

GLADSTONE PRIMARY SCHOOL

59. ATTENDANCE

RATIONALE

All enrolled pupils aged 6 and over are expected to attend school every day that the school is open. In terms of s31 of the Education Act 1989 the Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that all pupils attend. Additionally Research consistently shows that children's achievement at school is affected by their attendance. The better the attendance the higher the level of student achievement.

PURPOSES

1. To ensure that school attendance is effectively monitored.
2. To respond appropriately to attendance problems.

GUIDELINES

1. Any absence of a pupil from the school at any time must be with the knowledge and consent of the pupil's parents/caregivers, **who must contact the school to advise absences by 9.00am on the morning of the first day of a period of absence (Ph 846-9744 Ext 3) and on each additional day of absence.**
2. Planned absences must be notified in advance to both the classroom teacher or the Office.
3. Attendance of all classes will be monitored by a roll, taken twice daily (by 9am and by 1:50pm)
4. The Principal through the attendance officer will ensure that patterns of absence are identified and appropriately dealt with.
5. The Principal will report persistent truancy problems to the Board of Trustees.
6. The Board of Trustees, through the Principal and Director of Guidance and Support, will decide the appropriate action to be taken, which may include liaison with other agencies to follow up repeated unexplained absences.
7. Parents/caregivers will be advised of the Attendance Policy at the time of their child's enrolment.

Dave Shadbolt _____
(Principal)

Fiona Barker _____
(Chairperson)

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES (Policy 86 Attendance)

Recording Attendance

1. Student attendance will be recorded twice a day, at the beginning of morning school (by 9am), and at the beginning of afternoon school (by 1:50pm). This will be done, either electronically by the class teacher (whether that be the homeroom teacher or a different teacher – eg: a special needs teacher or technology teacher) using the school’s Student Management System in the classroom, or by recording the attendance/absence information on a pre-populated class list, which will be sent within 15 minutes to the School Office.
2. The Office or the class teacher will subsequently record in the SMS the reason for each student’s absence, using the Attendance Codes 2012.
3. Students arriving at school late are required to report first to the office, so their arrival can be recorded and the electronic register updated. The student will be issued with a Pass In stamp which they show to their class teacher so they know the register has been updated.
4. If a student is required to leave school during the school day, Parents/Caregivers will go to the office where they will be issued with a Pass Out before leaving the school grounds. When/If the student returns to school later in the day, (s) he will be required to report to the Office upon arrival. In this way the Office will be able to record justified absences, occurring during the course of the day, in the SMS.
5. If a student is absent without explanation during the course of the school day, the class teacher will input that information directly into the SMS.
6. Whenever possible, parents/caregivers will be encouraged to advise the school of an impending absence ahead of time. When this is not possible, then parents/caregivers will be asked to inform the school as soon as possible after the event (eg: by phone on the day of a student’s illness, or by note on the first day when the student returns to school).
7. The following methods of explaining student absences, either before or after the event, will be accepted from parents/caregivers:
 - A phone call
 - A face-to-face explanation
 - A note
 - A text message to the school’s absence phone
 - An email message to school stating:
 - i. the student’s name
 - ii. the date of the absence and
 - iii. the reason for the absence
 - A certificate from a health professional or other person of standing in the community (as defined by the Principal).
8. When a student is marked absent and that absence hasn’t been explained beforehand, the Office will contact a parent/caregiver first by text message and if no response this will be followed by a phone call

on the first day of absence. If an explanation is received by the office it will be entered into the SMS, using the Attendance Codes 2012.

9. If the absence remains unexplained when the student returns to school, the class teacher will seek to obtain an explanation through an unexplained absence slip sent home. This is to be completed and returned to school. If that is unsuccessful after three days, the teacher will attempt to contact the parents/caregivers by phone. (If a satisfactory explanation is subsequently received, then the coding of the absence will be changed by the class teacher in the SMS).
10. When an absence is deemed to be 'unjustified', the class teacher will contact the parents/caregivers within 24 hours, either by phone or by sending a note home (evidence of the receipt of which will be required in writing). The aim of this contact is to alert parents/caregivers to the fact that the absence falls outside what is acceptable to the school and that any repetition of this will require further action by the school. (It might also give the teacher insights that may be useful in counselling the student at a later stage).
11. If a student has three days of 'unjustified' absence in the course of a school term, the class teacher will counsel the student about this, advising of the likely consequences if this behaviour continues.
12. If a student has a fourth day of 'unjustified' absence in the course of a school term, the class teacher will refer the matter to the Director of Guidance and Support, who will interview the student and then contact the parents/caregivers in order to arrange a meeting with them.
13. If a student is referred to the Director of Guidance and Support for 'unjustified' absences in two consecutive school terms, they will consult the Principal and then refer the matter to the District Truancy Service.
14. Each term the Principal will review the school's attendance/absence statistics and, where there is concern, will discuss it with the relevant class teacher, with a view to agreeing on a strategy to deal with the concern. The Principal will also analyse the data in terms of gender, ethnicity, year levels, etc.
15. Information on attendance requirements and absence protocols will be given to parents/caregivers as part of the school's Enrolment Pack.
16. In the case of a student who is engaged in learning that is taking place not under the direct supervision of the school, the Principal will use his/her discretion to decide as to whether the student will be marked as present or absent from school. Each case will be taken on its merits.