DET NSW

2013

Bargo Public School

Attendance Plan

Modified Attendance Plan

Home School Liaison Officer Referral

Roll Marking Procedures

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**Policy Context**

The *Education Act 1990* requires the parents of children of compulsory school age to enrol them at a government school, or registered non-government school or to register them with the Board of Studies for home schooling. The Act also requires parents ensure the regular attendance of their children at school. It is an offence for parents to fail to meet these obligations unless they can show they have a defense (for example, illness or accident). Parents convicted of this offence, may be fined up to $1,100 for each offence.

The Department undertakes legal action in the case of parents who do not fulfill these obligations despite all reasonable measures being undertaken by school and regional staff to support them.

**Attendance Plan** Improving K-6 student attendance is a priority of Bargo Public School.

**Introduction**

The purpose of the attendance self-evaluation process is to provide the school with support to evaluate attendance and develop findings and recommendations for improving attendance. This will assist the school in modifying targets and initiatives in the school plan relating to attendance.

The Principal will implement the attendance plan. The School plan will be adjusted to accommodate same.

#### Monitoring

Regular roll checks will be made by both the Principal and the Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO) to ensure that all students maintain an acceptable attendance pattern.

If a classroom teacher is concerned about lack of attendance or consistent lateness they should seek advice from their team leader or the Principal so that rectification measures can be taken and then complete the HSLO referral, submitting it to the principal for a Letter 5.

**Procedures for Dealing with Unacceptable Attendance**

School Measures:- Bargo PS implements a wide range of strategies to support the regular attendance of students, including contact with parents to resolve issues of non-attendance. These strategies include letters, phone calls, interviews and family support.

In the case of a student who has been identified with unacceptable attendance (attendance pattern of less than 90%), it is necessary to document the measures taken to monitor and improve attendance. The school is required to provide documentary evidence of its interventions before making a HSLO referral. This documentation will take the form of the *Sydney Region Attendance Checklist for Schools*. See Appendix One.

When classroom teachers feel a student has an unacceptable attendance pattern and the student is not already being monitored, they should make a referral to the executive/principal. The executive/principal will discuss and implement strategies to improve attendance. This **MUST** include the use of monitoring with the Sydney Region Attendance Checklist for Schools so that appropriate documentation is available if a referral needs to be made to the HSLO.

HSLO Intervention and Investigation: - Where the school has taken all reasonable action to support the regular attendance of a student of **compulsory** school age but the student continues to attend erratically, the matter should be referred to the HSLO program for investigation. Investigation, including a review of school documentation, must be completed within five school days of referral.

If appropriate, and within five school days of completing the investigation, HSLO must develop an attendance improvement plan for the student. The plan will be developed in consultation with the school and will identify targets, strategies and timelines.

If the investigation indicates that home school liaison intervention is not warranted, the HSLO must, within five school days, provide the school with advice on additional strategies to be implemented by the school.

**Attendance School Self-Evaluation: Document Analysis**

When conducting a document analysis on school attendance a number of sources need to be examined. Our school is using both manual and electronic recording of attendance registers. The following table describes particular documents and the information that can be provided.

**Document Data being collected through examination**

School welfare policy – our policy recognising good attendance, with 100% attendance awards, issued yearly and half yearly

🗸School discipline policy - consequences for truanting

🗸Attendance register - register maintained (roll) and correct codes being used

🗸Absentee notes - system in place for follow up on absences, evidence of follow up

🗸School attendance- mandatory attendance plan if school attendance is below regional level

* strategies should be identified by school to improve attendance.
* special circumstances register systems in place and operating.
* Part-time attendance system in place and operating
* examination of OASIS - attendance data fortnightly.
* examination of attendance data, patterns, identified students with poor attendance
* newsletters or information sheets provided to parents on attendance
* parents and carers are being informed and reminded of the importance of student attendance.

🗸Home School Liaison Officer - (HSLO) referrals compiled by staff, with letter from principal.

* students with high absences have been referred onto the-(HSLO)
* student exemption and leave-applications for students completed by principal
* leave and exemption systems are being utilised

**Questions for use when informing school staff of their responsibility for student attendance**

1. Do you know what the school attendance rate is and how it compares with the state and the region?

2. When and how is attendance data reviewed in the school?

3. How are students with a high absentee rate identified? What is done with students who have a high absentee rate? Do you think this is effective in reducing absenteeism?

4. How are parents/carers contacted when a student is absent? What is the timeframe for the parent/carer, of a student with an unexplained absence, being contacted?

5. When are students notified to the Home School Liaison program?

6. What systems does the school have to reward good or improving attendance? Do you think these systems work/don’t work in improving attendance? Give reasons.

7. Do you know and understand the Department’s attendance policies and procedures?

8. Have you ever had any training in the use of the school attendance procedure?

9. Can you think of anything that could be done to improve school attendance?

**Questions for use with interviewing students about attendance**

1. Do teachers expect you to come to every class?

2. How easy is it to wag school here?

3. What happens if you are late in the morning? Do you have to explain why?

4. Do teachers talk to you at about attending class?

5. Do teachers challenge you if you are out of class, roaming the school?

6. What sort of checking/follow up, is carried out on kids who are absent from class?

7. What are some of the reasons that kids stay away, wag it, skip class?

8. Are teachers consistent in checking whether kids are at school or not?

9. Do you think teachers care if you come to school or not? How do you know this?

10. If you are away, what do you have to do to explain the reason why? Does the school check this?

11. How disruptive are kids being late to class? Is this a minor, major problem for your learning?

12. Do many teachers give early marks?

13. Do you think there is a connection between kids not coming to school and crime, drugs, unemployment, etc.?

14. Do kids who are consistently away, parent(s), carers try to do something about it?

15. Do you know it’s against the law not to attend school?

16. Does the school have any awards or recognition for those who do come to school most of the time?

17. Do you have any ideas about this?

**Questions for use with interviewing Parents about attendance**

Do you know if?

1. The school has a system for rewarding good attendance.

2. The school has a system for rewarding improving attendance.

3. The school has a system for promptly identifying when my child is away

4. The school advertises the importance of students attending school

5. I know the consequences for my child’s learning by not attending school

6. I know the legal consequences, for my child not attending school.

**Actions to be implemented by the school to improve school attendance.**

🗸 Teachers are to ensure they maintain a positive learning environment in their workspace and project a positive attitude to learning, behaviour, and community.

🗸 The school needs to deliver a stimulating, energising appearance, both through concrete structures and ethos.

🗸 At all times students are to feel safe and protected while in the school and while attending any educational event organised by or through the school.

🗸 Friendship and collegial work between staff and students is paramount.

🗸 The maintenance of confidential information correctly stored and displayed is also vital. This should be treated with the upmost care.

***Actions supported by all school staff***

🗸 Rolls will be marked by 9.30 am

🗸 School gates are locked at 9.30 am and are unlocked at 3 pm

🗸 Absence notes are a requirement from the parents when their child does not attend school; this is outlined at parent/teacher information sessions and during the initial enrolment process.

🗸 Bargo Public School has developed a positive collegial relationship with the school HSLO officer and staff has the knowledge of when referrals to the HSLO are required.

🗸 When a student arrives late to school or is required to leave early to attend an appointment they need to report to the front office for a partial absence slip to be issued. This note has to be delivered to the class teacher before they can be admitted late to class or before an adult can remove them from class.

🗸 Staff housekeeping meetings keep the whole school staff abreast of relevant information pertaining to individual student attendance matters.eg holidays, long term illness or injury.

**SCHOOL ATTENDANCE - ROLLS**

Make sure all information is correct and current by checking with

1. Children
2. Record cards
3. Emergency contact forms
4. OASIS/ERN/LMBR
5. Parents

***Requirements***

* Mark roll daily
* Send home follow up notes to explain absences
* Store rolls safely - They are **LEGAL** document (teacher’s desk, top drawer)
* Send roll to the office by 10.30AM every FRIDAY

***Setting up your Roll***

* Boys and girls are entered separately on the same page, list boys first.

Enter –

* + - Enrolment Registration Number,
    - D.O.B., Age at 1st Jan
    - Religion (next column) then
    - Sport house from printout provided from office (Enlarged to approx 121% on photocopier).

Enter any special information (eg wear classes, catches bus, allergic to milk, a language other than English is spoken at home, etc). Confidential information should not be entered.

Enter Phone Number (several if necessary) and Addressee - this is the name of the person(s) to whom correspondence will be addressed. *Be alert to single parents and parents/guardians with a name different to that of the child*

**Marking Procedures**

Follow the ‘Direction for Marking-Exceptions Method’ at the front of rolls.

* All marking to be done in black and every day before 9.30am.
* Mark the first and last days of term with an ‘ x’
* Colour lightly in a vertical broken RED line any Public Holidays or School development Days. Print the reason for the Holiday over the top or ‘ Roll Not Marked - School Development Day’ /Industrial Disputes (Part day)
* Marking Codes include:

Attend all day - No entry i.e. present.

Attend after strike - No entry i.e. present.

Absent all day - Pa (no note required).

Absent all day / sick - Sa.

Absent all day / Leave La

Representing school B

* When a child leaves the school, draw a line in red through the child’s name and particulars. Put a cross on last day of attendance and rule through to end of term
* Absences through Industrial Action are not to affect a student’s attendance record.
* ‘P’ should also be used for all part absences during the day.
* For statistical purposes, count any absences of 3 hours or longer duration as a full day’s absence.
* All part leave absences. Notes should be sent for approval to the Principal or Assistant Principals each morning.
* Proformas for early departure are to be filed in class roll with absence notes.

Notify supervisors of unexplained absences or patterns of non attendance. Teachers are required to complete the proforma which is send home seeking explanations (in front of roll). Upon return, teachers update roll and then handed proforma to the Principal.

HSLO proforma to be sent to Home School Liaison Officer through the Principal; where attendance causes ongoing concern (e.g. frequent absences with no explanation or unsatisfactory explanation and /or an established pattern of absences)

**Reflection**

Staff at Bargo Public School continue to take positive action to maintain a high attendance record by making our school a safe, motivating learning centre.

Negotiated Part Time Attendance Plan

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **School: Bargo Public School Student: XXXXXX Grade: XXX Dob: 00.00.00**  **A.T.S.I** | | | |
| Parent Responsibilities | Student Responsibilities | **School Responsibilities** | **Other Agency Contact** |
| To accept responsibility/care for child at all other times | To attend school for allotted time and follow school rules | Maintain plan and review weekly to monitor transition and make adjustments where necessary. |  |
| School Staff supporting Plan: XXXXXXX | | **Date of Planning Meeting:** XXXX | |
| **Learning Support Team coordinator:** XXXXXXXXXX | | **Last date student attended full day** XXXXXXXX | |
| **Case Manager:** XXXXXXXXXXXXXX | | **Review of this plan** (weeklyXXXXXXXXXXX | |
| Please tick as appropriate: Post-Suspension Plan Funding Support Out-of-home Care Transition Support class | | | |

**Plan**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Step*** | ***From*** | ***To*** | ***Frequency*** | ***Responsibility for supervision*** | ***Comments*** |
| eg 1 | 5.03.07 | 9.03.07 | M,W, Th, 9.15 – 11.00, T,F –12.00 | Mother to collect from Admin. | If leaving independently, issue Common Leave Pass |
| 1 | 28.04.10 | 28.04.10 | will attend school from 9am-10am. | Mother to collect from the office daily. is to complete allocated work at home. | Mother must sign out on sign out sheet. |
| 2 | 5.05.10 | 5.05.10 | will attend school from 9am-11am. | Mother to collect from the office daily. is to complete allocated work at home. | Mother must sign out on sign out sheet. |

**Agreement:**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Principal LST Coordinator/Case Manager Parent

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: 00 / 00 / 00**

**Student Welfare Consultant - Noted SED (Student Services)**

**Monitoring Sheet**

**Week beginning 26.04.10 WEEK 1**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Day** | **Negotiated time for attendance** | **Time arrived** | **Time left** | **Comment** |
| **Mon** |  |  |  |  |
| **Tue** |  |  |  |  |
| **Wed** |  |  |  |  |
| **Thu** |  |  |  |  |
| **Fri** |  |  |  |  |

**Week beginning 3.05.10 WEEK 2**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Day** | **Negotiated time for attendance** | **Time arrived** | **Time left** | **Comment** |
| **Mon** |  |  |  |  |
| **Tue** |  |  |  |  |
| **Wed** |  |  |  |  |
| **Thu** |  |  |  |  |
| **Fri** |  |  |  |  |

**Week beginning 10.05.10 WEEK 3**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Day** | **Negotiated time** | **arrived** | **Left** | **Comment** |
| **Mon** |  |  |  |  |
| **Tue** |  |  |  |  |
| **Wed** |  |  |  |  |
| **Thu** |  |  |  |  |

**Legal Action**

It is important that legal action to resolve attendance issues is not delayed unnecessarily. School education directors must, as soon as possible and within five school days, refer the matter for legal action if:

* the student’s attendance remains poor **and**
* the parents have not meaningfully engaged in the attendance improvement plan within 20 school days of the commencement of the plan.

Conciliation conferences are currently convened prior to referral for consideration of prosecution. However, these conferences have rarely been successful in resolving matters quickly. While attendance meetings may continue to be convened if appropriate, it is now recommended that formally convened conciliation conferences occur as a result of a decision by the court. Any attempt to convene a conciliation conference after a court appearance notice has been issued, should only be done in consultation with the lawyer dealing with the prosecution case, and subject to any orders or recommendations a court makes in any particular case.

**Referral to Department of Community Services**

If at any stage any officer of the Department suspects a child is at risk of harm, the officer must make an immediate report to the Department of Community Services.

#### Parent Awareness of the Importance of Attendance

Throughout the year there are several opportunities to raise parent and community awareness of the need for excellent attendance and the impact of poor attendance on academic performance. These include:

* Inclusion of a session on attendance at the Parent Information Evening in Term 1;
* Weekly publication of attendance rates and patterns in the newsletter/website*;*
* Publication of Attendance Census data when compiled in Terms 2 and 4;
* Letters to specific years, such as Kindergarten; and or
* Letters and attendance reports for parents of children with an attendance pattern of less than 90% at the end of Terms 1, 2 and 3.

Parents also need to be made aware of:

* the need to provide a written explanation of all absences; and
* the need to apply for a Certificate of Exemption for when students require leave for extended periods of time i.e. for overseas travel.

#### Recognising Excellent Attendance

Students with excellent attendance will be recognised. Attendance awards will be given to students at the end of the semester for 100% attendance in the previous semester.

#### Recognising Improved Attendance

In some circumstances the HSLO will recognise an improved attendance pattern. This recognition will form part of an attendance behaviour modification program.

***Supporting Documents***

***Appendix One***

**DEC**

**Attendance Checklist for Schools**

**Please attach this to your application for Home School Liaison Program assistance**

**Student: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ School: Bargo Public School**

Principals/executive and Learning Support Teams should ensure that a full range of strategies to restore school attendance has been implemented prior to applying for support from the Home School Liaison Program (HSLO Program Guidelines 2.4 Student Welfare Directorate 2008).

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Intervention** | **Yes/No** | **Date** | **Comment** |
| 1. Absentee Notice/Compulsory School  Attendance Note sent to parent/caregivers after 2 days unexplained absence. |  |  |  |
| 2. Student Interview with teacher/executive/HSLO to identify cause of poor attendance. |  |  |  |
| 3. Contact parents/caregivers by phone or letter to involve them in resolving the attendance issue |  |  |  |
| 4. School personnel organise attendance meeting with parent/caregiver. |  |  |  |
| 5. Individualised attendance monitoring e.g. Student placed on an attendance care, reports to a designated teacher, provided with a mentor, SC, LAS team, ESL support. |  |  |  |
| 6. Student discussed at LAS Team meetings to discuss attendance strategies and support required. |  |  |  |
| 7. Request for medical certificates – these should be carefully monitored. |  |  |  |
| 8. Involvement of outside agencies (as Appropriate) e.g. DOCS, Community Health, Housing, Juvenile Justice, local community organisations. |  |  |  |
| 9. Incentive program initiated i.e. reward for improved attendance. |  |  |  |
| 10. Curriculum/timetabling issues examined and amended if appropriate. |  |  |  |
| 11. Involvement of regional support staff (if appropriate) e.g. APLAST, CLO, ACLO |  |  |  |

**Please note that the application for support can only be signed by the principal**

**or the relieving principal (as per new attendance procedures).**

**Appendix Two: Principal to parent letter advising of referral to HSLP**

**Letter 5**

Addressee

Address 1

Address 2

Dear xxxxxxxxx

I refer to the attendance of your son/daughter, xxxxxxxxx at school.

The *Education Act (1990)* requires parents to ensure that children between the ages of six and fifteen attend school on each day that the school is open for instruction. If children are absent from school, parents are required to provide the school with an acceptable explanation within seven days of the absence.

You have previously been advised that xxxxxxxxx attendance is a matter of concern. The school has implemented a range of strategies to encourage xxxxxxxxx full attendance at school without success.

At a recent school Learning and Support Team meeting xxxxxxxxx’s pattern of attendance was reviewed and it is clear that xxxxxxxxx ’s attendance is still at an unacceptable level.

I am obliged to report apparent unresolved non-compliance with the *Education Act (1990)* to the local manager of the region’s Home School Liaison Program for further investigation by a home school liaison officer to help resolve the matter. The local manager will consider if further action is necessary. This may include the development of an Attendance Improvement Plan with specific targets, strategies and timelines.

If an Attendance Improvement Plan is to be implemented, you will be advised by the school education director and provided with a copy of the plan. The local manager and home school liaison officer will review progress within the plan over a four week school period.

If you do not meaningfully engage in the plan andthere is no improvement in the xxxxxxxxx attendance during this time, the matter will be referred to the Department’s solicitors for legal action.

It is important that you work with us to resolve the issue.

Yours sincerely

Name

Principal

Date