

NSW Department of Education and Communities

# Koorawatha Public School

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

Revised March, 2016.

### **Context**

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their learning. Schools, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. Parents have a duty to comply with the compulsory education requirements of the Education Act 1990. Under their duty of care, staff will monitor part and whole day absences.

This document reflects the DET School Attendance Policy (revised 2011) and the School Attendance Procedures (revised 2011) as they apply to Koorawatha Public School. This policy should be read in the context of The Enrolment of Students in Government Schools: A Summary and Consolidation of Policy (1997).

### **Legal Requirements**

- The school must maintain an attendance register (roll) in a form approved by the Minister (Section 24 of the Education Act, 1990);
- Parents or carers are to ensure students attend school each day and explain ALL student absences. Partial absences (arriving late or leaving early) also require a note of explanation (Section 22 of the Education Act, 1990).
- DOCS and Child Wellbeing Unit must be contacted if attendance drops below 70% for the year.

### **Koorawatha Public School Policy and Procedures:**

#### **Regular Attendance**

- Regular attendance is essential to ensure that effective learning occurs;
- Government legislation requires students to attend each day that instruction is provided;
- Regular attendance will be encouraged at all times with students and their parents/caregivers;
- Class teachers are directly responsible for monitoring daily attendance;
- The Principal will support class teachers, ensuring that monitoring procedures are effective.

## **Procedures at KPS:**

- Koorawatha Public School maintains two rolls K-2 and 3-6. This is maintained by one nominated teacher.
- Teachers are responsible for the completion of the class roll each morning. In the absence of the regular class teacher, the roll will be completed by the relief teacher .
- If a child is absent from school, parents/carers are required to provide the school with an acceptable explanation within seven days of the absence.
- Where parents/carers do not provide an absentee note within seven days of the absence, the roll will reflect an unjustified absence. Notes that provide explanations that are not adequate are recorded as unjustified and are followed up by the Principal.
- All absentee notes are to be signed, dated by the classroom teacher. These notes are to be stored in the school attendance folder and taken to the office at the end of every term. The SAM will place them in storage.
- If a student is absent and no note/verbal explanation is received, the Class teacher will phone parents/carers after two days non-attendance.
- When a verbal absence message is received, the class teacher will be notified in writing. The class teacher will then be required to record this absence on the class roll.
- The Principal will assist in monitoring regular attendance and a note indicating concern re: attendance may be sent home if deemed necessary. Both school (interviews, LST referrals etc.) and HSLO (Home School Liaison Officer) interventions may occur.
- If a student is late for school, they must come to the main building to sign onto the attendance variation book. The exact time of arrival is recorded in the book.
- If a student is leaving early, their parent/carer must see the classroom teacher and sign out of the school. The exact time of leaving is recorded in the book.
- Any student with less than 85% attendance (whole days) is monitored by the delegated staff member and both school (interviews, LST referrals etc.) and HSLO (Home School Liaison Officer) interventions may occur.
- The school will keep a file of the attendance records as required by the NSW Department of Education and Communities.
- School organised events such as sports carnivals are part of the school curriculum. Students are required to attend. Students who do not attend these events, without a justified excuse, are to be marked unjustified.
- If a child is representing the school in a sporting or other activity, the student will be marked "on school business".
- During teacher strikes, School Development Days or natural disasters, a special circumstance register is to be kept for students who are in attendance.

## **Information to Parents**

Information on attendance requirements is provided in the school information handbook. The school information handbook is provided to all new enrolments. The school will inform parents/caregivers of attendance requirements regularly through the newsletter and website.

## **Roles in Attendance Monitoring**

**1. Teachers must be aware of the 'Attendance Policy' and its procedures.**

**2. Parents are responsible for:**

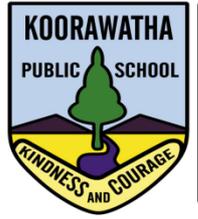
- Ensuring that their child attend school every day and explain ALL student absences;
- Ensuring that their child arrives to school on time.

### **3. Class teachers will:**

- reinforce that regular attendance is necessary and that notes are required;
- closely monitor attendance patterns- absences and lateness;
- remind students, and if possible their parents, that explanatory notes are required if the note is overdue i.e. if the note has not been received within seven school days;
- record the category of absence in roll eg 'L' for leave "U" for unjustified;
- Phone parents on the second consecutive day of absence without notification;
- inform the Principal, when a student has been absent for three or more consecutive days;
- notify the Principal if notes do not provide an acceptable explanation for absence;
- Sign and date notes with a reason for absence. These notes are to be stored in the school attendance folder and sent to the office at the end of every Term.

### **4. The Principal will:**

- monitor student attendance (whole days) on a fortnightly basis;
- complete attendance roll check fortnightly;
- send home letters of concern to parents/carers if a student attendance falls below 85%;
- request additional documentation from parent/carers, such as medical certificates detailing the nature and duration of the sickness if there are concerns about notes provided by the parents/carers or if the sickness is over the extended period;
- Implement in school monitoring program; contact parents/carers when extended unexplained absences have occurred after the initial monitoring does not improve attendance;
- implement appropriate school intervention (interviews, LST referral etc) or refer the case to the HSLO;
- ensure that regular information is included in school newsletter re: attendance and requirements surrounding attendance;
- ensure that positive attendance is celebrated across the school
- monitor attendance of Aboriginal students;
- consider exemption applications from parents/carers (submitted prior to the period of absence);
- communicate students at risk to every staff member on an on-going basis
- initiate a program to encourage a behaviour change with regard to lateness;



NSW Department of Education and Communities

# Koorawatha Public School

## COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

Regular attendance at school is important for students to reach their potential. The school is required to record the reason for any absences as a way of ensuring that students are absent from school only when they are sick or have another good reason for missing school.

Your child \_\_\_\_\_ was absent from school on:

• \_\_\_\_\_ and no explanation was received. Please assist us by completing the attached form and returning it to school with your child as soon as possible.

Alternatively, you may wish to contact the school on 6345 3414 to discuss your child's attendance.

Yours sincerely

Catherine Briggs  
Principal

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REASON FOR ABSENCE: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



NSW Department of Education and Communities

# Koorawatha Public School

Date:

Dear \_

I refer to the attendance of your son, John at Koorawatha Public School.

The *Education Act (1990)* requires parents to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend school on each day that the school is open for instruction. If children are absent from school, parents are required to provide the school with an acceptable explanation within seven days of the absence.

You have previously been advised that John's attendance is a matter of concern. The school has implemented a range of strategies to encourage John's full attendance at school without success.

At a recent school Learning Support Team/Student Welfare Team meeting John's pattern of attendance was reviewed and it is clear that John's attendance is still at an unacceptable level.

I am obliged to report apparent unresolved non-compliance with the *Education Act (1990)* to the local manager of the region's Home School Liaison Program for further investigation by a home school liaison officer/Aboriginal student liaison officer to help resolve the matter. The local manager will consider if further action is necessary.

This may include the development of an Attendance Improvement Plan with specific targets, strategies and timelines.

If you do not meaningfully engage in the plan and there is no improvement in the John's attendance during this time, the matter may be referred to the Department's senior officers for possible legal action.

It is important that you work with us to resolve the issue.

Yours sincerely

Catherine Briggs  
Principal