



WILLUNGA WALDORF SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Our school is required under the Education Act 1972 (SA) and the Education (Compulsory Education Age) Amendment Act 2007 to ensure that students enrolled at our school are attending school or participating in an approved learning program and maintain appropriate attendance registers.

Attendance and punctuality is a shared responsibility between parents/caregivers and the school.

STATEMENT OF INTENT FOR ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

Early identification and intervention of non-attenders, late attenders or irregular attendance has proven to support student learning. The following policy outlines how we can work together to ensure we are supporting the rhythms of our classrooms and provide a healthy learning environment. Our child protection policies require us to abide by all legislative and regulatory obligations and to take necessary action promptly where there are concerns.

We encourage punctuality in both students and teachers for the following reasons:

- To maintain the healthy rhythm and flow of the lessons in the school day
- For students to demonstrate a healthy respect for teachers, fellow students, content and study
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- The modelling of punctual and responsible teachers will encourage students to develop self-responsibility in this area.
- The school has a common law, duty of care responsibility.

CONTEXT

This policy refers to the Willunga Waldorf School Kindergarten, Primary and Secondary faculties.

The Willunga Waldorf School Kindergarten operates under the National Quality (NQF) comprising the Education Care Services National Law Act 2010. As the Kindergarten operates as part of the Willunga Waldorf School, the following policy applies for the purpose of administration, roll books and record keeping.

LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

Under the Education Act 1972 (SA) children of compulsory school age (six years and up to the age of sixteen years) residing in South Australia are required to be in full time attendance at a government or registered non-government school unless exempted by the Minister.

Students of Compulsory Education age (between 16 and 17 years) are required to be in attendance at school or a combination of school and other approved training unless exempted by the Minister.

Willunga Waldorf School is required to maintain the appropriate attendance and enrolment registers and provide these to the Education and Early Childhood Services Registration and Standards board when it visits the school as part of the review of registration process. Our records are legal documents and should demonstrate that a comprehensive record of absences and attendances are being maintained, both for the current year and to meet legislative requirements for information retention.

Our school has a legal requirement to:

- Maintain rolls, enrolment registers and computer records with reasons for absences and dates of cessation of enrolment recorded
- Publish as part of the School Performance Information reporting requirements stipulated by the Australian Government
- To report student attendance data to the Australia Government through the Schools Service Point.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents/caregivers

Enrolled students are required to attend every day of the school calendar subject to absence for sickness or accident. Students are expected to arrive at school no earlier than 8.30am and no later than 8.50am unless otherwise advised by a parent or caregiver.

When Parents/Caregivers enrol their child at school they accept the responsibility to:

- Support the child in attending school regularly and enable them to arrive on time each day
- Provide information that will assist teachers in supporting the child during learning (i.e. medical conditions, family issues etc.)
- Advise the school office and/or student's teacher via phone or written note/email on days when children are away for ill health or family reasons. Written notification is required for absences of 3 days or more. If a child has been ill and has seen a doctor, a certificate from the doctor will assist in accounting for the absence.
- Apply for an exemption whenever there is a planned extended absence such as a family holiday (see temporary exemptions below)
- Ensure the child signs in at the front office if they arrive later than 8.55am and provide notification by written note/email or phone call to explain the reason
- Provide written notification of reason for early departure of students, to be presented to the class teacher/guardian in the morning for approval & signing and then provided to the front office
- Work with the school to improve punctuality and attendance if required
- Ensure students who do not participate in camp or excursion activities are at school for the period unless alternative arrangements have been negotiated prior

Students

Students are expected to:

- Attend all time-tabled lessons, work experience, excursions and camps
- Be punctual in arriving at school and lessons and returning promptly to class at the end of recess and lunch
- Remain on school ground through-out the day except under special circumstances.
- Seek support from class teachers/guardians if they have any concerns that will affect attendance

Teachers

It is the responsibility of the teacher to provide a relevant and dynamic class environment that engages children and encourages regular attendance. Each class teacher accepts responsibility to:

- Maintain a roll book to document student attendance and record absences according to the schools requirements
- Work with the Administration Assistant on the third day of a student's absence to ensure appropriate follow up with the family as to reason why
- Work with the Administration Assistant to ensure appropriate follow up on all unexplained absences
- Coordinate the collection of work for students who are unable to attend school for acceptable reasons and for whom work is requested
- Advise the Leadership Team of frequent or prolonged absences
- Work with the Head of School and document any strategies or interventions to improve attendance and include these in the students file
- Make Mandatory Notifications as appropriate

Head of School

The Head of School (or delegated officer) is responsible for monitoring absence data and ensuring accurate records are being kept. The Head of School accepts responsibility for:

- Ensuring accurate absence data is maintained and appropriate follow up is completed by Teachers and Administration Assistant for all unexplained absences/prolonged absences
- Documentation of interventions, strategies, home visits, phone calls and recording these in the student's file
- Working with teachers and families to develop an individual Student Attendance Improvement Plan and working with teachers and families to determine underlying causes of frequent absenteeism and/or late arrival
- Ensuring accurate reporting of student attendance data per the Australian Education Act 2013
- Reporting to the Chief Executive, Association of Independent Schools of South Australia if attendance issues are not resolved

TEMPORARY EXEMPTIONS RE STUDENT ABSENCE

In the case of general absences, the Head of School has the authority to approve temporary exemptions for periods of up to 12 months for the reason of Family Travel / Holiday.

- Requests for absences of **less than one month** due to Family Travel / Holiday are to be made to the Head of School via the front office in writing, stating the enrolled child/ren concerned, the proposed dates of the absence and signed by a parent or guardian.
- Requests for absences of **more than one month** due to Family Travel / Holiday requires an Application for Exemption, Form A to be completed and lodged at the front office.
- If the absence proposed is for **more than one month and for reasons other than travel/family holiday**, the application requires approval by the Director, Programs and Regional Management (Central Delegate) or the Chief Executive, Association of Independent Schools of South Australia (Independent Schools).

Notification

Parents are asked to provide reasonable notice with requests of absence. This includes:

- At least 4 weeks notification is required for periods exceeding five (5) consecutive days due to Family Travel / Holiday to allow teachers to cater for the student's needs and for the school to complete its attendance record keeping obligations. The structure of Main Lesson is in blocks and the teacher may need to work out a particular scenario for the student depending on the timing of the leave.
- One full term's notification is required if the proposed period of absence is 4 weeks or longer. Parents are encouraged to discuss absences of this nature in advance with the school so we can ensure there is minimal impact on the student.

NOTE 1 : if the absence is for a 16-17 year old student and the period is to exceed 1 month please ask for a copy of FORM B as there are different requirements under the Act.

NOTE 2 : if the absence is for reasons of Disability or Behavioural or Health/Medical reasons please ask for a copy of FORM C as there are different requirements under the Act.

PROCEDURE – UNINFORMED ABSENCES

When it becomes clear that a student has not arrived at school as expected, or left the school premises without parental consent and without coming to the office, staff must do everything possible to locate the missing student and return them to the school grounds as quickly as possible.

Immediately:

1. Advise the Head of School
2. Contact parents

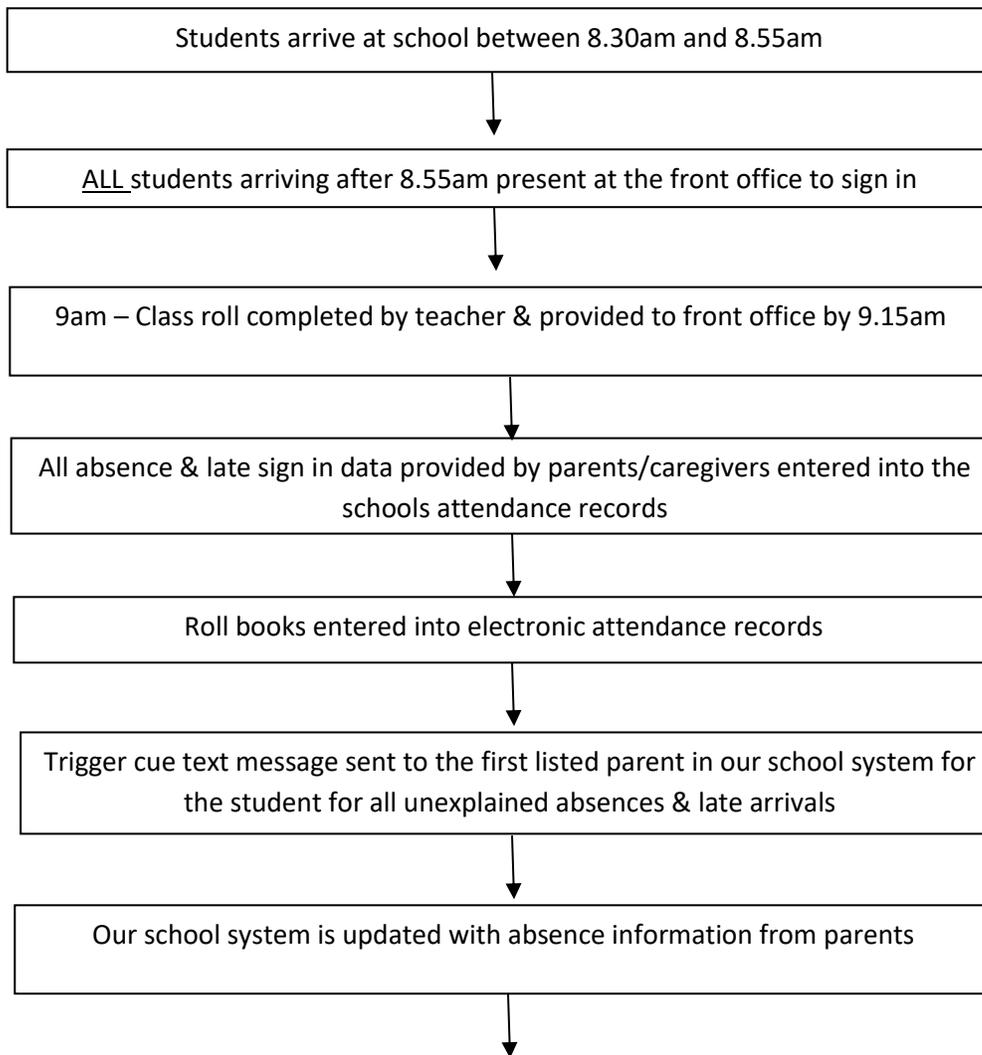
Under direction from the Head of School the following may also be done:

- Speak to teachers that have taken classes leading up to student absence
- Call the student's mobile where applicable, generally HS students only
- Speak to other students to ascertain the students possible whereabouts
- Notify the police

Office staff must keep the parents informed regularly with progress made and actions taken

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Attendance Flow chart



Other follow up as and when required:

- Email sent to parent to request written confirmation/medical certificate for absences of 3 or more days
- Teacher notified and to follow up as required when student attendance drops below 90%
- Head of School notified and to follow up when student attendance drops below 80%
- DECD Attendance and Engagement Officer is advised in cases of unreasonable absence and that there is a risk if it continues
- Mandatory notification considered and/or lodged

Related School Policies and Procedures

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory Notification Procedure • Grievance Policy and Procedure: staff, student • Bullying and Harassment Policy • Codes of Conduct: Staff, Volunteers, Students • Recruitment Policy • New Staff and Volunteer Induction Procedure • Critical Incident Policy and Procedure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pastoral Care Program • Student Management Policy • eSafety Policy (social media policy) • Student Advocacy Policy • Excursion, Camps and Billeting Policies • Transport of Students
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Version	1.0	
Publication Date	To be approved	
Review Date	Initial policy	
Related Legislation and Regulatory Requirements	UN Conventions of the Rights of the Child Children’s Protection Act 1993 (SA) Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA) Teacher Registration and Standards Act 2004 (SA) Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011	
Cross sector Guidelines (SA)	Child Safe Environments: principles of good practice Protective Practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people Managing allegations of sexual misconduct in SA education and care settings Responding to problem sexual behaviour in children and young people Information Sharing Guidelines	
Responsibility	Head of School	
Approved by	WWS Council	Date: 21 st February 2017
Next Review Date	Term 3, 2019	