

## **ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY**

### **Introduction**

The Education Act 1990 and the Education Amendment (School Attendance) Bill 2009 state that it is the parent or guardian's duty to ensure that their child(ren) 'attend school at all times when the school is open for the child's instruction or participation in school activities' except when reasonable causes prevent attendance. All parents with their child(ren) enrolled at APGS must adhere to the rules regarding student attendance at both the school and at each timetabled class. Inconsistent attendance is considered to be detrimental to children's progress, and holidays extended into term time are firmly discouraged for the same reason.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the attendance policy is to facilitate the following expectations and requirements of students and their families, to monitor the attendance of students at school in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act and to properly document student absences.

### **Attendance & Punctuality**

Punctuality engenders a healthy respect for work and study and is considered very important. Students should be at school with enough time to feel relaxed and ready to begin class.

If a student arrives late to school after homeroom bell time or later during the day, they must sign in with the administration staff at the front desk and collect a late-note. Late-notes are to be taken and handed to the classroom teacher.

- It is essential that all students arrive at school on time
- It is essential to the curriculum and the class that all students experience the opening of the day together.
- It is expected that students attend school except in cases of illness.
- It is expected that the students complete the full school term with their class before going on vacation.

Year 11 and 12 attendance may vary after timetabled study periods are confirmed. Year 11 and 12 students, with permission from their parents or guardians, may leave school early when they have no timetabled class, but must sign out at the front desk before leaving the premises. Students who leave early for any other reason, e.g. medical / dental appointments, must also sign out at the front desk.

### **Absences**

Attendance is taken daily at the beginning of the school day by homeroom teacher on Sentral.

It is the parents or guardian's responsibility to advise the school about their child's absence from school.

If a student is going to be late or absent the parent or guardian must provide the administration staff with an email or written note in the morning to provide details of the absence. Please attach medical certificate if applicable (missing an assessment or if the absence is more than 2 days).

Any student who is marked absent or late without an explanation from a parent (via email) will be sent a text message on the morning of the absence. Throughout the day attendance is monitored each period by the classroom teachers on Sentral.

### **Extended Leave**

If a student is expected to be absent for an extended period i.e. more than 2 days, the parent or guardian must complete an *Exemption Application Form* which can be found on ePAL.

Note: At least two weeks' notice is required for special leave to be approved except in the case of a sudden emergency. Also note that minimum attendance is required in order for students to fulfil their academic requirements and that extended absences may jeopardise their eligibility requirements for the HSC.

Procedural fairness must be accorded to an applicant for an exemption.

Absence for any of the following reasons is generally considered unsatisfactory:

- Holidays during term time, especially in the first and last week of term.

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- During study periods in senior classes.
- During examination and assessment periods.
- When a student is unable to participate in sport or has given cause not to attend a school camp or excursion.

The School Board may grant an exemption from school attendance for periods totalling up to 50 days in a 12 month period for any one student in accordance with the provisions of Section 25 of the Education Act (1990).

### **Attendance Requirements**

At the end of the school term any outstanding unexplained absences or partial absences are noted and letters to parents are generated on Sentral. These are posted to parents to fill in and return to the front office.

Attendance percentage is also reported each fortnight and any students at risk of falling below the required attendance levels are monitored. If by the end of the term their attendance has not improved, a First or Final Attendance Warning Letter will be sent home to parents and further action will be taken.

Parents should be aware that if school attendance continues to fall below acceptable levels, without reasonable cause, it may be necessary for the school to report the non-attendance to the Department of Community Services under its obligations as a mandatory reporter.

### **Senior Students (Year 11 & 12)**

Senior students need to meet the minimum required hours of attendance in order to meet their Preliminary and Higher School Certificate requirements from the NSW Education Standards Authority. Free periods are not marked as absences for statistical purposes. However, students must mark that they have a “Free Period” when they sign out for the day at the front office.

### **Suspended Students**

Where a suspension has been given, the suspension is recorded on Sentral as “Suspended” and not counted as “Leave” or any other absence.

### **Students on Overseas Exchange**

Students participating in accredited overseas exchange programs for periods of up to 12 months are to remain on the school Roll. They are not to be marked absent for the duration of their exchange.

A note is to be made on the student’s Sentral attendance profile regarding the place and duration of the exchange. For statistical purposes students on overseas exchange are to be considered present.

Where a student has been assessed as not achieving satisfactory attendance, APGS will notify the parent/guardian in writing of its intention to report the student. The written letter will inform parents/guardians that they are able to access the Overseas Students Complaints and Appeals Policy and that they have 20 working days in which to do so. If the final decision is that the attendance should be reported, PRISMS will be notified that they have not achieved satisfactory attendance.