



Clarkson Primary School Attendance Policy and Guidelines

At Clarkson Primary School we know that regular *attendance at school* is fundamental to student learning. Every day matters; any *absence from school* can have a negative impact on student progress and achievement. Consistent attendance and participation are also essential for all students' social and emotional development and assists in cultivating a sense of belonging to the school community.

Attendance requirements by law

Section 23 of the School Education Act 1999 requires students to attend school, or participate in an educational program of the school, on the days on which it is open for instruction.

A student may be excused if they are prevented from attending due to temporary physical or mental incapacity, or other reasonable cause (Section 25), cultural or religious observance (Section 30) or suspension (Section 90).

When a student's attendance falls below 90% or is identified as a concern, the Student Attendance policy and procedures requires the school to investigate the reasons for a student's absence, discuss with parents and implement strategies for improvement that are linked to the cause of absence.

Clarkson Primary School adheres to the WA Department of Education 'Student Attendance in Public Schools' Policy. (as updated 19 July 2021, version 4.4)

At Clarkson Primary School we will:

- support increased attendance by liaising with other agencies to improve student engagement with school;
- maintain accurate records of attendance using SIS/Integrus for every student enrolled (including attendance at both morning and afternoon sessions for Kindergarten, Pre-Primary, and Primary students);
- record whether a student's absence is authorised or unauthorised (using appropriate attendance codes)
- issue a leave pass (using PassTab) to a student who has been granted permission to leave the school by a responsible adult;
- record a student as; present for a half day when the student has attended at least two hours and five minutes of instruction; and present if they are on a school-approved activity or attending off-site under a Section 24 absence; and
- retain documentation of all contact and intervention strategies implemented in addressing a student's absence.

Student absences

At Clarkson Primary School we will:

- request a reason for a student's absence be provided to the principal's satisfaction;
- manage the student's attendance in conjunction with the alternative school or provider where a student is participating in a Section 24 arrangement,; and

- where a student's attendance is below 90% or is identified as a concern:
 - investigate the reasons for the student's absence;
 - organise a parent/teacher meeting and/or case conference at the earliest opportunity to identify issues concerning the student's absence; plan improvement strategies; and
 - Include identified attendance improvement strategies in a document plan.

Guidance (from DoE Student Attendance in Public Schools Policy and Procedures document)

- *The School Education Act 1999 requires that an explanation of a student's absence is provided within three school days from the start of the absence.*
- *For procedures which apply for students who cannot be contacted or located refer to Section 3.4.1 Missing Students - Students Whose Whereabouts are Unknown.*
- *Badged Attendance Officers assist in the management of student absence. For information about the authorisation and designation of Badged Attendance Officers refer to Badged Attendance Officers.*
- *For further information on developing attendance improvement plans refer to Restoring Attendance, Consultation Phase Support.*
- *Principals should request a medical certificate for prolonged absences that are due to sickness or injury.*

Persistent student absence

At Clarkson Primary School we will:

- Develop and implement an attendance improvement plan consisting of:
 - A consultation phase;
 - A formal meeting phase if attendance is not successfully restored through actions taken as a result of consultation; and
 - A process to monitor and review engagement with any plan or agreement developed in the formal meeting.
- Documents all intervention strategies used to address a student's absence, so that, should it become necessary to proceed to prosecution, it can be clearly established that all reasonably practicable steps to restore attendance have been taken.

Where absence persists, the principal will offer the option of an attendance panel to the parent, the purpose of which is to provide advice and assistance to restore regular attendance (*refer to Guidelines for Attendance Panels*).

Guidance

- *The principal should consider whether the persistent absence places the child or young person at suspected risk of harm and/or what other elements of risk to the student's wellbeing may be indicated by persistent absence from school.*
 - *In the formal meeting phase, the principal offers the parent the opportunity to:*
 - *enter into a Responsible Parenting Agreement; or*
 - *avail themselves of the advice and assistance which an attendance panel may provide.*
- *The Regional Executive Director or Independent Public School principal should also refer the student's case to the Department for Child Protection and Family Support in circumstances where:*
 - *the offer to convene an attendance panel is not accepted by the parent; or*
 - *an attendance panel is convened but the advice and assistance it provides is not successful in restoring attendance.*

Definitions

ATTENDANCE PANEL

Is formed pursuant to the School Education Act 1999 (the Act) to address the persistent absence of a student. The function of the panel is to provide advice and assistance to students and parents in order to restore regular attendance.

AUTHORISED ABSENCE

An absence where the reason provided by the parent is considered to be legitimate and is deemed acceptable by the principal.

DOCUMENTED PLAN

An umbrella term used to describe a range of ways of catering for the educational needs of individual or smaller groups of students with identified needs. It is primarily a teaching and learning planning document, and it identifies short to medium term educational outcomes. Documented plans may take a variety of forms, including:

- Individual Education Plans (IEP);
- Individual Behaviour Plans (IBP);
- Individual Transition Plans (ITP); and
- Risk Management Plans (RMP).

Risk categories

Students who attend school less than 90% are considered 'at risk' by the Education of Department.

Levels of attendance are defined as:

'Regular' – 90% or greater 'Indicated' – 80% to <90% 'Moderate' – 60% to <80% 'Severe' - <60%

The table below establishes how much equivalent school is missed through non-attendance.

Period of absence	Rate of Attendance	Equivalent School Missed (over Years 1 to 10)
Average 5 days per term	90%	1 year
1 day per week	80%	2 years
1.5 days per week	70%	3 years
2 days per week	60%	4 years
3 days per week	40%	6 years
5 weeks per term	50%	5 years