

Attendance Policy and Procedure

Version 1.5	
Ratified by:	Date: March 2022
Student Services Team	
School Leadership	
School Board	
Review Date	

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1. Rationale

At Byford Secondary College, our vision for our school community is *Aspiring to Excellence*. We know that school attendance and access to education is vital for students to reach their full potential. Through engagement with high quality education, our students can attain higher achievement and have access to greater employment and social opportunities.

2. Commitment

We implement whole-school, targeted, and personalised strategies that promote student engagement and attendance. We commit to providing high quality and inspiring educational opportunities that meet the individual needs of our students.

We will promote student attendance and engagement by maintaining a safe, inclusive and connected school environment, establishing strong family and community partnerships, and building resilience by employing pastoral care and wellbeing support initiatives.

3. School Attendance Procedures

Regular attendance is defined as 90% or above, student outcomes and success are strongly linked to maintaining regular student attendance, and we are required to keep an accurate record of lesson attendance for all students.

Daily attendance:

Hours of attendance at Byford Secondary College are 9:00am to 3:10pm. Student attendance will be recorded by 9:10am and updated when necessary throughout the day. Two absentee text messages will be sent to parent/caregivers. The first absentee text is generated based on period 1 data and sent at 10:30am. A second absentee text message will be sent between 3:30pm and 4pm for period 2-5 attendance.

Parents/caregivers can monitor their child's attendance in real time via Compass.

Absences

Parents/caregivers are required to advise the school of the reasons for an absence as soon as practical. The advice can be provided to the school by SMS: 0437 780 389, phone: 9526 7738 (8:15 am - 3:45pm), or email: byford.sc.absentees@education.wa.edu.au . Written advice should clearly state the student's first name, surname, the date(s) and reason for the absence. Parents are also requested to advise the college if they are aware of any future absences.

If a student is away for more than three consecutive days, the school will contact the parent/caregiver. Medical certificates are required.

School incursions/excursions:

Students are expected to attend school on all scheduled school days including sports carnivals, cultural days and excursions, unless an alternative arrangement has been made with the school. Students not attending scheduled excursions will have classroom arrangements made and are still expected to attend school. Punctual arrival to school is a requisite.

Lateness

Lateness to school disrupts student's instruction and impacts on learning. Parent/caregivers should provide the school with an explanation and/or evidence for students who arrive after 9:00am. The preferred method for a late notification is via SMS 0437 780 398. Notification can also be provided via phone on 9526 7738 (between 8:15am and 3:45pm), email byford.sc.absentees@education.wa.edu.au or with a signed note from the parent/caregiver that the student may present to the Student Hub prior to attending class. Students who are late to school without parent/caregiver advice should present to their timetabled class where their arrival time will be recorded.

Early Departures

With contact from a registered parent/caregiver, students can leave school site at any time for reasonable causes (e.g. medical appointments). If a student is needing to leave during the day, parents/carers must make contact with the school. The preferred method of contact is via Text 0437 780 398 with the student's name, departure time and reason for departure. Notification can also be provided via phone on 9526 7738 (between 8:15am and 3:45pm), email byford.sc.absentees@education.wa.edu.au or with a signed note from the parent/caregiver that the student may present to Student Services before period 1 commences. Text messages on student's personal devices will not be accepted. Once parent/caregiver contact has been received, the student will be provided with a Department of Education leave pass and will be signed out of school as an authorised absence.

If a student is unwell and would like to depart the College, they must present to Student Services. A member of the Student Services team will contact a parent/caregiver to request collect/early departure. As per the West Australian Governments 'off and away' policy, students are not to contact their parent/caregiver using their personal devices.

Students leaving College grounds without the school receiving parent/caregiver contact and without signing out via Student Services, will have a Breach of Policy recorded against their name.

Authorised Absence Vs Unexplained Absence:

Unauthorised absences have a significant negative impact on student achievement. All student absences for which the school does not receive legitimate contact from a parent/caregiver will remain as an unexplained absence. Absences will be amended to 'authorised' when parent/caregivers have notified the school of the legitimate reason for their child's non-attendance.

Illness/Health Conditions:

We understand there are some occasions where students have mental or physical illnesses and/or health care needs that effect their ability to attend school onsite. Please inform the school as soon as possible and provide evidence, e.g. medical certificate, for this type of absence. In some circumstances, the school can arrange access to an appropriate alternative educational program.

In specific circumstances, such as where there has been a hospitalisation and a prolonged absence is expected due to health reasons, the school may refer to the School of Special Educational Needs” Mental and Medical Health (SSEN: MMH) Home Teaching Program.

Truancy

Truancy may place students at additional risk of harm. Attendance will be monitored throughout the school day and parents/caregivers notified if their child is confirmed absent from class and believed to be truanting. Truanting will be managed through our whole school Behaviour support processes. This will include communication with parents/carers and may include detention to catch up on missed school work.

Good Standing Policy

Students with attendance below 90% may lose their good standing at the College (refer to our Good Standing Policy) Rewards and engagement strategies.

At Byford SC, we employ a range school-wide, targeted and individual initiatives to support student engagement and attendance.

- Educational and engagement opportunities (e.g. work experience, CO2 Dragster cars, Bike Rescue program).
- Short-term or alternative educational arrangements within other educational institutions (e.g. certificates and short courses).
- Alternative Programs- Art Therapy, Drum Beat, Student Mentoring.
- Ongoing Teacher communication with parent/caregivers.
- Teacher nominations for prosocial behaviour and prize draw at cohort assembly .

4. Attendance Concerns

The Student Services Team monitor student’s attendance and absence patterns, and consider reasons given for absences. Through this, we identify signs that may indicate a student is becoming disengaged.

Potential indicators of students at educational risk include frequent lateness to school, truancy and unexplained absences. Students with attendance below 90% will be deemed ‘at risk’.

Monitoring and managing attendance concerns

- Class attendance is monitored each lesson. Parents/caregivers will receive an SMS if their child is marked absent after 9.00am.
- Daily absences are reviewed every three days. If an explanation has not been provided to the school, the relevant Student Services Manager will contact parent/caregivers. Please advise the school if you require assistance to manage attendance concerns.
- Parent/caregivers will be informed weekly through Compass of all unexplained absences. Parent/caregivers are required to provide an explanation to the school.
- Parent/caregivers will be advised of their child’s attendance percentage each term if their child’s attendance is considered ‘at-risk’.
- If the absences remain unexplained and/or the school are concerned about a student’s attendance they will arrange a parent/caregiver meeting to identify barriers to

attendance. At Byford SC we have badged attendance officers and can arrange a home-visit to work with families to restore attendance. Meetings will occur from Term Two or more frequently as required, until attendance concerns are managed or resolved.

- Byford SC can liaise with external agencies/professionals, develop a Specific Measurable Achievable, Realistic, Time specific (SMART) attendance and/or student support plan (e.g. physical/medical, cultural, social and emotional, academic needs considered), offer individualised targeted support through The Student Services Hub and/or make referrals for additional Department of Education (e.g. Participation Team, Schools of Special Educational Needs) or external support. Alternative education options may be considered (*3.7 Alternative attendance arrangements under Section 24 of the School Education Act*).
- Where attendance concerns persist, a Responsible Parenting Agreement may be considered appropriate to address underlying factors and to encourage a productive relationship between school staff and parent/caregivers.
- For continued attendance concerns, and/or barriers collaborating with parents/caregivers the school will refer to or consult with the South Metropolitan Regional Education Office. An attendance advisory panel or referral to Regional Participation Services may be arranged to restore student's engagement in education. A student may be considered 'Whereabouts Unknown' if contact was unable to be established.

See Attendance flowchart

5. Parent /Caregivers

Parents/caregivers have a crucial role in encouraging regular school attendance. Collaboration and communication between parents/caregivers and the school is essential to support student engagement and attendance.

Encouraging regular attendance

- It is important to act early to understand the reason/s why your child is not attending school. Please contact the School if you require support in managing your child's non-attendance.
- Ensure the school is informed of any concerns that are impacting on your child's attendance. The school may be able to assist with planning, information/resources and/or support.
- Maintaining a daily routine can support school attendance. On average, teenagers need eight to nine hours sleep a night to be healthy and alert. Technology can impact on sleep, monitoring internet, mobile phone and television use at night to ensure sleep is not disturbed. Encourage extracurricular activities as they can further support your child's resilience.
- Where possible, encourage regular school attendance by scheduling appointments, holidays, hobbies and employment outside of school hours, and only allowing your child to stay home when unwell.
- Monitor your child's attendance and learning at school. Periodically check their progress with their year coordinator. Support your child to identify solutions to improving attendance and work with the school to address any concerns.

6. Community

At Byford SC we continue to liaise and work with our community regarding supporting school attendance. Local businesses aim to support our school in maintaining regular attendance and advertise that they will refuse service to school students.

We also collaborate with a number of community/support agencies to assist students and parents/caregivers to address attendance concerns such as, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, YMCA, Family Support Network, Department of Communities (Child Protection and Family Support), Youth Justice, Headspace, Youth Focus, Reconnect.

7. Legislation

Section 23 of the *School Education Act 1999* requires for every year of the student's **compulsory education period** (Pre-primary onwards) that the student attend the school at which they are enrolled, or participate in an educational program of the school, on the days on which it is open for instruction.

Since 2008, education and/or training is compulsory for students until the end of the year in which they turn 17. Under legislation it is the duty of the parent/caregivers to ensure that a student of compulsory school age is enrolled and attends school or a registered training institution.

Eighteen year olds enrolled in school are subject to the same attendance requirements as other students.

We strongly discourage the scheduling of holidays during the school term. Teachers are also not obliged to accommodate students with learning programs where holidays are taken during a school term. Only the school's Principal can approve holidays occurring outside of the scheduled Western Australian school holiday periods.

Parents/caregivers who wish to take their child out of school for extenuating circumstances (e.g. funeral, monumental occasions) for two or more days are required to seek approval. Where possible, please apply in writing at least one month prior to the intended absence to BSC Enrolments Inbox or 57 Abernethy Road, Byford WA 6122.

8. Resources

[Student Attendance in Public Schools Policy](#)

[Student Attendance in Public Schools Procedures](#)

[School Education Act 1999](#)

[Alternatives to Full Time Schooling](#)

[School of Isolated Distance Education](#)

<https://ssenmmh.wa.edu.au/>

[https://studentwellbeinghub.edu.au/Teens \(12-18 years\) | Raising Children Network](https://studentwellbeinghub.edu.au/Teens%20(12-18%20years)%20|Raising%20Children%20Network)

<https://www.ccyp.wa.gov.au/our-work/indicators-of-wellbeing/age-group-12-to-17-years/>

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Attendance Flowchart

Byford SC implements processes and creates a school environment that fosters attendance. Parent/caregivers support their child to maintain regular attendance. Daily class attendance is monitored, if attendance is unexplained - parent/caregivers are notified by SMS that their child is marked absent after 9.00am

Attendance Concern

Attendance is explained by parent/caregiver and student attendance is restored

Attendance is unexplained, an identified concern and/or attendance is 'at-risk' (at or below 90 %) without reasonable cause. Parent/caregiver notified by phone and/or in writing. School will maintain accurate records.

Student Services Managers and Attendance officer meet fortnightly. Unexplained absences will be followed up with parent/caregivers by the relevant Student SManager. Parent/caregivers receive fortnightly letters regarding unexplained attendance.

Absences remain unexplained or attendance concerns persist - parent/caregiver and student will be invited to a school meeting to identify address barriers to their child's engagement and attendance.

Individual case management – Student considered at educational risk. SMART attendance goals established.

- Collaboration with student, parent/caregiver, school and other agencies involved
- Individual attendance/support plan developed (e.g. physical/medical, cultural, social and emotional, academic needs considered)
- Alternative education arrangements considered (e.g. modified timetable, alternatives)
- Home visits with badged attendance officer
- Referral to internal school supports Department of Education Services and/or external agencies
- Regular review meetings

School notifies and/or requests Regional Office support

- Participation Team
- Responsible Parent Agreements
- Attendance Advisory Panel
- Student Whereabouts Unknown

RESTORING ATTENDANCE

Attendance Letter One

<AddeeSalutation>

<AddeeAddress>

«Date»

Dear <AddeeSalutation>

Attendance Letter One, has been sent to all families whose child has an attendance rate at less than 90% for the duration of Term One, 2022.

As you are aware, an attendance rate of greater than 90% can assist «FirstName» in achieving «his/her» academic goals. At Byford Secondary College, we understand that there are some circumstances where it is not possible for a student to attend on a particular day.

The purpose of this letter is to keep you informed of «FirstName»'s attendance rate, particularly if you are unaware of «his/her» attendance over the past term. There is still an opportunity for «FirstName» to improve their attendance rate for the remainder of the year.

We understand that some recipients of this letter have legitimate reasons for their low attendance rate, and we thank you for communicating reasons via phone call, email or SMS. We also understand that many families have been affected by the current Covid-19 Pandemic, and are unable to attend school as they are in WA Health directed isolation. Thank you to those parents who have communicated this information to the College.

If you would like to discuss «FirstName»'s attendance or have any further concerns, please contact «his/her» Student Services Manager to discuss. We thank you for your support in this matter and wish «FirstName» all the best for the remainder of the year.

Yours Sincerely

Claire Hennessy

Manager Student Services Years 9 & 12

Attendance Stage	Action to be taken by College
Prior to Low attendance procedures	Daily Absentee SMS & Weekly emails
Step 1 Week 8, Term 1	First written notification of identified attendance concerns due to student dropping below 90%
Step 2 Week 5-7, Term 2	Second written notification of attendance concerns – no improvement since first notification of attendance concerns - meeting with Student Services Manager arranged
Step 3 Week 8-10, Term 2	Home-visit if attendance meeting is not attended/attendance has not improved
Step 4 Week 3-4, Term 3	Letter from Principal to parent requesting formal meeting with appropriate Associate Principal to discuss plan to improve attendance
Step 5 Week 7, Term 3	Letter to parent from Principal advising of consultation with Attendance Advisory Panel network or regional officer
Step 6 Week 8, Term 3	Attendance Advisory Panel meeting convened (may lead to legal action including a court order or financial penalties)

Attendance Letter Two

<AddeeSalutation>

<AddeeAddress>

«Date»

Dear <AddeeSalutation>

You have been notified previously in Term One, that <FirstName>'s attendance had fallen below an acceptable level of 90%. Unfortunately, there has been no further improvement in <FirstName>'s attendance.

The School Education Act 1999 requires parents to send their children to school each school day unless there is a good reason for them not to attend.

At Byford Secondary College, one of our priorities is School Attendance. We have a whole school attendance strategy that supports all families to maximise attendance at school. We also understand that many families have been affected by the current Covid-19 Pandemic, and are unable to attend school as they are in WA Health directed isolation. Thank you to those parents who have communicated this information to the College via phone call, email or SMS.

Could you please attend a meeting with the Manager of Student Services so that together we can develop and implement an Individual Attendance Improvement Plan.

Meeting Date:

Time:

Yours Sincerely

Ms Claire Hennessy

Manager Student Services Years 9 & 12

Attendance Stage	Action to be taken by College
Prior to Low attendance procedures	Daily Absentee SMS & Weekly emails
Step 1 Week 8, Term 1	First written notification of identified attendance concerns due to student dropping below 90%
Step 2 Week 5-7, Term 2	Second written notification of attendance concerns – no improvement since first notification of attendance concerns - meeting with Student Services Manager arranged
Step 3 Week 8-10, Term 2	Home-visit if attendance meeting is not attended/attendance has not improved
Step 4 Week 3-4, Term 3	Letter from Principal to parent requesting formal meeting with appropriate Associate Principal to discuss plan to improve attendance
Step 5 Week 7, Term 3	Letter to parent from Principal advising of consultation with Attendance Advisory Panel network or regional officer
Step 6 Week 8, Term 3	Attendance Advisory Panel meeting convened (may lead to legal action including a court order or financial penalties)

Attendance Letter Three

<AddeeSalutation>

<AddeeAddress>

«Date»

Dear <AddeeSalutation>

It has come to my attention that you have received two notifications from the College regarding your child's concerning low attendance. You would have received Letter One in Term One, Letter Two in Term Two, where a meeting with the Student Services Manager was arranged, as well as a follow-up Home Visit. Unfortunately, there has been limited to no improvement with <FirstName>'s attendance despite these interventions.

The School Education Act 1999 requires parents to send their children to school each school day unless there is a good reason for them not to attend.

At Byford Secondary College one, of our priorities is School Attendance. We have a whole school attendance strategy that supports all families to maximise attendance at school. An attendance rate of greater than 90% can assist «PreferredName» in achieving «his/her» academic goals. There is still an opportunity for «PreferredName» to improve «his/her» attendance rate for the remainder of the year.

Could you please attend a meeting with the appropriate Associate Principal so that together we can develop and implement an Individual Attendance Improvement Plan.

Meeting Date:

Time:

Meeting held with: Mrs Rose Williamson- Associate Principal Years 8 and 11

Yours Sincerely

Mr Paul Jones

Principal

Attendance Stage	Action to be taken by College
Prior to Low attendance procedures	Daily Absentee SMS & Weekly emails
Step 1 Week 8, Term 1	First written notification of identified attendance concerns due to student dropping below 90%
Step 2 Week 5-7, Term 2	Second written notification of attendance concerns – no improvement since first notification of attendance concerns - meeting with Student Services Manager arranged
Step 3 Week 8-10, Term 2	Home-visit if attendance meeting is not attended/attendance has not improved
Step 4 Week 3-4, Term 3	Letter from Principal to parent requesting formal meeting with appropriate Associate Principal to discuss plan to improve attendance
Step 5 Week 7, Term 3	Letter to parent from Principal advising of consultation with Attendance Advisory Panel network or regional officer
Step 6 Week 8, Term 3	Attendance Advisory Panel meeting convened (may lead to legal action including a court order or financial penalties)

Attendance Letter Four

<AddeeSalutation>

<AddeeAddress>

«Date»

Dear <AddeeSalutation>

It has come to my attention that you have received three formal letters of communication from the College regarding your child's chronic absence from school. You would have received Letter One in Term One, Letter Two in Term Two, where a meeting with the Student Services Manager was arranged, as well as a follow-up Home Visit. Several weeks ago, I reached out to you asking that you meet with the appropriate Associate Principal so that you could discuss any concerns and barriers you were having to engage with your child's education at Byford Secondary College. Unfortunately, there has been limited to no improvement with <FirstName>'s attendance despite these interventions. I have taken the time to consult with South Metropolitan Education Regional Office, and it has been determined appropriate, to convene an attendance panel.

The School Education Act 1999 requires parents to send their children to school each school day unless there is a good reason for them not to attend.

At Byford Secondary College, one of our priorities is School Attendance. We have a whole school attendance strategy that supports all families to maximise attendance at school. An attendance rate of greater than 90% can assist «PreferredName» in achieving «his/her» academic goals. There is still an opportunity for «PreferredName» to improve «his/her» attendance rate for the remainder of the year. At this meeting, I would like to discuss with you, a Responsible Parenting Agreement.

Could you please attend a meeting with the Network Attendance Advisory Panel so that together we can develop and implement an Individual Attendance Improvement Plan.

Meeting Date:

Time:

Meeting held with:

Location:

Yours Sincerely

Mr Paul Jones

Principal

 57 Abernethy Road, Byford WA 6122 | www.byfordsc.wa.edu.au
 Administration: (08) 9526 7700 | Absentees: (08) 9526 7738
 Byford.SC@education.wa.edu.au | Byford.SC.Absentees@education.wa.edu.au

Attendance Stage	Action to be taken by College
Prior to Low attendance procedures	Daily Absentee SMS & Weekly emails
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