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|  | **Seven Hills High School**  **Student Attendance Policy** | | |
| **Implementation Date: June 2017** | |  | **Review Date: June 2020** |

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| Rationale |

Regular attendance at school for every student is essential if students are to achieve their potential, and increase their career and life options. Seven Hills High School, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, school staff, as part of their duty of care, record and monitor part and whole day absences.

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| Student absence from school |

## Students leaving the school grounds during school hours

## Parents are to contact the school via phone, a written explanation or in person if they are requesting permission for a child to leave the school premises during the school day.

* **A leave pass will to students who have permission to leave school premises during normal school hours.**
* **The leave pass is only valid on the day of issue**

**Parents notifying the school of a student absence**

* + - Should a parent is aware that their child will be absent from school prior to the date, they should contact the school, via a written note, telephone or email, noting the child’s name, date, reason and length of absence.

## The school contacting parents be contacted regarding student absence

* The school will undertake all reasonable measures to contact parents on the same day or following day of an absence where parents have not contacted the school. Parents may respond to the notification SMS, contact the school directly or provide a written explanation to provide an explanation of their child’s absence from school.
  + - If within 7 days of the first day of any period of absence an explanation has not been received and no contact has been made with parents, the school will ensure parents are contacted within the next 2 school days.

N.B. If the principal declines to accept an explanation for an absence and record the absence as ‘unjustified’. The parent will be advised that the explanation has not been accepted and a reason for the decision will be provided.

## Frequent absences due to illness

* + - Where frequent absences are explained as being due to illness a member of the Wellbeing Team will consult with parents regarding the health care needs of the child.
    - The Principal can request the parents to provide a medical certificate if he/she has concerns with the explanation provided, or where there is a history of poor attendance.

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| **Application for Extended Leave (travel or holiday)** |

* Parents wishing to apply for extended leave are required to contact the Principal at least 2 weeks prior to the intended period of absence.
  + - The principal will not accept a reason for travel during school term if it is not in the best interests of the student. Educational, social and participation reasons, which should be specified on the Application
    - Where the principal considers that the travel is appropriate during school term, the principal will issues the parent with an Application for Extended Leave – Travel for completion and inform the parent that if the Application is accepted, the absences will be recorded as leave. Travel documentation, such as travel itinerary or e- ticket, is to be attached to the Application
    - If the principal declines to accept a parent’s Application for Extended Leave – Travel the parent will advised in writing.

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| **Exemption from attendance at school** |

* + - Certificates of Exemption from the compulsory schooling requirements of the Education Act will only be granted by the Principal (within his/her delegation) when it has been clearly demonstrated by the applicant that an exemption is in the student’s best interests in the short and long term and that alternatives to exemption have been considered.
    - Applications for a Certificate of Exemption from School will be managed consistent with the ‘Exemption from School – Procedures’.

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| Role of the parents |

* To take appropriate action to ensure their child(ren) attend school every day the school is open for their instruction.
* Provide an explanation for absences by means such as a telephone call, written note, text message or email to the school within 7 days from the first day of any period of absence.
* Work in partnership with the school to plan and implement strategies to support regular attendance at school, including communicating with the school if they are aware of issues impacting on their child’s attendance or engagement with school.

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| Role of the Principal |

To oversee the management of systems whereby;

* All attendance records are accessible to the appropriate Department of Education officials and entities.
* Procedures are in place for the school to regularly evaluate and address school attendance and provide avenue for open communication with parents on issues affecting student attendance.
* Effective strategies are implemented to contact parents where there is a pattern of attendance causing concern or the parent has failed to provide a satisfactory explanation for an absence.
* To ensure school staff are trained to implement school attendance policies and procedures and that personnel with delegated responsibility for maintaining attendance records are supervised.
* Early identification of students at risk of developing poor school attendance patterns occurs through regular roll checks and that attendance reports are generated at least fortnightly followed up by the Wellbeing Team.
* Parents, students and the school community are regularly informed of the importance of school and attendance requirements
  + - Ensure that concerns related to unsatisfactory attendance are notified to the relevant agencies and are managed according to the [Protecting and](https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student_serv/child_protection/prot_children/PD20020067.shtml) [Supporting Children and Young People Policy and Procedures.](https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student_serv/child_protection/prot_children/PD20020067.shtml)

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| Role of the Wellbeing and Learning and Support Teams |

* Investigate all cases of unsatisfactory attendance, including part day absences, and school based factors impacting on attendance are addressed.
* Early identification occurs of students at risk of developing poor school attendance patterns.
* Partnerships with parents are formed to identify and implement strategies that address the learning and support needs of a student with attendance patterns of concern.
* Establish effective referral and support networks so that students whose attendance is identified as being of concern and their families can be connected to relevant services within the department and with local external agencies in discussion with parents.
* Communicate, collaborate and share information with other services and agencies to enhance the effectiveness of interventions with students and families. Provide feedback about outcomes to the principal.

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| **Responsibilities of school staff** |

* Provide a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students’ sense of wellbeing and belonging to the school community.
* Promote regular attendance at school through teaching and learning activities that acknowledge the learning and support needs of students.
* Maintain accurate records of student attendance.
* Alert the Head Teacher Wellbeing, when a student’s pattern of attendance is of concern, or if no explanation is received from the parent or carer within required timeframes.
* Those with concerns about the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child or young person, will report their concerns to the principal.