

Attendance Policy

For students to be successful at school they need minimal interruptions to their learning.

It is widely recognised that students need to attend school on a regular basis to gain the maximum benefit from schooling and in so doing optimise their life opportunities. Research indicates that missing an average of five days of school each term puts children back the equivalent of one year of schooling. Skipping two to three days of school each week causes them to fall behind four to six years of schooling.

It is also widely recognised that attendance problems are best managed by early identification and intervention. The School Education Act 1999 requires compulsory aged students, as defined in the Act, to attend school, or participate in an educational program of a school, on the days on which the school is open for instruction unless an arrangement in writing has been entered into for a student.

In the interests of ensuring all of our students are achieving to the best of their ability, we are hopeful that these measures will enhance our support of our students and we thank you in anticipation of your cooperation in these matters

Student Absence

At Baldivis Secondary College we recognise the strong link between student attendance and student achievement. Staff within the Student Services team oversee the recording of student attendance as well as monitoring and amending as necessary our existing policy and procedures to ensure greater accuracy and accountability.

Contact with parent/guardians is fundamental to ensuring the data recorded is accurate. There are many reasons why our information may be incorrect – the regular class teacher may be absent, for some reason the student may not answer when their name is called or they may arrive late to class, data may be incorrectly entered or recorded etc. Furthermore, if students are absenting themselves from the college without the knowledge of their parents/guardians/caregivers, we want to be able to communicate this information sooner rather than later!

In order for us to work collaboratively in improving student attendance rates across the board, we are asking that parents/guardians/caregivers note the following:

If students are absent from school at any time, parent/guardians should advise the College by 9.00am and provide a satisfactory explanation for the absence. Please provide the following information;

- Your name
- Student's full name
- Student's Year Group
- Reason for absence

They can do this by:

- Phoning the Student Services Absentee Line on (08) 9523 3660 or Administration on (08) 9523 3600; or
- Emailing the Student Services on cathy.mcguire@education.wa.edu.au

If the College has not received prior notification of a student's absence, parent/guardians will receive a SMS. These messages are computer generated and will be sent at 9.30am each morning.

Parent/guardians are requested to respond to this message with an explanation for the absence. If the College does not receive a response, a written note must be provided within three (3) days of the absence. Notes should be handed in to the Student Services reception upon return to college.

Every fortnight parent/guardians will receive a report on their child's unexplained absences; parent/guardians are required to provide a satisfactory explanation for all absences, this form must be returned to the College within 3 working days of receiving it. If this information is not received within this

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time frame, the absence will be recorded as an 'unauthorised' absence from school.

Parent/guardians are asked to contact the Student Services Officer if student absence is going to be for an extended period of time (e.g. family reasons or illness).

Please notify the college immediately of any changes to your contact details (e.g. change of address or home or mobile telephone number) as soon as possible so that we can update our records.

School Refusal

If a student is refusing to attend school, please contact the Year Coordinator or Program Coordinator (Student Services) as a matter of urgency.

Lateness

All students arriving to college late **MUST** provide a written note giving brief details of the reason/s for lateness and immediately report to the School Officer in charge of attendance at the **Student Services** reception desk in the Student Services Centre. Students must not go directly to class.

The student will be provided with an 'entry to class slip' and advised to show it to their teacher upon entry to **each** of their classes during the day.

When students arrive late to school without a note, the 'absence' will be regarded as "unexplained" until such time as a note is received or the parent advises the school via telephone or email. Once this information has been received the record will be amended. Consequences will be instigated for students who regularly arrive late to the college **without** parent permission or arrive late **on a consistent basis**.

Students Leaving Early For Essential Appointments

- A note from a parent/guardian/caregiver is essential when a child is leaving the college to attend an appointment during the day.
- The note must be presented to Student Services first thing in the morning so that the students can be issued with a 'Permission to Leave College Slip'. The student should then hand this slip to their class teacher at the commencement of the period during which they are leaving to forewarn of early departure.
- No student is allowed to leave a class during the college day to "go to sign out".
- Preferably all "signing out" is to be completed before 8.40am.

Family Holidays during School Terms

Parents are discouraged from taking their children on holidays during school terms. Whilst the college respects that travel can be an educational experience in itself it is important that it does not come at the cost of the child's education. Parents are required to negotiate their child's absence with the college principal **prior to first day of non-attendance**, otherwise the absence will be considered to be 'unauthorised' and recorded as such.

Leaving College Grounds

- Students **MUST NOT** leave the college grounds without the written consent of a parent/guardian **and** the college. This will be regarded as truancy.
- Students who leave the college grounds without permission will be considered to have committed a

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serious breach of college discipline and will be subject to disciplinary action.

- Students leaving college early or arriving late **MUST** sign in or out at Student Services unless alternative arrangements have been put in place.
- Students must not make contact with their parent/guardian directly to be collected from school. The correct procedure is to report to Student Services and discuss the matter with a staff member, who will contact home if appropriate.

Out Of Class Pass System

All students should be in class during period times. Any student out of class must have an **Out of Class Pass**. Students who are out of class without a valid reason will be considered to have 'truanted' and therefore may be required to make up the class time they missed.

Lesson Attendance Codes

There are 14 different codes used to record and monitor student attendance. Under the School Education Act 1999, principals are required to record whether a student 'attended or participated in an educational program of the school or whether they failed to so attend or participate'.

Codes for students who are NOT absent

/ Present code is used to indicate that the student is attending class.

There are three other codes to use in situations when students are **NOT absent** but are not attending their classes on the school site.

E Educational Activity

The Educational Activity code is used when the student is involved in an approved educational program such as an excursion, work placement or an off-site program. No follow up is required and the student is not recorded as absent.

W Withdrawn

The Withdrawn code should be used when a student is withdrawn from classroom activities but is still present at school. For example this may be used when a student is sent to the office or a buddy class.

M Medical or Sick Bay

The Medical or Sick Bay code should be used when a student is in the medical or sick bay but is still present at school.

Codes for students who are late

L Late

The Late code is used when a student is late to school but the degree of lateness is insufficient to be recorded as a period or session absence. If the student is so late that they have missed more than 25% of a period then they are recorded as absent for that period or session.

Codes for Authorised Absences

When students are **absent** from school there are a range of codes which apply. There are five codes which may apply when a student's absence is authorised by the principal.

R Reasonable Cause

The Reasonable cause code is used when the principal has authorised the reason provided as acceptable. This code is **not** be used when the reason provided is suspension, a cultural absence,

illness or a holiday.

Z Suspended

A student is automatically recorded as absent using the Suspended code when they have been formally suspended from school.

C Cultural Absence

The Cultural absence code is used when the principal has authorised a student's absence because of cultural or religious significance to the family such as funerals, weddings and sorry time. The nominated days for this absence should be approved by the principal. If the days absent extend beyond the number of approved days and no acceptable reason is given the additional absences should be recorded as unauthorised.

N Notified as Sick

The Notified as Sick code is used when a student is absent from school and the Principal has authorised this absence due to confirmation of the student's ill health by the parent. The principal has the discretion to request a medical certificate when the student is absent from school due to illness.

V Vacation

The Vacation code is used when the Principal has authorised a student's absence due to a holiday. The absence will only be approved through negotiations between the principal and the parent prior to the absence. The negotiation may involve the student completing a work package during the holidays.

Codes for Unauthorised Absences

There are three codes which may be used when a student is absent from school and the principal does not authorise the absence.

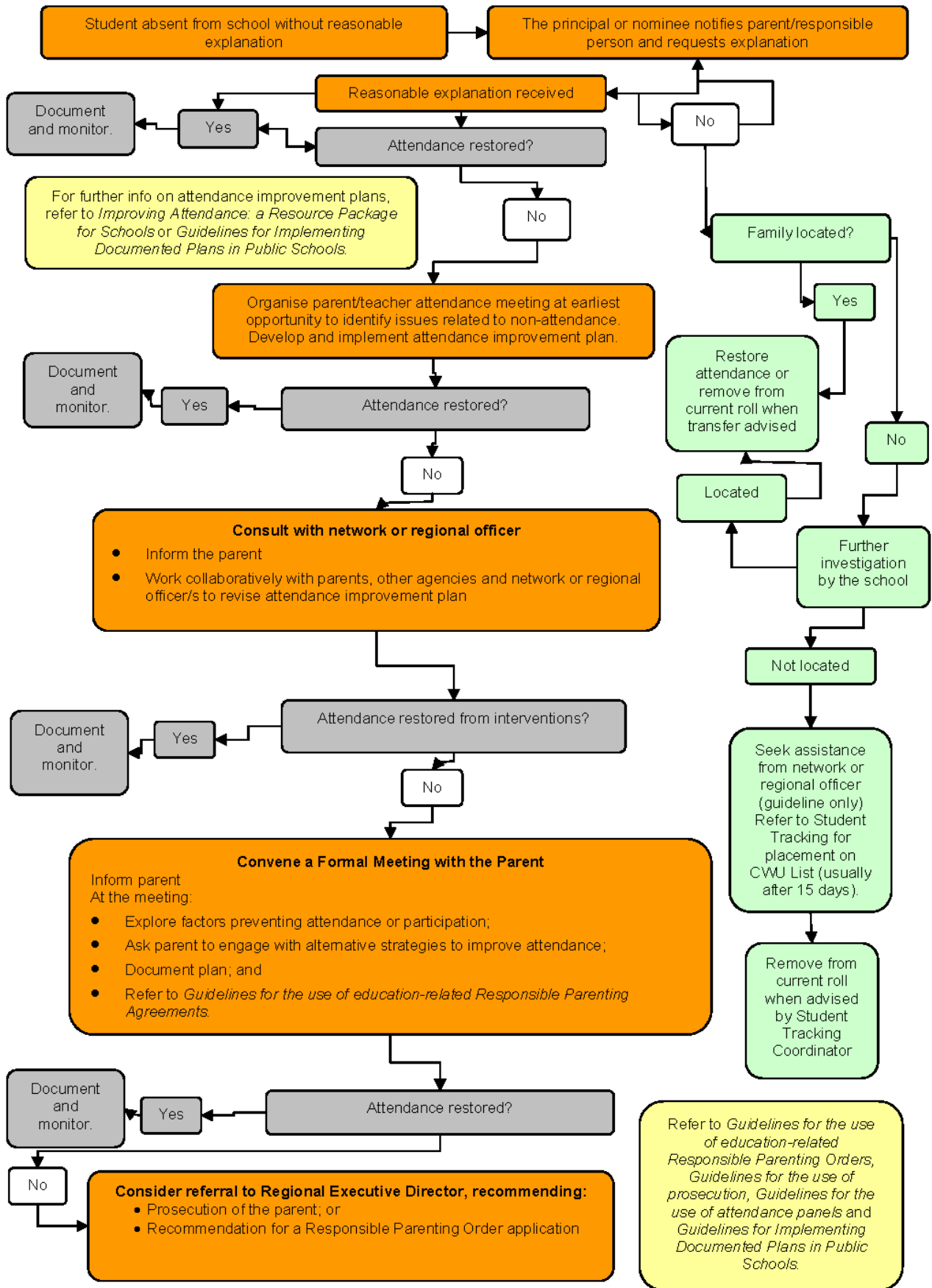
X Unacceptable Reason

The Unacceptable reason code is used when a student is absent from school and the reason which has been given for the absence is deemed unauthorised. In this situation the principal has not approved the reason and further follow up is required.

U Absence – cause not yet established

The Absence – cause not yet established code is used when a student is absent from school and no reason has been established. This code is sometimes called an unexplained absence and in this situation further follow up is required.

ATTENDANCE INTERVENTION FLOWCHART



Student Attendance

All policy and procedural statements contained within this document are lawful orders for the purposes of section 80(a) of the Sector Management Act 1994 (WA) and are therefore to be observed by all Department of Education employees.

