



Goodooga Central School

School Attendance Policy (Reviewed 2020)

Preamble:

The NSW Government has determined that parents, caregivers or persons having custody of a child are responsible for the regular attendance of that child at school until the child is 17 years of age. All students who are enrolled at school, regardless of their age, are expected to attend school whenever instruction is provided, as stated in the NSW Department of Education and Training School Attendance Policy, 2010.

Regular attendance at school is essential to assist students to maximise their potential. The encouragement and maintenance of regular school attendance remains a core responsibility of Principals and teachers.

The need for careful and accurate roll marking is paramount as student absence may be symptomatic of deeper underlying problems such as:

- sexual abuse
- physical abuse
- serious illness in the family
- death in the family
- drug abuse – parent / student
- poverty
- child exploitation
- delinquency
- minor crime involvement
- difficulty in transporting child to school
- parent may condone absences
- as well as other unidentified reasons

Context:

The Principal is responsible for the development and effective implementation of attendance policies and procedures that are compliant with NSW DET School Attendance Policy, 2010.

All teachers have a legal responsibility to maintain accurate rolls of student attendance, both during Roll Call and all lessons. This is a *Duty of Care* requirement.

At Goodooga Central School, four (4) areas have been identified to assist in student attendance monitoring.

1. Daily school attendance
2. Extended leave
3. Truancy – Full day and Fractional truancy
4. Punctuality/Lateness to school

Goodooga Central School expectations, responsibilities and requirements for student attendance are communicated to all stakeholders through a number of ways, including verbal contact with parents/carers and newsletters.

Outcomes

The implementation of the Goodooga Central School attendance policy with associated procedures ensures the provision of consistent systems across the school to meet Department of Education and Communities (DEC) Policy.

The Goodooga Central School attendance policy provides clarity to all stakeholders - students, parents/carers and staff about Goodooga Central School expectations, responsibilities and requirements for student attendance.

The encouragement and maintenance of regular attendance for each student will ensure students at Goodooga Central School maximise their learning potential.

1. Daily school attendance:

Student responsibility:

The school day starts with a warning bell at 8:35 am. All primary students must be in their lines and all secondary students their roll call room by 8.40 am.

Late arrival to school

A student, who arrives **after 8.40 am**, is required to go directly to the office to receive a school late note.

Additional interventions such as parental contact/interview may be implemented for those students who display continued patterns of lateness without a satisfactory reason. Our AEO contacts parents when students are absent. Rolls are marked through the SENTRAL program.

Early Leave

A student who wishes to get approval for Early Leave must have a note signed by her parent/caregiver requesting permission for the student to leave at the stated time. The student must take this note to the office where an early leavers pass will be issued. The **“early leavers pass”** must be **carried by the student as evidence of approval** and can be required to be shown to the Police upon request. A student places himself/herself at risk and beyond the duty of care of teachers if he/she leaves the school without permission. Failure to follow these procedures may result in disciplinary action as per school policy.

Teacher responsibility:

Teachers are responsible for ensuring rolls are accurately marked and monitored for patterns of unexplained absences. At Goodooga Central School, the teachers mark the roll on SENTRAL and then our AEO calls the families of anyone who is absent, to ascertain why the students are away.

Extended leave

Students are expected to attend school whenever instruction is provided. There are, however, occasions when a student may need to apply for an exemption from their classes due to alternative educational programs, personal or health reasons.

Principals have the authority to grant leave up to **50** days in a **12** month period **per** student. No minimal approval period is stated. Where approved, these would be entered as an exemption from school attendance in the official school records. Leave will only be granted when the Principal perceives this leave is in the best educational interests of the child. Part day

exemptions may also be granted for approved alternative education programs or other appropriate exceptional circumstances.
Parents need to apply in writing to the Principal for any extended periods of leave.

Truancy – Full day and Fractional truancy

According to the Student Welfare Directorate, Truancy is the absence of a student from school without the knowledge or permission of their parent or caregiver. Full day truancy is when a student is absent for the full school day, without appropriate permission. Fractional truancy is defined as a student absenting herself for part of a school day without consent.

This includes a student who:

- Is absent from school without a valid reason and without the knowledge/approval of a Parent/Caregiver;
- Has been marked present at period 1 lesson or roll call but does not attend timetabled class(es);
- Leaves class without the permission of the teacher;
- Is loitering in the school without a valid reason;
- Leaves the school grounds without written approval from Parent/Caregiver and the Senior Executive.

As outlined in the preamble, regular attendance at school is essential to assist students to maximise their potential, as well as a legal requirement, therefore truanting students will be counselled accordingly. Though truancy may be symptomatic of underlying welfare issues, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken to ensure that all students recognise and understand the seriousness of the offence.

Teachers, Head Teacher SS and Assistant Principal have defined roles and responsibilities in the management of truancy. These roles include:

- monitoring of attendance in class / marking class rolls in every class;
- tracking student attendance to identify patterns;
- implementing strategies and interventions when truancy issues are detected;
- communicating truancy within the school;
- communicating truancy to parents/caregivers; and
- implementing disciplinary action, as required.

Punctuality/lateness to lessons

All students are **expected to be punctual to all lessons**. This will ensure maximum learning time for all students in each class. It is also vital for students to understand that punctuality is a basic expectation for life beyond school. To assist students in this understanding, it is important that a consistent process is used to improve student punctuality. When a student arrives late to class, the teacher needs to use discretion in relation to movement times.

To assist students with arriving at classes on time after a break, a warning bell will sound 5 minutes before the end of both Recess and Lunch. Students are expected to start moving to their assembly area or class at this first bell, with the aim that all students arrive in the correct room/place by the end of recess/lunch bell. Teachers on playground duty are to move students at the sound of the warning bell.