
ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES: SECONDARY 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. GENERAL PROCEDURE

2.1. The Secondary School uses a session-based attendance system, whereby student attendance is recorded by teachers using the SEQTA software suite. Teachers are required to record the attendance for each of their classes as soon as possible. It is expected that this would be within the first ten minutes of the commencement of the lesson.

2.2. Students arriving to school late are required to sign in, via the iPad (using the Passtab application), at Student Services Reception. A late stamp with the time of arrival at school recorded is stamped into the student’s Homework Diary. Parents are required to provide a note if notification has not already been given.

2.3. The Student Services Receptionist enters directly into SEQTA student absentee details provided by parents/guardians from telephone calls, recorded messages and emails/SEQTA Direqt messages. These details are also noted on a paper form that is filed for record purposes.

2.4. The Student Services Receptionist generates a list from SEQTA of all unexplained student absences at 10:00am. This ensures that all teachers have had the opportunity to record attendance for Sessions 1 and 2. The procedure applied for contacting parents/guardians is that a student must have three unexplained absences recorded next to their name (i.e. House Group and Sessions 1 and 2). However, if there is any doubt concerning whether a student is actually absent due to incomplete records, the Student Helper is sent with a student list to the student’s teacher for Session 2 to verify attendance. The teacher signs the

list sheet as appropriate. By 10:15am, from the verified list of absences, the Student Services Receptionist will send SMS messages to the parents/guardians of students with three unexplained absence records for that morning. 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).

- 2.5. When the School's regular timetable is disrupted by events e.g. Photograph Day and Pre-Carnival Athletics trials and competitions, verification of student attendance can take more time. However, the procedures will still be followed and completed as soon as possible.
- 2.6. At 11:00am, if a parent/guardian has not responded to the SMS message, the Student Services Receptionist telephones 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.
- 2.7. At the end of each week, an *Absentee Follow Up Letter* (see *Appendix 2*) is generated from SEQTA records and given to the teachers to pass on to the students, who take them home to parents seeking resolution for unexplained absences.

3. INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

3.1. ABSENCE DUE TO ILLNESS

- 3.1.1. Absences due to illness are unavoidable. Parents/Guardians should telephone or email the School as early as possible on the day of absence. If for some reason this does not occur, the School will send SMS messages to the parents/guardians of students with three unexplained absence records for that morning. The message includes a request for the parent/guardian to contact the School.
- 3.1.2. As a rule, a medical certificate is not required for absences due to illness during term time. The exceptions, for Year 11 and 12 students because of external assessments and examinations, are set out in the Assessment Policy Years 7 to 10 and the Assessment Policy Years 11 and 12.. Parents/Guardians are requested to contact Student Services and the student's Head of House/House Teacher if the absence is expected to be prolonged. Work is available to students absent from school via SEQTA. Individual teachers (in consultation with Department Heads if necessary) will determine, according to circumstances, the situation with regard to tests and other assessments missed due to illness. There are specific rules for Year 11 and 12 students.
- 3.1.3. There should be no expectation of a refund, or remission of fees, for absence due to illness.

3.2. ABSENCE FOR APPOINTMENTS

- 3.2.1. Parents/Guardians are asked to make appointments for their children outside school hours where possible. It is acknowledged that this is sometimes difficult, but in general, permission should be requested for students to be absent to attend only medical, dental, optical and other such appointments.
- 3.2.2. If a student has an appointment during the day (e.g. doctor, dentist) they must have a note from their parent/guardian (written in the student's Homework Dairy/SEQTA Direqt message) so that it can be shown to their class teacher when it is time to leave. The student must then report to Student Services Reception to meet with their parent/guardian. The student must be signed out by the child's parent/guardian, via the iPad (using the Passtab application), at Student Services Reception. Students returning to school must sign in, via the iPad (using the Passtab application), at

Student Services Reception before proceeding to class. Student Services staff will update the SEQTA attendance record.

3.3. ABSENCE DUE TO FAMILY HOLIDAYS

3.3.1. Parents/Guardians are strongly discouraged from taking a family holiday during term time as it causes disruption to the student's educational program. If it is absolutely necessary for families to take holidays during term time, the Principal must receive prior notification in writing. It is preferable if the student is absent from school at the start of the term rather than the end. Staff have been instructed to continue with meaningful school work up to the close of school on the last day of each term. An absence from mid-Term 2 and from mid-Term 4 will generally interfere with examinations and major class assessments for students in Years 7 to 11. For Year 12 students, examinations are usually held during Weeks 6 and 7 of Term 2 and during the second week of the Term 3 vacation, concluding early Week 1, Term 4. Family holidays must be avoided at these times. The policy for a prolonged absence from school, for reasons other than illness, is as follows:

- Written notification to the Principal is required before the absence. Holiday absence notifications to the Principal or other staff are to be communicated through SEQTA Direqt Message or via email to the Principal at pa@jwacs.wa.edu.au (from *SEQTA Use and Etiquette Statement for Families*). Emails received by Student Services are forwarded to the Principal.
- No refund or remission of fees will be provided for the period of absence.
- School work/lessons will not be provided by the School for students absent during term time for the purpose of family holiday or recreational activities.
- The School will not be held responsible for any long-term effect of the absence on the student's overall academic performance.

3.4. STUDENT LATENESS OR ILLNESS

3.4.1. If a student is late arriving at school they must report to Student Services Reception before going to class. The student must sign in via the iPad (using the Passtab application) at Student Services Reception. A late stamp is entered into the student's Homework Diary to be shown to the class teacher. Student Services staff will update the SEQTA attendance record.

3.4.2. If a student is unwell during school hours and is sent by the teacher to Sick-Bay, the Sick-Bay Register is completed with the time of arrival and the time of departure, when either returning to class or departing for the day. The teacher will give written permission to the student to attend Sick-Bay. If the medical issue can be dealt with at the School, Student Services staff will give written permission to the student, to return to class. If students are collected by parents/guardians from Sick-Bay they must be signed out by the parent/guardian, via the iPad (using the Passtab application), at Student Services Reception. Student Services staff will update the SEQTA attendance record.

3.4.3. If a student is ill and unable to attend school, parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the School before 9:00am on 9495 8111, email at absentees@jwacs.wa.edu.au. This will assist the School in maintaining accurate attendance records and in providing effective duty of care for the students.

3.5. STUDENTS ARRIVING TO SCHOOL EARLY

3.5.1 Heads of House greet students on a daily basis at the front of the School from 8:10am. Secondary staff monitor student movement in and around the buildings and grounds before school commences at 8:30am.

3.5.2 Parents/Guardians are requested not to have their child arrive at school before 8:00am. In the event that this is unavoidable, students are to sit on the bench outside the Library and are to remain there until 8:00am. Students will then be able to access other in-bound areas on the School campus.

3.5.2 Parents/Guardians are notified through the eNewsletter of the student school arrival time, being 8:00am to 8:25am. They are also advised that supervision of students will not be provided 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 contacted by the Dean of Pastoral Care.

3.6. STUDENTS LEAVING THE SCHOOL LATE

- 3.6.1. 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 playground equipment or other recreational areas of the campus e.g. school ovals.
- 3.6.2. 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.
- 3.6.3. 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.
- 3.6.4. 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 for their parents/guardians on the lawn area at the front of the School inside the main gate or, in wet weather, on the front verandah of the Administration Building.
- 3.6.5. 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.

4. PUNCTUALITY

- 4.1. School starts at 8:30 am. It is expected that all students arrive in good time, no later than 8:25 am.
- 4.2. If there is regular lateness, the student and their parents/guardians will be contacted by the Head of House.

5. MONITORING ATTENDANCE AND RESPONDING TO PATTERNS OF ABSENCE

- 5.1. School staff will respond when a pattern of low attendance emerges as detailed in Appendix 3.
 - a. The School is responsible for initial intervention. When a pattern of poor attendance emerges, a meeting takes place between the Head of House and the Dean of Pastoral Care to determine a course of action.
 - b. The Head of House will make initial contact with the parent/guardian to discuss and resolve the issue. If there is no improvement, the Dean of Pastoral Care must be informed and will arrange to meet with the parent/guardian.
- 5.2. To ensure that all patterns of low attendance are identified, the Dean of Pastoral Care will:
 - a. Closely monitor student attendance working with pastoral staff and Student Services Receptionists.
 - b. Promptly communicate with parents/guardians seeking a remedy to the concerns.
 - c. Organise a meeting with the parents/guardians to determine a plan to transition the student back to school.
 - d. Work with the student to boost their self-confidence and resilience.
 - e. In the event of school refusal, work with the family, pastoral care staff, school counsellor and/or other external parties to support the student. It is acknowledged that school refusal is often a complex issue which requires engagement of several parties, including the student, to resolve attendance issues.

6. COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS

- 6.1. It is essential the parents/guardians of all pupils understand the *Attendance Policy and Procedures Secondary School* and their role in ensuring their child maintains good attendance.
- 6.2. 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.
- 6.3. Information will be shared with parents/guardians, via the eNewsletter, giving a brief outline of the *Attendance Policy and Procedures Secondary 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.
- 6.4. The *Attendance Policy and Procedures Secondary School* will be available to all families via the School's website at <http://www.jwacs.wa.edu.au/>.

7. RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

- *ASC Enrolment and Attendance Policy and Procedures*
- *Attendance Policy and Procedures Primary School*
- *Duty of Care Policy*
- *School Grounds Supervision Policy*
- *SEQTA Use and Etiquette Statement for Families*
- *Assessment Policy Years 7 to 10*
- *Assessment Policy Years 11 and 12*

HOUSE/CLASS TEACHER ABSENCE FOLLOW UP NOTE

Mr and Mrs [surname]
[Address]

Dear Mr and Mrs [surname]

ABSENCE FOLLOW UP

Please note that your child, **[student name]** (House Group/Class: **STH**), was either absent or late on the dates indicated below. Please write the reason(s) in the spaces provided and return this note to your child's House Group/Class teacher as soon as possible. Thank you.

Date	Session	Reason
10/06/2020	S4 S5 S6	

Parent/Guardian name: _____

Parent/Guardian signature: _____

Date: _____

Yours sincerely

KYLIE VIRGO
DEAN OF PASTORAL CARE

DATE

cc House Group Teacher

ABSENTEE FOLLOW UP LETTER

Mr and Mrs [surname]

[Address]

Dear Mr and Mrs [surname]

ABSENTEE FOLLOW UP

Please note that your child, **[child's name]** (House Group/Class: **HUD**), was recorded as either absent or late on the dates indicated below. Please write the reason(s) in the spaces provided and return this note to your child's House Group/Class teacher as soon as possible. Thank you.

Date	Sessions	Reason
10/06/2020	S4 S5 S6	

Parent/Guardian name: _____

Parent/Guardian signature: _____

Date: _____

Yours sincerely

KYLIE VIRGO
DEAN OF PASTORAL CARE

DATE

cc House Group Teacher

FOLLOWING UP STUDENT ABSENCE – SECONDARY SCHOOL

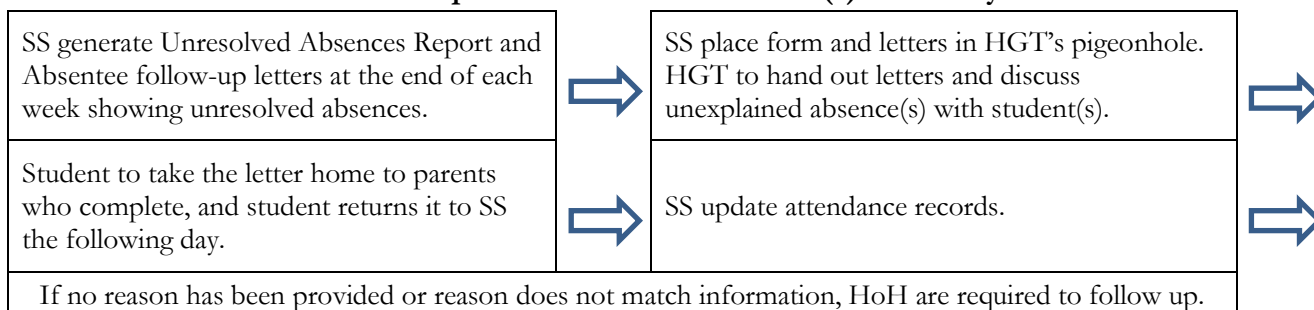
House Group teacher (HGT)

Head of House (HoH)

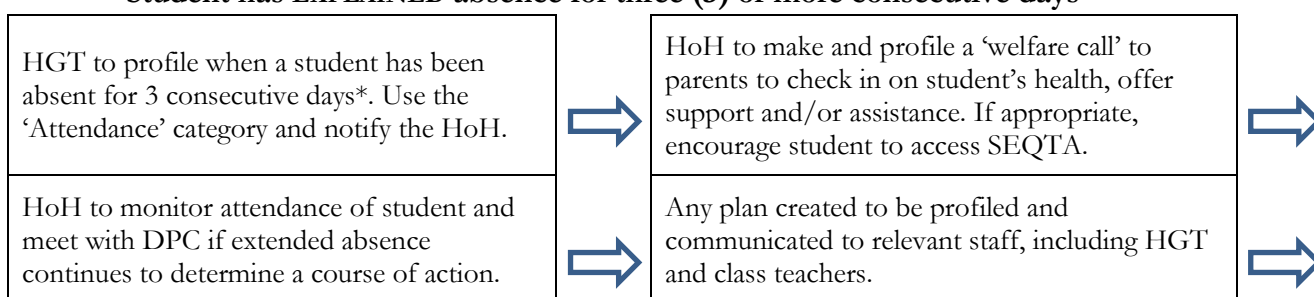
Student Services (SS)

Dean of Pastoral Care (DPC)

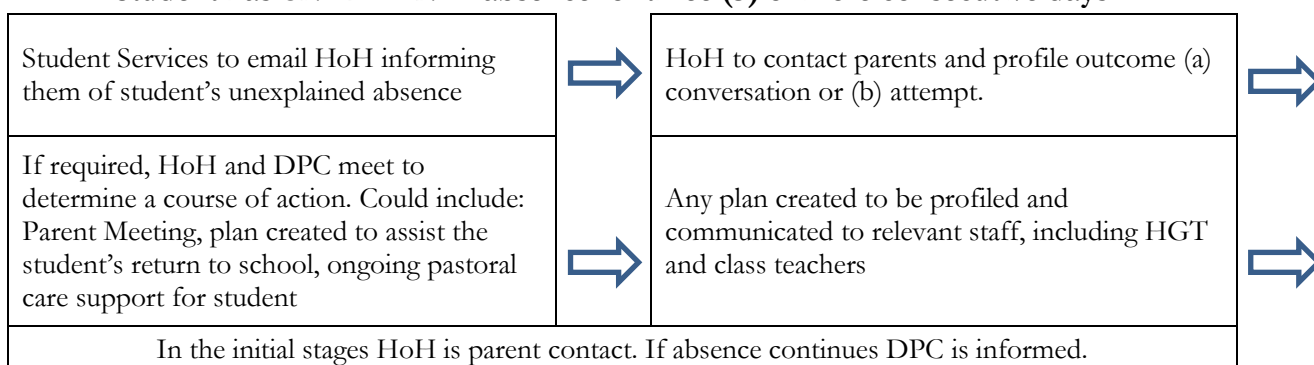
Student has unexplained absence for session(s) or full day



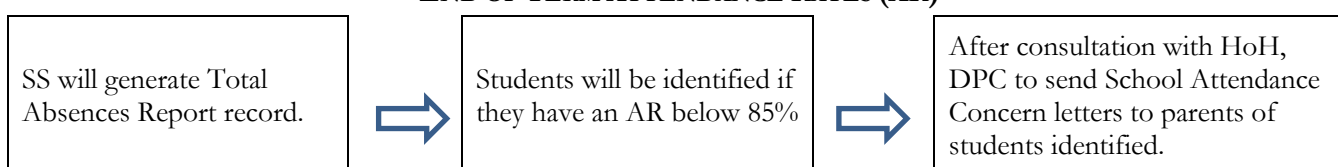
Student has EXPLAINED absence for three (3) or more consecutive days*



Student has UNEXPLAINED absence for three (3) or more consecutive days*



END OF TERM ATTENDANCE RATES (AR)



* Actions may be followed when a pattern of absence emerges. The three consecutive days marker is a starting point.