



# **NAREENA HILLS PUBLIC SCHOOL**

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY 2012**



# Nareena Hills Public School

## Attendance Policy

### Rationale

Nareena Hills Public School is committed to providing a caring and supportive teaching and learning environment to enable students to achieve their personal best.

For students to learn, they need to arrive at school on time and attend regularly. Regular attendance is a critical factor in ensuring that students have every opportunity to learn and develop. This cannot occur without a strong partnership between parents/carers who have the legal responsibility to ensure that students attend school regularly and school staff who have a duty of care to ensure that student attendance is managed according to the school's policy and procedures. Student attendance is everyone's responsibility.

The following policy and procedures have been developed to ensure that Nareena Hills Public School implements the NSW Department of Education and Training's 'School Attendance Policy and Procedures' (PD20050259). The procedures articulate the roles and responsibilities of all staff at Nareena Hills Public School.

Nareena Hills Public School records student attendance within the school's computerised administration system which is the Department's preferred means for maintaining an attendance register.

### Strategies to Encourage Regular Attendance

- Provide a positive learning environment where expectations are high but realistic and where students are provided with every opportunity to achieve their personal best
- Provide clear information to parents and students about attendance requirements and the consequences for unsatisfactory attendance
- Regular reminders in newsletters of the importance of regular attendance
- Regular reminders by Teachers to students in classrooms of the importance of regular attendance
- Regular reminders by the Principal to students at assembly of the importance of regular attendance
- Teachers will monitor attendance and follow up any concerns promptly with phone calls to parents/carers and if necessary, discussions with appropriate Assistant Principal
- Ensure that there is an early detection of students with unsatisfactory attendance, including early leavers and late arrivals, so that interventions can occur promptly.

### Responsibilities

### **Parents/Carers**

- Ensure that their children attend school regularly
- Explain absences of their children from school in writing (including use of email) promptly to the school
- Work with the school to improve attendance.

### **Classroom Teachers**

- Record absences at the start of each day on the Absentee folder. NOTE that late arrivals/early departures information will be recorded at the office and teachers are not required to note this on the Absentee folder. All students who leave early/arrive late are required to get a note from the office before going to class/leaving. This note should be signed and dated by an authorised person and filed in the sleeve for notes provided in the Attendance folder
- Receive notes from students explaining absences, record details in the section “Notes Received” on the Absentee folder. If teachers are unable to make a decision about the explanation provided, they should attach the notes to the daily absentee sheet which will be reviewed by the Principal. The Principal is the only person who is delegated with the authority to grant leave and a short exemption. Dates recorded must be for the date of the absence (NOT the date the note was received). Store notes in the sleeve in the Attendance Folder. These will be collected by SASS staff and stored securely
- In the event that teachers receive verbal explanations from parents and carers they should request a written explanation. If there are cultural and/or language barriers which impact on the parents/carers to do this, it should be discussed with the appropriate Assistant Principal so that interpreter support can be accessed
- Send Absentee folder to the office prior to 11.00 am daily (except Friday – Yrs 4-6 sport)
- **Identify students who have irregular or unsatisfactory patterns of attendance and discuss with parents/carers promptly.** If a student has been absent for three days without an explanation, the teacher should contact the parents/carers and seek an explanation. If they are unable to make contact with the parents/carers they should advise the school Administration Officer
- Discuss attendance concerns which have not been resolved at the teacher/parent/carer level with the appropriate Assistant Principal

### **Casual Teachers**

- Instructions for casual teachers are found in the casual teachers’ folders.

### **SASS Staff**

- Enter data from the Absentee folder onto OASIS by the end of every school day. Return the Absentee folders to the respective teacher pigeon hole by 3.00 pm every day
- Record details of students who arrive late and leave early in the late arrival and early departure books. Explained partial absences will be recorded within OASIS.

- Inform classroom teachers of any child whose attendance may warrant the teacher contacting the child's parents
- Generate reports as requested by the Assistant Principals and the Principal.
- Generate < 85% reports by the end of week 4 and week 8 each term and give to the Principal.
- In the event that SAS staff receives verbal explanations for absences they should remind parents that they are still required to provide a written explanation. If there are cultural and/or language barriers which impact on the parents/carers to do this, it should be discussed with the Principal so that interpreter support can be accessed. The teacher should be advised of the verbal explanation.
- Print off unexplained absence request letters as requested by the Principal.

### **Assistant Principals**

- Coordinate procedures for monitoring and improving student attendance within their supervisory areas
- Provide advice and guidance to teachers around matters pertaining to student attendance
- Follow up student absences from <85% OASIS report. Following investigation, if the assessment is that the teacher has exhausted strategies to improve attendance, this should be raised at the Learning Support Meeting.
- Advise the Principal of cases where school based strategies to improve attendance have not been successful and make a referral to the Home School Liaison Program
- Monitor progress of School Attendance Improvement Plans for students who have been referred to the Home School Liaison Program.
- Monitor and analyse attendance patterns, including partial attendance which include late arrivals and early departures which are of concern and refer to the Principal.

### **School Counsellor**

- Participate in the development, implementation and evaluation of School Attendance Improvement Plans where appropriate and as negotiated at the Learning Support Team Meeting.
- Follow up on welfare issues as discussed and negotiated at the Learning Support Team Meeting.

### **Principal**

- Review notes received by parents/carers where teachers are unable to make a decision about the explanation.
- Ensure that all staff are trained to implement the attendance policy and procedures
- Authorise the issuing of letters to parents/carers when advised by the Assistant Principals/SASS of impending referral to the Home School Liaison Program.

- Participate in the development, implementation and evaluation of School Attendance Improvement Plans as appropriate.
- Attend conciliation conference meetings.
- Process all exemption applications.
- Advise SASS staff when exemption is granted.

### **Home School Liaison Program**

If school based interventions have not been successful in resolving attendance concerns, a referral may be made to the Home School Liaison Programme by the Principal.

Legal action may be taken in cases where all internal and external interventions have not resolved serious attendance problems. The act requires that parents/carers attend a conciliation conference and participate in an attendance improvement program. If these strategies are not effective prosecution may occur.