



DIANELLA
SECONDARY COLLEGE

2017 Senior School Assessment Policy

I n s p i r e C r e a t e A c h i e v e

BACKGROUND

Where a student is enrolled in a public school, the *School Education Act 1999* (the Act) requires that the student attends the school on site or an educational program of the school elsewhere as directed by the principal.

The parents of a child who is enrolled in a school are responsible under the Act for ensuring their child is attending on a daily basis. Parents or other responsible persons may be asked to provide an acceptable explanation for any absence to the Principal. For the purpose of this policy, parent is defined as the parent at law. Further information about the terms *parent* and *responsible person* can be found in the definitions section.

The principal is responsible for creating and maintaining a safe and positive learning environment which promotes engagement and participation, and for the management of regular school attendance.

Consistent attendance and participation at school are essential factors in achieving social and academic learning outcomes. Schools that develop a supportive learning environment and an engaging and relevant curriculum create conditions conducive to regular school attendance.

ATTENDANCE RECORDS

Dianella Secondary College will:

- Keep accurate attendance records for every student enrolled at the school.
- Record whether a student's absence was authorised or unauthorised.
- Issue a leave pass to a student who has been granted permission to leave the school unaccompanied by a responsible adult.
- Record a student as:
 - a) Present for a half day when the student has attended at least two hours of instruction.
 - b) Attending if they are on a school-approved activity.
 - c) An authorised absence during the period of suspension.
 - d) An authorised absence if they are absent due to cultural/religious events.

Guidelines

- *Students who arrive late or leave early but still attend two hours of instruction are recorded as attending a half day.*
- *All students enrolled in the school are required to have their attendance recorded, irrespective of where the educational program is delivered. This includes students who may be attending either part-time or full-time programs offsite as part of an educational program under a Section 24 Arrangement (see Enrolment policy) and those with a Notice of Arrangements that involves a component of school attendance.*
- *Authorised absences for religious observance or cultural reasons are best negotiated prior to the absence to avoid repetitive follow-up on the school's behalf and to support planning for the student.*
- *Leave passes allow students to be readily recognised by police and other agencies when legitimately off school site during school hours. The leave pass may be used in instances such as medical appointments or travel to another site to access an Endorsed Community Based Course (see Guidelines for the use of Standardised Leave Passes).*

MANAGEMENT OF NON-ATTENDANCE

The Principal or nominee will:

- Request an explanation from the student's parent or responsible person when a student has been absent from school and an acceptable explanation has not been provided after three days from the beginning of the absence.
- Manage absences in conjunction with the alternative provider for students participating in alternative attendance arrangements under Section 24 of the Act.
- Develop documented plans for Aboriginal students as per Appendix A: *Documented plans for Aboriginal students.*
- Refer a student to the Student Tracking Coordinator when he or she is deemed to be a 'child whose whereabouts is unknown or where attendance falls below 90% over a term.
- Organise a parent/teacher meeting and/or case conference at the earliest opportunity to identify the issues related to the non-attendance and plan for improvement.
- Document all attendance improvement plans.

Guidelines

- *Student attendance is considered to be 'at-risk' if less than 90%.*
- *Where a student's attendance falls below 90% and acceptable reasons have not been provided for a number of absences, further investigation may assist the return to regular attendance.*
- *In most instances, where an acceptable explanation for the absence has been provided, further action is not required.*
- Documented plans will be developed if a student is deemed at risk. These plans will clearly articulate the support provided by the school with actions agreed on by the parents/caregiver.
- *Principals or nominees should request a medical certificate for prolonged absences due to sickness or injury. In the instance of long term/severe medical conditions impacting on the student's attendance, the principal or nominee need not investigate further if documentary evidence has been provided outlining the nature of the illness and the expected duration of the absence.*
- *Western Australia's schools operate in various cultural and geographical contexts. Relationships between schools and the community are vital to establishing an improved understanding of the factors contributing to absences and their expected duration.*
- *Students up until the end of Year 10 must not be employed during the hours when required to attend school or otherwise participate in an educational program. Employment is only permitted as part of the student's educational program through an arrangement under Section 24 of the Act or through an Exemption from enrolment..*
- *Students in Year 11 or 12 are able to participate in an approved full-time option other than school under a Notice of Arrangements. Options include training (public and private registered training organisations), apprenticeships and traineeships, endorsed community based courses and employment.*
- *Principals (and nominees) should use all appropriate school based resources in the support of students, parents and their families.*

Management of continued non-attendance

If school attendance or engagement in an educational program is not successfully restored through consultation with an appropriate network or regional officer, the principal or nominee will request the parent attends a formal meeting. At the formal meeting, the principal or nominee will:

- ensure any factors preventing attendance or participation are explored;
- request the parent engages with alternative strategies to improve attendance;
- document a formal attendance improvement plan.

The Principal will refer the matter to the Regional Executive Director where:

- A formal meeting has been unable to secure parental engagement and improvement in school attendance.
- It is determined that either prosecution of the parent or application to the Children's Court for a Responsible Parenting Order is appropriate.

Please note that the full Attendance Policy document can be accessed from the Departments of Education WA webpage.