

Attendance Policy

1.0 Rationale

Regular attendance enables students to build upon their knowledge and skills every day. Students who miss out on basic skills and knowledge may experience difficulties later on due to gaps in their learning. Regular attendance helps students to develop confidence in areas such as social skills, organisation and teamwork.

2.0 Department Policy

The Department of Education monitors the attendance of all students enrolled at schools, identifies students with attendance issues and implements appropriate measures to restore *regular* attendance.

School responsibilities:

- Mark the attendance of all enrolled students in a timely manner.
- Maintain accurate attendance records.
- Support the *regular* attendance of all enrolled students. *Regular* attendance is deemed to be 90% or above (this means being absent no more than once a fortnight) by the Department of Education. Below 90% is deemed to be at risk.
- Timely communication with parents for any attendance related issues and concerns (refer 4.2)

Student responsibilities:

- Attend all timetabled classes on time and remain in class for the duration of the lesson unless authorised to leave, as required.
- Students are encouraged to advise relevant staff members if they are not able to attend a timetabled class. Sharing the relevant concerns with the staff member may lead to possible supports being put in place.

Parent/carer responsibilities:

- Under Western Australian law (School Education Act 1999), parents/carers must send their child to school unless their child; is genuinely unwell, has an infectious disease and/or the Principal is provided with a genuine and acceptable reason.
- Explain any absence within three days of the start of the absence (refer 4.3)
- Provide the college with updates on their child and likely return to school if they are experiencing any extended periods of absence due to illness or injury.

3.0 Marking Class Attendance

All staff will promptly mark class attendance within the first 10 minutes at the start of each period. This will be done via roll marking on Compass (refer Staff Handbook).

3.1 Regular Attendance

- Regular attendance is the key to academic achievement. The Education Act requires that compulsory aged students attend school or participate in an educational program. Education is compulsory to the end of the year in which a student turns 17.
- Students with improved and regular excellent attendance may be acknowledged with certificates and reward activities.

4.0 Absences

A student may be absent from school due to temporary ill health or “any other reasonable cause” such as significant family commitments (bereavement/religious). It is not acceptable to be absent due to birthdays and shopping trips, for example. It is expected all students attend college on days where there are sporting carnivals and other special days.

When a parent/carer does not provide a reason for their child’s absence, the Attendance Officer and Student Services will follow up with the parent/carer to clear the relevant ‘unexplained absence’.

4.1 Absence Categories

Student absences usually fit into the following reasons:

Authorised Absences

- Illness, injury and/or mental health concerns - A doctor's certificate or formal diagnosis may be required. This is deemed reasonable.
- Specified appointments and emergencies (pending authorisation from Student Services).
- Behavioural Consequences - Home withdrawals and suspensions.

Unauthorised Absences

- Truancy - Where a student is absent from class(es) without parent/carer authorisation and/or the school's knowledge.
- School refusal – Where a student does not want to attend college even though the parent/carer has tried.
- Parent/carer chooses to withdraw child - A student does not attend school with parent/carer permission eg birthdays and family events.
- Holidays taken during the term (only the Principal can authorise and for extenuating circumstances only).

4.2 Communication to Parents/Carers about Absences

- SMS Alert - An SMS alert will automatically be sent to parent/carer's mobile phone advising them if their child has not attended. SMS Alerts are sent to parents/carers twice daily. At 9:30am and 2:30pm.
- Weekly (year to date) Absences - The college will send out a letter to parents/carers giving the details of any unexplained absences on a weekly basis.
- Formal attendance letters – The college may send formal attendance letters to the parents/carers of any student whose child's attendance rate is under 90% (refer Appendix: 3-5)

4.3 Explaining Absences

- When absences occur, they must be explained within three days of the start of the absence. Information supplied should include the student's name, year, actual dates of absence and the reason.
- Parent/carers can explain absences by; responding to the SMS message, email, signed note with the student when they return to school or via the Compass App.

4.4 Providing Work for Absences

- It is a student's responsibility to catch up on any missed work or assessments due to absences (refer Assessment and Reporting Policy).
- The college is not required to provide any work for students who miss school days due to holidays (as per Department guidelines).

5.0 Lateness

All staff will promptly mark class attendance within the first 10 minutes at the start of each period (refer 3.0). If a student arrives to class 10 minutes after the class has started, the student will be regarded as late.

5.1 Lateness to School

- 8:15 am - Students can enter college grounds.
- 8:35 am - A movement bell will sound, to ensure all students move to their Period 1 class, ready for 8:40 am.
- 8:40 am - All external gates will be locked, except for the gates outside Lower School Student Services. Students who arrive after 8:40 am are to sign in at the Front Administration Office as soon as they arrive.
- 9:00 am - The Lower School Student Services gate will be locked. Any student signing in after 9:00 am will need to enter the college via Front Administration.
- If a student arrives after Period 1, it will be recorded as a half day absence.

5.2 Lateness to Class

- Any student who arrives 10 minutes after the movement bell will be deemed as late.
- Any student who is late to class will need to have a note from a staff member to explain why they are late. This includes coming late to school (refer 4.0).
- All staff will adjust the roll when a student arrives late to their class, from 'not present' to 'present' if the student has been in a meeting or appointment e.g. at Student Services.
- All staff will adjust the roll when a student arrives late to their class from 'not present' to 'late' if it is after the first 10mins of the lesson and the student does not have a valid reason for their lateness e.g. in a meeting with another staff member or at Student Services.

6.0 Truancy

- A student who is absent from class without a staff member's authorisation is to be recorded as 'not present' on the roll.
- If a student is 'not present' and they are truanting, Student Services will follow this up to confirm it.
- Any student who truants will be followed up with by their relevant Year Coordinator and required to complete a Break Time Detention.
- Students who continually truant may lose *Good Standing* (refer Appendix E: Good Standing Policy 2.2) or receive other consequences as stated under 'Possible Actions' on the college Behaviour Support Flow Chart.
- A student who is present in class but then leaves the class without teacher permission and does not return is to be followed up by the relevant teacher and issued a consequence as stated under 'Possible Actions' on the college Behaviour Support Flow Chart.

7.0 Leave Passes

If a student needs to leave college grounds during the day a Leave Pass is required.

- Students leaving grounds during the day need to do so through Student Services.
- Parents/carers collecting their child must collect them via Front Administration.
- Parents/carers can organise a Leave Pass in advance by emailing, SMS or sending a note with the details of the appointment to either Student Services or Administration, who will then issue the pass.
- If a student is returning to the college before 2:50 pm, they will need to re-enter the college via the Front Administration.

8.0 Illness or Injury Whilst at the College

- Students who become ill or are injured while at college should report to Student Services. The student will be assessed and, where necessary, parent/carer phoned and arrangements made for the student to be picked up.
- Students are not to personally ring and make arrangements to be picked up, as it is important that an ill or injured student is supervised until they are picked up.

9.0 Accessing Help for Attendance Concerns

- The Year Coordinator will contact parents/carers when a student's attendance percentage drops below 90% to discuss any support that may be required. They are a good first port of call for most issues and concerns.
- Student Services will also work with families if a student's attendance drops below 80%. They work with families to resolve issues and where applicable, access appropriate support (refer Appendix 1: Attendance Roles and Responsibilities).

10.0 Related Documents

Category	Document Title
Related Department Policies	Student Attendance in Public Schools Procedures Policy

	School Education Act 1999
	Student Attendance Toolkit

11.0 History of Changes

Effective	Last Updated	Policy Version	Notes
26/09/19		1	
	24/8/20	2	Amendment to percentage information
	28-11-22	3	<p>Wording to change from SEQTA to Compass</p> <p>P3: Leave passes can be SMSed</p> <p>P4: Student responsibility to notify appropriate staff member</p> <p>P4/P6: Access Teacher responsibilities changed to Year Coordinator</p> <p>P4: Bar Graphs changed to Attendance Monitoring Sheets</p> <p>P5: Advanced Good Standing added</p>
	19-9-23	4	Amendments to roles and responsibilities to include documented plans and attendance letters.
	28-11-24	5	<p>Amendments to 2.0 Department Policy: Student responsibilities and Parent/carer responsibilities.</p> <p>Amendment to 3.0 Marking Class Attendance</p> <p>Amendment to:</p> <p>4.0 Absences</p> <p>4.1 Absence Categories</p> <p>4.2 Communication to Parents/Carers about Absences</p> <p>Amendment to:</p> <p>5.0 Lateness</p> <p>5.1 Lateness to School</p> <p>5.2 Lateness to Class</p> <p>Amendment to 6.0 Truancy</p> <p>Amendments to Appendix 1 – Attendance Roles and Responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student - Classroom - Year Coordinator - Student Support Officer/Attendance Officer - Student Services Coordinator <p>Amendments to Appendix 2 – Staff Roles and Responsibilities</p>

Attendance Roles and Responsibilities (To be consulted in conjunction with Appendix 2)



Student

- Attend all timetabled classes on time and remain in class for the duration of the lesson unless authorised to leave, as required.
- Notify an appropriate staff member if they are not able to attend a timetabled class.

Parent/carers

- Send their child to school unless their child is; genuinely unwell, has an infectious disease and/or the college is provided with a genuine and acceptable reason.
- Explain any absence within three days of the start of the absence.
- Notify the college if there are any extenuating circumstances stopping their child from attending the college and subsequently work with the college to try and maintain regular attendance.
- Take holidays only during the designated West Australian vacation periods.

All staff

- Engage in positive conversations with students about the importance of regular attendance.
- Support parents/carers and students to maintain regular attendance (above 90%).

Classroom Teacher

- Mark the attendance of students within the first 10 minutes of the lesson.
- Maintain accurate attendance records and change relevant 'not present' roll records to 'present' or 'late' if necessary.
- Refer any attendance issues or concerns to the appropriate staff member (refer Positive Behaviour Plan 6.7: Behaviour Support Flowchart).

Head of Learning Area

- Support classroom teachers with any attendance issues or concerns pertaining to lateness and/or truancy refer to the appropriate staff member (refer Positive Behaviour Plan 6.7: Behaviour Support Flowchart).

Year Coordinator

- Support and acknowledge the students with regular attendance.
- Support students in assigned year group, once they drop below 90% (below 90% is deemed *At Risk*) to restore regular attendance.
- Ongoing communication with parents/carers regarding attendance. This includes assisting the Attendance Officer in clarifying relevant student unexplained absences.
- Analyse and discuss data from *Attendance Monitoring Spreadsheet* with students and document intervention strategies.
- Refer any student whose attendance rate drops below 80%.
- Refer any ongoing attendance issues or concerns pertaining to ongoing lateness and/or truancy to the applicable Program Coordinator (refer Positive Behaviour Plan 6.7: Behaviour Support Flowchart).

Student Support Officer/Attendance Officer

- Clarify inaccuracies and truanancies on Daily Variations.
- Identify staff with reoccurring errors in variations.
- Daily notifications home for unexplained absences via Compass.

- Weekly unexplained absence emails sent home to parents/carers.
- Make follow-up phone calls with parents/carers in attempt to clear outstanding unexplained absences for relevant students.
- Refer ongoing unexplained absences or outstanding unexplained absences to the relevant Year Coordinator for follow-up.
- Attendance Certificates.

Student Services Coordinator

- Receive any ongoing attendance issues or concerns pertaining to ongoing lateness and/or truancy of relevant students from the applicable Year Coordinator.
- Case management of students whose attendance drops below 80%. Development of documented plan where applicable.
- Receive any outstanding unexplained absences for relevant students from the applicable Year Coordinator, as required.
- Link in, where necessary - School Psychologist, Chaplain, Youth Worker.
- Track & Issue formal letters (1 and 2) at each level (refer Appendix 3-5).
- Early intervention to external supports and alternate program placements.
- Oversee processes for students on Risk Management Plans (refer College Response and Guidelines for Students with Suicidal Behavior and Non-Suicidal Self-Injury, Appendix A: Student Presenting with SI or NSSI concerns).
- Assist in monitoring students applicable for Advanced Good Standing.

School Psychologist

- Support and advise Student Services Coordinator on best practice models for optimising attendance rates.
- Support staff, as required.
- Attend case management meetings, as required.
- Assist in development of documented plans.

Chaplain and Youth Workers

- Support staff, as required.
- Attend case management meetings, as required.

College Executive

- Oversee College Planning Framework and Attendance Improvement Targets and Strategies.
- Oversee and present data and support Student Services, as required.
- Implement processes required for Responsible Parent Agreements and formal engagement contracts, as required.
- Support staff identified with reoccurring variation errors.
- Issue level 3 formal letter in relevant year groups.
- Review and reward students applicable for Advanced Good Standing.

Appendix 2

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

Attendance Percentage	Case manager	Responsibilities	Consequences for concerns
All	Classroom teacher	Register attendance for lessons	Mark attendance on Compass
		Note and record late students on Compass	Mark students who are late Conversation and log on Compass Notify parent/carer Ongoing issues refer to HoLA
		Ensure follow-up of any student that has left class without permission	Refer to HoLA to investigate
		Monitor students on Risk Management Plans	Notify Student Services immediately if the student is absent BUT has attended other classes
	HoLA	Truancy from class	HoLA to assist Student Services in addressing the issue with student. Notify parent/carer and log on Compass
		Lateness to class (referred by classroom teacher), if ongoing	HoLA to address issue with student. Notify parent/carer and log on Compass
		Truancy or lateness after HoLA intervention, if ongoing	HoLA to refer to Year Coordinator
	Student Support Officer	Resolve all unresolved absences from lessons	Daily notifications home for unexplained absences, via Compass
		Anomalies in roll marking	Send reminders and emails Refer any ongoing issues and concerns to relevant Associate Principal
		Signing in late students as well as students leaving early	Compass roll-marking and leave passes
		Fortnightly unexplained absence emails sent home to parents/carers.	Email to parent/carer
		Monitor absences for students on RMPs	Notify parent/carer if the student is absent
	80% - 100%	Year Coordinator	Monitor attendance of students in relevant year group
Repeated truancy or lateness			Individual counselling, detentions and parent/carer communication as required
2 weeks of continual non-attendance without reasonable explanation			Contact home to verify. Assist as required.
Under 80%	Student Services Coordinator	Referrals received from staff regarding ongoing attendance issues	Support given by Student Services Referrals to external supports as required
		Monitor attendance percentages	Send Stage 1-3 Attendance Letters each term (refer Appendix 3-5)
		Severely disengaged students	Support as required including attendance/engagement plan
		Acknowledge students with regular (90%+) attendance	Fortnightly draws
		Ongoing issues of inaccurate attendance recording	Work with staff member to rectify
All	Associate Principal	Acknowledge students with above 95% attendance	Applicable for Advanced Good Standing
		Acknowledge students with 100% attendance	Termly reward and certificate
		Overview of attendance data	Review of attendance policy and procedures

Appendix 3 Stage 1 Letter Example

«PG1»
«ADDRESS»,
«SUBURB» WA «POSTOCDE»

«FIRST_NAME» «SURNAME» «FORM»



Dear «PG1»

Attendance as at Week 9, Term 1

After reviewing the school attendance records, it is noted that «FIRST_NAME»'s attendance has dropped to «ATTEND_0204»% for the year. This is equal to «EQUATES_TO_0204» days per fortnight that «FIRST_NAME» is not attending school.

This is obviously not ideal and needs to be addressed immediately to ensure «FIRST_NAME» has the best chance of being successful at school. The Department of Education has stated that 90% attendance is the lowest acceptable figure to allow students the best opportunity to engage in their studies and not risk falling behind.

We would like to discuss how we can assist with getting «FIRST_NAME» to school and if there are any issues that are impacting upon attendance.

Please contact «FIRST_NAME»'s Year Coordinator on >>>> at the college to arrange a time mutually convenient if you have any queries.

Thank you for your assistance, and we look forward to «FIRST_NAME»'s attendance improving and a productive year.

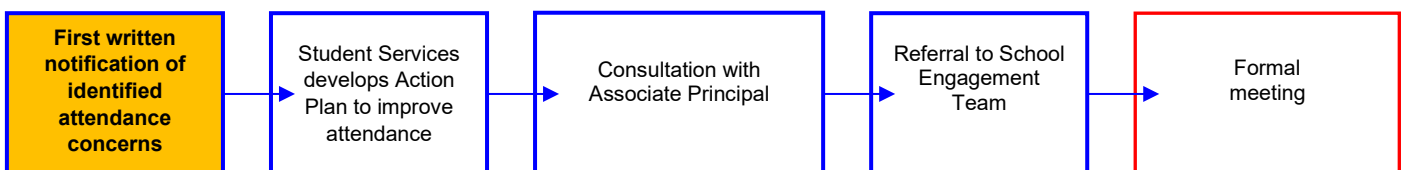
Regards

{ Name }

Year Coordinator

Date

You are here



Appendix 4 Stage 2 Letter Example

«PG1»
«ADDRESS»,
«SUBURB» WA «POSTOCDE»

«FIRST_NAME» «SURNAME» «FORM»



Dear «PG1»

Attendance as at >>>>, Term 2

You have been notified previously that «FIRST_NAME»'s attendance had fallen below an acceptable level.

«FIRST_NAME»'s attendance has now dropped to «ATTEND_0204»% for the year. This is equal to «EQUATES_TO_0204» days per fortnight that «FIRST_NAME» is not attending school.

At Alkimos College we prioritise school attendance so that all students can achieve the best possible outcomes.

The *School Education Act 1999* requires parents/carers to send their children to college each designated school day, unless there is a valid reason for them not to attend.

Please contact the Student Services Coordinator, Ms Laura Bateson, **on >>>>** at the college to arrange a meeting time mutually convenient, to develop an individual attendance plan.

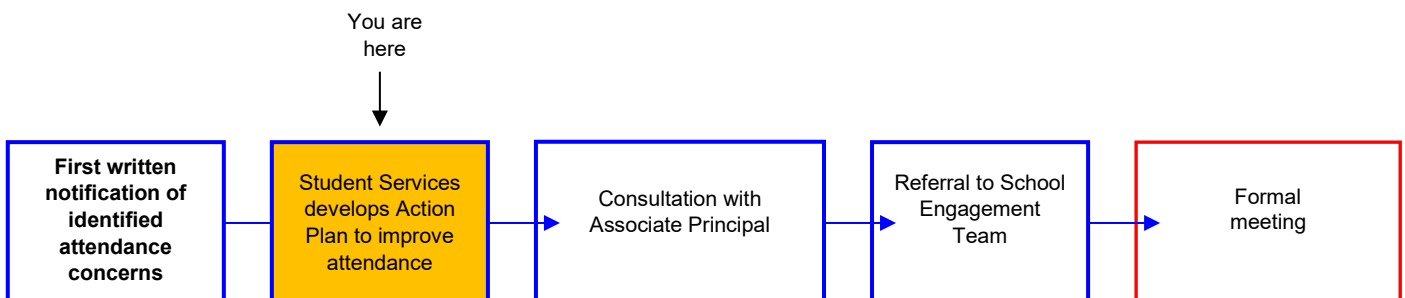
Thank you for your assistance, and we look forward to «FIRST_NAME»'s attendance improving and a productive year.

Regards

Ms Laura Bateson

Lower School Student Services Coordinator

Date



Appendix 5 Stage 3 Letter Example

Parent/Caregiver Name
Address1
ADDRESS2 WA 6XXX



Dear [Title] [Parent Last Name]

I am writing regarding the attendance of your son/daughter, [Student Name], at the college.

The *School Education Act 1999* requires parents/carers ensure that children of compulsory school age attend school on each day that the school is open for instruction. If children are absent from school, a parent or responsible person must provide the school with an acceptable explanation within three days of the absence.

I have previously advised you that [Student Name]'s attendance is a matter of concern. We have tried to work with [Student Name] and yourself to implement a range of strategies to encourage [Student Name]'s regular attendance at the college, without success.

I have recently reviewed [Student Name]'s pattern of attendance and it is clear that absences are still at an unacceptable level. It is very important that we work together to resolve this issue and I intend to consult with the North Metropolitan Education Regional Office School Engagement Team to provide additional support and advice.

If [Student Name]'s attendance does not improve through these strategies, I will ask you to attend a formal meeting to discuss the situation and try to restore positive attendance. If we feel that schooling at Alkimos College is not currently in the best interests of [Student Name], and/or in the event that we are unable to resolve this situation together, it may be necessary to consider Alternate Schooling Programs.

Regards

{Name of Applicable Associate Principal }
Associate Principal

Date

