

Kindergarten Enrolment and Attendance Policy and Procedures

Aim

Ensure the compliance requirement to provide processes to record and maintain records of enrolment and attendance is followed. Ensure a thorough process of enrolment.

Sources

Section 25 of the Education act

Public Health Act 2010.

NSW Education Act(1990)

Implementation

Students are enrolled 50 weeks a year commencing the second week of January and ending on third/fourth week of December. Our main curriculum will be run during the NSW term dates comprising 4 terms of 10 weeks each. The syllabus requirements will be delivered during these term times. Any absence during this time will be counted towards unsatisfactory attendance. We encourage families to take holidays out of term dates so that they are not counted as school absence.

Kindergarten children are required by law to attend 5 days a week during NSW Government school terms. Compulsory hours of attendance are 8.45am – 3.30 pm

The kindergarten year is only available to existing Headland school students

Enrolment

It is not assumed that all children finishing the pre-school program will automatically be accepted into the kindergarten year.

Kindergarten places are only available for existing Headland students

- Parent(s)/guardians of the student accepted in the Kindergarten Year will be required to complete a re-enrolment form for the Kindergarten Year.
- The administrator will enter all enrolment and attendance records into an electronic system independently accessible for the kindergarten year that will be able to generate reports of the following:
 - Date of enrolment
 - Attendance records
 - Student information including
 - Name, age and address
 - Name and contact telephone of parent(s) / guardians
- It is the parents/guardians responsibility to notify the school of any update/changes of information through a change of information form as soon as changes occur. Any changes of information are updated on receipt of the information by the administrator.

Attendance

It is the responsibility of parent(s)/guardians to ensure that their children attend school and to account for any absence.

- Applications for exemption from school attendance must be made in writing to the principal
- Parents/guardians can notify reasons of absence by email on the day before 12pm or complete the Notification of Absence forms.
- The class teacher will maintain a register of daily attendance and absence on the class roll using the code approved by the Minister.
- Any documentation substantiating reasons for absence will be collected by the class teacher and placed in relevant in tray in the principal's office to be filed in the student's file.
- The syllabus will be delivered during NSW term dates.
- During the NSW school term dates the daily attendances and absences will be recorded by the teacher on either paper attendance rolls.
- Any explained or unexplained absence will be recorded using the common code approved by the Minister.

Attendance register codes and definitions

Only the following attendance register codes will be used to record the:

- explanation of student absence, and/or
- variation in student attendance.

In addition to recording the reason for an absence or the reason for a variation in attendance, the duration of the absence or variation will be recorded in the *Special Comments* section of the attendance sheet.

Symbol	Meaning
A	<p>The student's absence is unexplained or unjustified. This symbol must be used if no explanation has been provided by parents within seven days of the occurrence of an absence or the explanation is not accepted by the principal It is at the principal's discretion to accept or not accept the explanation provided.</p> <p>The "A" code is to be used if no explanation has been provided by parents within seven days of the occurrence of an absence or the explanation is not accepted by the Principal. It is at the principal's discretion whether to accept the explanation provided.</p> <p>If travel outside of school vacation periods is necessary, the following considerations apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If the principal accepts the reason for the absence, the absence will be marked as "L" and a Certificate of Extended Leave – Holiday issued.• If the principal does not believe the absence is in the student's best interests and does not accept the reason, the absence will be recorded as "A ". A Certificate of Extended Leave – Holiday will not be issued. <p>Holidays taken by students outside of school vacation periods will be included as absences. Families are encouraged to holiday or travel during school vacations.</p> <p>If the period of absence is in excess of 50 days in 1 block of time, the student may be eligible to enrol in</p>

	Distance Education.
S	The student's absence is due to sickness or as the result of a medical or paramedical appointment. In these cases: - a medical certificate is provided or - the absence was due to sickness and the principal accepts this explanation. Principals may request a medical certificate in addition to explanations if the explanation is doubted, or the student has a history of unsatisfactory attendance
L	An explanation of the absence is provided which has been accepted by the principal. This may be due to: - misadventure or unforeseen event - participation in special events not related to the school - domestic necessity such as serious illness of an immediate family member - attendance at funerals - travel in Australia and overseas - recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions.
E	The student was suspended from school.
M	The student was exempted from attending school and a Certificate of Exemption has been issued by a delegated officer.
B	The student is absent from the school on official school business. This symbol is recorded where the principal approves the student leaving the school site to undertake, for example: - work experience - school sport (regional and state carnivals) - school excursions - student exchange
H1	The student is enrolled in a school and is required or approved to be attending an alternative educational setting on a sessional or full time basis. The symbol is recorded where a student accesses education settings separate to their mainstream school such as: - tutorial centre and programs - behaviour schools - juvenile justice - hospital schools - distance education

Strategies for supporting regular attendance of students:

- Headland Montessori will provide a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the school community;
- We will provide clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance for school-aged children.

The Principal will view registers on a monthly basis

- We will implement programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise.
 - Contact parents regarding student absences and keep meeting minutes outlining attendance as a concern, phone logs, copies of letters, and copies of requests for medical certificates.
 - Keep documentation outlining the escalation of attendance concerns requiring further intervention e.g. reports to the Child Wellbeing Unit and/or Family and Community Services Child Protection Helpline, about suspected risk of harm relating to educational neglect.

- Ensure that every effort is being made to provide a program that engages the child's interests, learning style and addresses any learning difficulties. When necessary specialist advice will be sought.

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that when frequent absences are explained as being due to illness that:

- consultation occurs with parents regarding the health care needs of the student
- where there are ongoing concerns, approval is sought from parents to contact the student's doctor so the school has all relevant information regarding the student's health care needs
- strategies are developed to ensure regular attendance at school, via parent information evenings, inductions and parent teacher conferencing sessions.
- all required reports are made to the Community Services Child Protection Helpline or contact made with the Child Wellbeing Unit (as required by the Mandatory Reporter Guide).

When a student has unexplained absences

When a child has two days of unexplained absences the class teacher will first try to call both the parents on the contact phone numbers that the school have for them and then also email both parents on the email addresses that they have provided to the school, if contact has not already been made.

An absence is unexplained if parents have failed to provide an explanation to the school within 7 days. This is then passed onto the Principal to assess and handle.

When a child has an unsatisfactory attendance record

Regular attendance at school is essential to assist students to maximise their potential. Schools, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students.

A child's attendance is considered unsatisfactory if

- A child has a pattern of being more than an hour late to school on a weekly basis
- A child has weekly absences from school
- A child is absent from school for more than 50 days in the school year.

The Principal will

- Provide clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirement and the consequence of unsatisfactory attendance. This will be done in a parent teacher meeting that will be organised by the Principal after the class teacher brings up their concerns about these unexplained absents and unsatisfactory attendance.
- Continue to then monitor the attendance of this student to make sure that this is not a pattern.
- Place a copy of the meeting report into the students file in the office.
- The Principal will pass onto the class teacher any information from parents received by either phone or email into the school about absenteeism's in the class, so that the class rolls can be marked in the correct way.
- The Principal will print out a copy of the email and place into the student's file.

- If the unsatisfactory attendance is deemed a Child Protection matter the Principal will consult the Mandatory Reporter's Guide to assess whether the case should be reported to Community Services, or whether support agency assistance is required

Certificates of Exemption

The principal will have the authority to grant and cancel a certificate of exemption or a certificate of extended leave – vacation or travel, for a student from being enrolled and attending school in certain prescribed circumstances under Section 25 of the Education Act. This will be issued in relation to the granting of an exemption from school attendance totalling up to 100 days during NSW term dates.

- Exemption from enrolment will only be granted where conditions exist which make it necessary or desirable in the view of the principal that a Certificate of Exemption be granted and that an exemption is in the student's best interests in the short and long term. There will be significant consideration as to whether there are any welfare or child protection concerns relating to the child and whether any period of exemption will negatively impact on the child's learning, developmental or social progress.
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) make an application for exemption by completing an 'Application for Exemption from Attendance/Enrolment form' at School. This must be made in writing and in advance. Parents can seek assistance from the principal when completing an 'Application for Exemption from Attendance /Enrolment form' at School.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) are not required to apply for an exemption in cases of the student being prevented from attending school because of a direction under the Public Health Act 2010. The principal may grant a Certificate of Exemption for the period determined by relevant authorities under this Act.
- Generally, Certificates of Exemption will not be approved in the case of students who have been the subject of a Department of Community Services report or Child Wellbeing Unit report and for whom unresolved issues concerning a risk of harm remain. A risk assessment will be conducted by the principal to identify and manage the issue
- In the circumstances of approved prolonged absence, the principal will provide information of the syllabus requirements for parent(s) / guardian(s) and discuss possible learning alternatives during the absence.
- If a Certificate of Exemption has been granted the attendance register will indicate full day exemptions with the code 'M'
- The principal can cancel the Certificate of Exemption where circumstances are identified that it is believed warrants this action. For example, where the conditions attached to the exemption are not being met or cease to apply.
- The Certificate of exemption will be retained in the student's file and retained for a period of seven years
- **Travel, either local or international**, will not be considered under the *Exemption from School - Procedures*. Parents/guardians are required to complete an Application for Extended Leave and it is at the principal's discretion to accept the reason provided by the parent/guardian relating to their travel requests. This form will have to be completed for

periods of travel over 20 days, this may include a travel itinerary or e ticket. There is no minimum or maximum period of time that a parent may request leave provisions for the student. However, if the leave request exceeds a school term, an enrolment in distance education may be considered. If the principal accepts the reason and wishes to grant a period of leave to the student then they are required to complete a [Certificate of Extended Leave](#) and record a 'L' for the given period on the school's register. The parent or applicant will be issued with the original Certificate of Extended Leave and a copy of the Certificate and the Application will be kept in the student's file and retained for a period of seven years.

Departure from school

- In September each year, the principal will ensure parent(s) / guardian (s) of all Kindergarten students have been issued a leaving form to complete, stipulating date of departure and next school destination.
- The register of enrolment will reflect
 - Date of departure and
 - Which school the student will be attending next
- The leaving form will be kept in the student's file
- When a Kindergarten student leaves the school and we are unaware of their future schooling, the school will attempt to find out which school the student will be going to and if unsuccessful a 'student destination unknown' form will be completed by the principal and forwarded to the Department of Education and Communities Officer. A copy of the notification /communication to the Communities Officer will be retained with the child's record.

Record Retention

- The register of enrolments will be retained electronically for a minimum period of five (5) years before archiving.
- The register of daily attendances will be retained electronically for a period of seven (7) years after the last entry was made and then archived
- Evidence or documentation in regard to any exemption permission will be placed in the student's file including copies of all certificates issued.