMPLEMENTATION: The following are expectations of staff at Balarang Public School:

Teacher Responsibilities:

- Accurately mark rolls electronically each morning by 9.15am. If there is a technical difficulty, teachers must note students in attendance and those absent on a paper roll and send this to the office. N.B. If a casual teacher is responsible for the class, casual access will be provided to Sentral or a paper class roll will be provided to the teacher as part of their school induction by the executive responsible for staff cover, or the administration staff.
- Ensure students that arrive late or leave early have been signed in/out at the office, and this action is communicated with teaching staff through the distribution of a slip.
- Ensure all notes or electronic responses regarding the reason for a student's absence have been sighted within 7 days and the reason approved by the class teacher (as the Principal's delegate). Teachers should check the previous days roll in Sentral to confirm absence reason (office staff will enter parent absence notifications from Sentral). Teachers should seek advice from their supervisor or Principal if they are unsure of the correct absence code. Any notes received by teachers should be recorder in Sentral and the notes sent to the office. *N.B after 7 days the absence is automatically recorded as unexplained and cannot be changed by the teacher.*
- **Contact parents/caregivers within two school days of a student's unexplained absence to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the student.**
- Promote and encourage positive school attendance within class.
- Monitor student attendance in your class. If a student has a pattern of absences throughout the term, including late arrivals or early departures, contact the parent/caregiver to discuss and address concerns. Note any correspondence in Sentral --> Wellbeing --> Attendance. Students with less than 90% attendance and those with regular partial attendance should be closely monitored with interventions discussed with the Learning Support Team.
- Students with three unjustified absences during any term, or ongoing or uncommon absence concerns must be referred to the Stage Supervisor.

Stage Supervisor Responsibilities:

- Refer continuing concerns on to executive responsible for attendance and the Learning Support Team.
- Lead (or support teachers to lead) 20 day attendance monitoring meetings with parents/carers.
- Review attendance for classes they supervise at least twice per term in executive meetings. This information should be discussed at stage admin meetings and with respective classroom teachers.

Principal Responsibilities:

- The school regularly evaluates and addresses school attendance through the school plan.
- School staff are trained to implement school attendance policies and procedures and that personnel with delegated responsibility for maintaining attendance records are supervised.
- Effective referral and support networks are established so that students whose attendance is identified as being of concern and their families can be connected to relevant services within the department and with local external agencies in discussion with parents.
- Any child protection concerns underlying school attendance issues (including educational neglect) are managed consistent with the Child Protection: Responding to and reporting students at risk of harm.
- If concerns include not sighting the child principals must, as soon as possible contact the NSW Police Force to request that a child safety check be undertaken.
- Consideration is given to the Mandatory Reporter Guide (MRG), specialist advice and professional judgement, where there are concerns about suspected risk of harm. In accordance with the MRG Neglect Education - Habitual Absence is defined as 'The child/young person is of compulsory school age (6 years to current leaving age) AND is habitually absent'. 'Habitually absent is a minimum of 30 days absence within the past 100 school days. However, principals should consider other factors, such as the student's age and learning support needs in deciding on action earlier than the 30 days indicated.

HSLO Responsibilities:

- Provides a supportive service to students, parents and schools to encourage the full participation of all students in education.
- Provide support to students enrolled in New South Wales government schools and children of compulsory school age who are not enrolled in a registered school.
- Function as part of the Educational Services team to support school practices that promote regular attendance.
- Conduct periodic roll checks in schools, recommending improvements, where necessary.
- Develop attendance improvement plans, in consultation with school personnel, to resolve attendance issues.
- Organise attendance meetings with parents, students and school staff.
- Work with other agencies, e.g. NSW Police Force on joint anti-truancy operations when required.
- Advise schools on additional strategies as an alternative to Home School Liaison Program support.
- Compile support documentation to ensure correct procedures are followed if legal resolution is required.
- Professionally develop and support staff with teaching strategies that support attendance, as required.

Administration Staff Responsibilities:

- Check all rolls are marked by 9:30am. Contact any teachers who have not submitted their roll promptly.
- Send absence notifications via Sentral messages to parents of students who are absent. Absence notifications to be sent by 10:00am.
- Support parents in making an application for leave to the principal if parents are intending to take students on a holiday during the school term of a duration greater than 2 days. At all times, encouragement of holidays should be done within the school holiday period.
- All written explanations, phone messages, verbal notifications are to be recorded electronically via Sentral.
- Ensure all partial absences are electronically recorded as they arrive or leave, providing a slip from the office to present to the teacher. The Principal (or Principal's delegate), at the time of the partial absence will make a determination as to the appropriate absence code, inclusive of 'unjustified' if no satisfactory explanation is given.

Parents and Carers Responsibilities:

- Respond to Sentral absence texts, phone call, or a handwritten note to provide a written explanation of your child's absence from school. If you ring the school or the school rings you, your phone call will be acknowledged and reported by staff.
- Provide a medical certificate for a sick leave absence greater than 3 days.
- Make an appointment to see the Principal if an absence greater than 2 days for a family holiday is to be undertaken. This must be done prior to the absence occurring. Please bring any travel documentation with you to the meeting. It is an expectation from the Department of Education that family holidays be planned during school holiday periods whenever possible.
- Provide a note, or verbal explanation, for late arrivals and early departures.
- Where possible, appointments (e.g. doctor, specialist, dentist) should be made outside school hours.
- Understand that early departure from a carnival, open day etc. will be recorded as an unjustified partial absence.
- Speak with your child's teacher if you are experiencing difficulties getting your child to school. We are here to support you and your child.

Students Responsibilities:

Attend school every day, unless due to illness (under the care of a responsible adult).

Be on time for school every day.

Ensure explanation notes are given to teachers when returning to school.

Evaluation

These procedures will be regularly evaluated and updated throughout the school year. A review of the procedures will be held by the conclusion of each year and any alterations noted.