



ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES: PRIMARY SCHOOL

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1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

John Wollaston Anglican Community School (the School) operates a full educational program for all students from the first day of each term until the close of school, on the last day of each term. It is essential, if the teaching-learning program is to be successful and run as planned, that all students attend school all day for every day of every term as specified annually by the School.

The School Education Act 1999 states:

“A student must on the days on which the school is open for instruction –

(a) either –

(i) Attend the school at which he or she is enrolled;
or

(ii) Otherwise participate in an educational programme of the school whether at the school or elsewhere,
as required by the principal; or

(b) Comply with an arrangement under section 24.”

As stated above, any alternative to attending school must comply with arrangements under Section 24 of the Act.

1.1. RELEVANT LEGISLATION PERTAINING TO THIS POLICY:

- Acts Amendment (Higher Leaving Age and Related Provisions) Act 2005
- School Education Act 1999
- School Education Regulations 2000

2. INTRODUCTION

The Primary School of John Wollaston Anglican Community School seeks to ensure that all of its students receive a comprehensive education, which maximises the opportunities for inclusion and achievement so that each student is able to realise his/her full potential.

Students, parents and guardians, teachers, support staff and School Council members all have a role in supporting high standards of attendance and punctuality in the student body.

3. AIMS OF THE POLICY

- To improve the overall attendance of students at the School.
- To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities for all people involved in maintaining student attendance and punctuality.
- To develop a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and responding to attendance data.

4. RECORDING ATTENDANCE DATA

4.1 REGISTERS – DATA COLLECTION

Student attendance is completed by teaching staff in SEQTA at the beginning of the school day by 8:40am for the AM attendance check. The PM attendance check is completed by 1:10pm.

Primary Administration staff enter known information regarding attendance into SEQTA.

4.2 AUTHORISED AND EXPLAINED ABSENCE

An authorised absence is when a student is away for a reason acceptable to the School. The School (not the parent/guardian) determines whether an absence is authorised after receipt of a verbal or written explanation from the parent/guardian. Explanations from students or siblings are not sufficient.

Parents/Guardians are strongly discouraged from taking their children away during term time.

- a. Special leave of absence, can be approved at the Head of Primary's discretion. Extended periods of absence during term time, in excess of four weeks, may only be approved by the Principal.
- b. Any request for leave of absence for a medical appointment or religious observance will go to the child's teacher or Primary Administration
- c. If a parent/guardian feels it is unavoidable to take their child out of school for leave of absence, they must submit a request in writing, in advance, for consideration by the Head of Primary.
- d. Each case will be considered individually based on the nature of the event, history of term time absences, the student's current attendance, age, achievement, and the time of year with respect to the curriculum. Parents/Guardians will be informed in writing of the outcome of their request.
- e. School work/lessons will not be provided by the School for students absent during term time for the purpose of family holidays or recreational activities.
- f. Any time taken without the School's authorisation, or any additional time taken over and above the amount authorised will be recorded as unauthorised absence.
- g. If a student does not return on the agreed date, the School will make every effort to contact the family by telephone and in writing.

4.3 UNAUTHORISED OR UNEXPLAINED ABSENCE

- a. Parents/Guardians are strongly encouraged to telephone or email the School before 9:00 am if their child is to be absent from school on a given day for reasons such as illness. Primary Administration staff enter directly into SEQTA student absentee details provided by parents/guardians from telephone calls, recorded messages and emails. Phone details are also noted on a paper form that is filed for record purposes.
- b. The School will follow up on all unexplained absences.
- c. Once all communication to the School concerning student absences has been processed, by 9:45am or as soon as practicable, the School will send SMS messages to the parents/guardians of students marked as absent for the AM attendance check without explanation. The message includes a request for the parent/guardian to contact the School. Below is the template used for the message:
John Wollaston ACS records show {prefname} was marked absent today {day_date}. Please call 94958111 (Secondary) or 94958166 (Primary and ELC).
- d. At 11:00 am, or as soon as practicable, if a parent/guardian has not responded to the SMS message, a Primary Administration staff member will telephone the parent/guardian of the student. If the parent/guardian answers the telephone, details are recorded on the record form, filed and SEQTA records are updated. If parents/guardians are unable to be contacted, then (if possible) a message is left on their answering machine/voice mail with absence details with a further request to contact the School. Should the student answer the telephone, details

are recorded and the student is told that a note will be required from their parents/guardians when they return to school.

5. PUNCTUALITY

- Primary classrooms open at 8:15am and lessons commence at 8:30am. It is expected that all students arrive in good time, no later than 8:25 am.
- If there is regular lateness, a letter of concern will be sent to the parent/guardian by the Deputy Head of Primary.

6. STUDENTS ARRIVING LATE OR LEAVING SCHOOL DURING SCHOOL HOURS

- If a Years 2 to 6 student is late to school, they must sign in at Primary Reception. The student will be given a Late Slip (red) to give to their class teacher. The Primary Receptionist will update the SEQTA attendance record.
- If a Pre-Kindergarten to Year 1 student is late to school, they must be signed in by their parent/guardian at the Early Learning Centre (ELC) Reception. The ELC Receptionist will escort the student to class. The ELC Receptionist will update the SEQTA attendance record.
- If a Years 2 to 6 student has to leave early, their parent/guardian must first report to Primary Reception to sign the student out. Parents/Guardians will be given a Student Leave Pass (yellow) to give to their child's class teacher. The ELC Receptionist will update the SEQTA attendance record.
- If a Pre-Kindergarten to Year 1 student has to leave early, their parent/guardian must first report to ELC Reception to sign the student out. The ELC Receptionist will collect the student from the class. In the event that the ELC Reception is unattended the student will be signed out via the Early Departure Register at the classroom. The ELC Receptionist will update the SEQTA attendance record.

7. MONITORING ATTENDANCE AND RESPONDING TO PATTERNS OF ABSENCE

- School staff will respond when a pattern of low attendance emerges.
 - a. The School is responsible for initial intervention. When a pattern of poor attendance emerges, a meeting takes place between the class teacher and Primary Leadership to determine a course of action.
 - b. If the class teacher makes initial contact with the parent/guardian and there is no improvement, the Primary Leadership must be informed and will arrange to contact the parent/guardian.
- To ensure that all patterns of low attendance are identified, the Head of Primary will:
 - a. Closely monitor the patterns of attendance.
 - b. Send a letter to parents/guardians noting and seeking a remedy to the problem.
 - c. Organise a meeting with the parents/guardians.

8. COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS

- It is essential the parents/guardians of all students understand the *Attendance Policy and Procedures Primary School* and their role in ensuring their child maintains good attendance.
 - a. Parents/guardians must contact the School in person by email or on the telephone to provide an explanation on the first day their child is absent.
 - b. Information will be shared with parents/guardians, giving a brief outline of the *Attendance Policy and Procedures Primary School*, the School's expectations of them and the general importance of good attendance. This information will be given to all new parents/guardians upon enrolment.
 - c. The *Attendance Policy and Procedures Primary School* will be available to all families via the School's website at <http://www.jwacs.wa.edu.au/>.

9. STUDENTS ARRIVING TO SCHOOL EARLY

- For reasons of Duty of Care and personal safety students are not permitted to arrive at school prior to 8:00am.
- Primary students (Years 2 to 6) who arrive at school between 8:00am and 8:15am will be supervised by a staff member. Students must remain in the Primary or Upper Primary courtyard areas. Students are not permitted to use the Primary playground or the School oval.
- Parents/Guardians of Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten students must remain with the student until classroom doors open (8:45am and 8:30am respectively). Students of this age are not permitted to use the ELC drop off zone.
- ELC students in Pre-Primary and Year 1 can be escorted by parents / guardians to the classroom and wait for doors to open at 8:15am. Students in Pre-Primary and Year 1 are permitted to use the ELC drop off zone when arriving at school in the morning. The ELC drop off zone is supervised by staff and available for use between 8:00am and 8:30am. The ELC Courtyard is supervised by staff from 8:05am until class doors open.
- Parents/Guardians are notified through communication from the School of the student school arrival time, being 8:00am to 8:25am. They are also advised that students will not be supervised before 8:00am and that the School cannot accept responsibility for students delivered to the School prior to this time. Should parents/guardians deliver students prior to 8:00am they will be promptly contacted by the Head of Primary or Deputy Head of Primary.

10. STUDENTS LEAVING THE SCHOOL LATE

- Parents/guardians/other approved adults assume responsibility for the student once collected at the end of the day. This responsibility extends to their child/the student using recreational areas of the campus e.g. school ovals. Use of playground equipment after school is not permitted.
- Students waiting for a scheduled bus in the bus bays or for their parents/guardians in the drop off/pick-up zone will be supervised by school staff. The responsibility for providing supervision will extend at least until the last bus departs the premises or until 3:30pm, whichever occurs last.
- Students who are waiting at the BDISC car park for their parents/guardians in the drop off/pick-up zone will be supervised by school staff. The responsibility for providing supervision will extend until 3:30pm. Any remaining students will be escorted to Primary Reception for collection.
- All students should depart the School by 3:30pm unless alternative arrangements have been made with the School. In the event that parents/guardians cannot collect their children by 3:30pm, for safety reasons, children will be required to wait inside at Primary Reception. Should ELC students not be collected by 3:30pm, they will be escorted to Primary Reception by a staff member.
- School Administration is staffed until 4:00pm. Telephone calls will be made to parents/guardians to ensure collection of students by this time. No student will be left on school premises without adult supervision.

11. RELATED POLICIES

- *ASC Enrolment and Attendance Policy and Procedures*
- *Attendance Policy and Procedures Secondary*
- *Duty of Care Policy*
- *School Grounds Supervision Policy*
- *SEQTA Use and Etiquette Statement for Families*