



West Balcatta
Primary School

West Balcatta Primary School

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WHOLE-SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY & PROCEDURES 2022

1.0 BACKGROUND

- To maximise children's learning opportunities, they need to attend school at least 95% of the time.
- Regular attendance enables children to build upon their knowledge and skills every day. It is not acceptable to take holidays during in-term time.
- Children who miss out on the basic skills may experience difficulties later on due to gaps in their learning.
- Regular attendance helps students to develop confidence in areas such as social skills, organisation and teamwork.
- The law requires students to attend Primary School from Pre-primary to Year 6. Once a Kindergarten student is enrolled, attendance is compulsory.

Under Western Australian law (School Education Act 1999), parents must send their children to school unless:

- they are unwell,
- they have an infectious disease, or
- the Principal is provided with a genuine and acceptable reason.

2.0 OUR CONTEXT

The staff and school community at West Balcatta Primary School value attendance and believe that every day of attendance in school contributes to a child's learning and that academic outcomes are enhanced by maximising attendance in school. There is no 'safe' threshold.

We understand that for maximum educational impact 95% - 100% attendance is ideal. Attendance rates lower than 90% can have a negative effect on academic, social and emotional growth.

Our Attendance Policy is aligned with the Department of Education's attendance documents. Historically, our attendance rates have been equal to or above that of the State and 'like' schools. A large percentage of our student absences are vacation related and recorded as an unauthorised vacation. We actively promote the importance of attending school and scheduling family holidays during term breaks.

There is an expectation that once enrolled, students will attend on a regular basis. Positive attendance patterns are fostered and encouraged, and support is provided to students and families to maximise attendance.

3.0 PARENT/CARER RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1.1 Student Illness

- Parents are advised to call the school office advising staff of the reason for their child's absence. Office staff will then notify the class teacher that the student is absent, along with the reason why. Other methods of communication are email, note, via the website or in person with the class teacher. This must occur within 3 days of the absence.
- A student's absence must be explained by the parent or carer only, not the student. A medical certificate may be requested which is then to be submitted at the school office.
- It is a requirement that contact details are up-to-date at the school office so that parents can be contacted regarding absences.

3.1.2 Medical Appointments

Where possible, parents are encouraged to make medical appointments outside of school hours.

3.2 In-term Vacations

Parents are required to inform the school of the proposed holiday, however there is no provision for a Principal to approve student absences for the purpose of family vacations. As such, in-term vacations are not supported by the Department of Education *Student Attendance Policy and Procedures (2017)*. Teachers will not provide school work for students while on vacation, as there is no requirement within the *School Education Act 1999* or *School Education Regulations 2000* to do so.

3.3 Arriving After the Siren

The school day begins at 8:45am for students in Years 1-6 and 8.35am for Kindergarten and Pre Primary students. Students will be considered late if they are not in class by this time. Students arriving at school late miss critical morning routines and learning activities.

When arriving late, students must sign in via PassTab in the office.

3.4 Student Refusal to Attend

Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they are having difficulty getting their child to school. The school will arrange support and advice.

3.5 Unexplained Absences

If a student's absence is not explained, the following procedure is followed:

- an absentee note is sent home asking for a written explanation of the absence from the parent /carer: parents are expected to respond to this with an explanation; and
- if still no explanation is given, parents may be contacted by an Associate Principal asking for an explanation of the absence.

4.0 RECORDING ATTENDANCE

At West Balcatta Primary School, accurate attendance records are kept for all students. Teachers are responsible for recording attendance in Integris at 8:45am and 11.40am.

The office staff will enter late records and absences (which are directed to the school) directly into Integris. They will follow a pre-determined format: - *Time or date; reason; who is notifying; initial*. A continuous attendance by a student of at least two (2) full hours is to be recorded as a half-day attendance. Students who arrive late but still meet this requirement are recorded as late and are not recorded as a half-day absence.

A *Temporary Attendance Register* is used by Specialist Teachers and relief teachers, and for evacuation purposes. This information is recorded in Integris by the class teacher.

Code	Reason	Code	Reason
/	Present	Y	Enforced Closure
U	Cause Not Established	C	Cultural/Religious
X	Unacceptable Reason	N	Notified as Sick
T	Truant	V	Approved Absence by Principal
R	Reasonable Cause	K	Unauthorised Vacation
E	Educational Activity	W	Withdrawn
M	Medical Room	Z	Suspension
L	Late		

Correspondence from parents/carers relating to attendance are to be placed in each student's absentee note envelope and placed in their file.

Attendance records are kept in electronic form for a period of seven years. Unsatisfactory attendance reports on students must be retained in a student's records for 25 years from date of birth.

5.0 RESPONDING TO ABSENCES

The Associate Principal (Student Services) will create and print follow-up letters for all unexplained absences. These will be printed and sent home via the student twice per term.

6.0 ATTENDANCE CONCERNS

THE IMPACT OF MISSING SCHOOL			
Period of Absence (Pre-primary to Year 10)	Rate of Attendance	Equivalent School Missed	Level of Educational Risk
5 days per term	90%	1 Year	Regular Attendance (but not ideal)
1.5 days per fortnight	85%	1.5 Years	Low Risk
1 day per week	80%	2 Years	At Risk
1.5 days per week	70%	3 Years	Moderate Risk
2 days per week	60%	4 Years	Moderate Risk
3 days per week	40%	6 years	Severe Risk
5 weeks per term	50%	5 Years	Severe Risk

Students with an attendance rate of 70% or less in the current or previous year have their attendance tracked on a **Student Attendance Tracking Form** (Appendix 1), by the Associate Principal (Student Services). These forms are also available to monitor other concerns regarding attendance. An overall **WBPS Students At-Risk Attendance Tracking Form** (Appendix 2) is maintained by the Associate Principal (Student Services) for students with an attendance rate of 70% or less.

Class teachers phone parents when there have been three consecutive days of unexplained absence. If the teacher is unable to contact the family after two attempts this is recorded in the student's green Student Profile and on the Attendance Tracking Form (if the student has one) and the Associate Principal (Student Services) is notified.

The Associate Principal (Student Services) will generate letters for students who:

- are at risk (below 70% attendance);
- have unexplained absences, and
- are regularly late.

These letters will express our concerns, offer support and strategies along with the request for punctual arrival/improved attendance of the student(s), and will be sent home at the midway point and end of each term.

When a student's attendance is deemed concerning, the school will work collaboratively with students and families to develop and implement strategies to improve attendance. This is led by the Associate Principal (Student Services) who may choose to involve the Learning Support Team and/or the Student Services Team, following the **Attendance Intervention 1** and **Attendance Intervention 2** procedures (Appendix 3 and Appendix 4).

7.0 ANALYSING ATTENDANCE DATA

The Department of Education analyses student attendance data according to the following attendance categories:

- Regular (>90%)
- Indicated Risk (80% - 90%)
- Moderate at Risk (60% - 80%)
- Severe at Risk (< 60%)

In addition to reports available in SIS, we use two central databases that are derived from SIS, to analyse our attendance data and set targets in our operational plans each year.

1. The *Student Attendance Reporting* (SAR) application reports attendance rates and absence types, attendance profiles, year group breakdowns and authorised and unauthorised absences.
2. The *Student Achievement Information System* (SAIS) provides a graphic application that can assist schools in analysing student achievement in relation to attendance.

Whole school, year level and individual student targets are set and monitored throughout the year with a review of attendance targets scheduled at the beginning of each school year.

8.0 PROMOTING ATTENDANCE AT WBPS

We promote the importance of attendance to ensure children do not miss out on the benefits of our welcoming learning environment. There is an expectation that, once enrolled, positive attendance patterns are encouraged and students will attend on a regular basis. To enhance attendance we:

1. Create a friendly welcoming environment and foster a sense of belonging.
2. Encourage positive relationships between home and school.
3. Provide an engaging and motivating curriculum.
4. Communicate the importance of regular attendance with the school community.
5. Consider class placement that provides a supportive network of friends for each student.
6. Analyse and review attendance data via the Department's *Student Attendance Reporting Portal*, to set attendance targets each year.
7. Contact parents after 3 days of unexplained absences.

8. Use Attendance Tracking forms to monitor at-risk students.
9. Develop attendance plans to positively improve attendance.
10. Implement a case management approach to provide additional support for students with attendance concerns.

9.0 REFERENCES

When creating this policy, the following policies and websites were consulted:

- School Education Act 1999
- School Education Regulations 2000
- Department of Education *Student Attendance Policy and Procedures 2018*
- Department of Education *Students Whose Whereabouts are Unknown Guidelines and Procedures*
- Department of Education Toolkit *Student Attendance Toolkit*
<http://ecm.det.wa.edu.au/connect/resolver/view/SATK12T001/latest/index.html>

10.0 REVIEW OF POLICY

This policy is due to be reviewed during Term 3, 2023.

10.0 APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 Student Attendance Tracking Form
- Appendix 2 WBPS Students At-Risk Attendance Tracking Form
- Appendix 3 Attendance Intervention 1
- Appendix 4 Attendance Intervention 2

Appendix 1 - Student Attendance Tracking Form

Student:	DOB:	
Teacher(s):	Year:	Teaching Area:

Action	Staff Responsible	Timeline	Tick	Date(s)	Notes (see over for elaboration)
Phone call 1 to parents	Teacher	After 3 unexplained absences			
Phone call 2 to parents	Teacher				
Phone call 3 to parents with follow-up email	Associate Principal	All further unexplained absences, or if attendance is below 70%			
Unexplained absence follow up letter mailed home	Associate Principal	Week 5 and Week 10 of each term			
Letter home, inviting parents to a case conference	Associate Principal	If no improvement or explanation after Phone Call 3			
Case Conference regarding attendance	Teacher, Associate & Learning Support Team	Within 2 weeks of Letter sent home by Associate Principal			
Attendance Plan Developed & Implemented	Teacher, Associate & Learning Support Team	During Case Conference, for implementation immediately following			
Outside Agencies offered	Teacher, Associate & Learning Support Team	During Case Conference			
Outside Agencies contacted	Teacher, Associate & Learning Support Team	Immediately following Case Conference			
Phone Call to Regional Office	Associate Principal	At any point after at least 2 phone calls, one letter and one meeting (or attempt)			

Associate Principal to keep with copies of SIS Attendance Reports and copies of all letters, plans & meeting minutes

Record of Contact Regarding Attendance

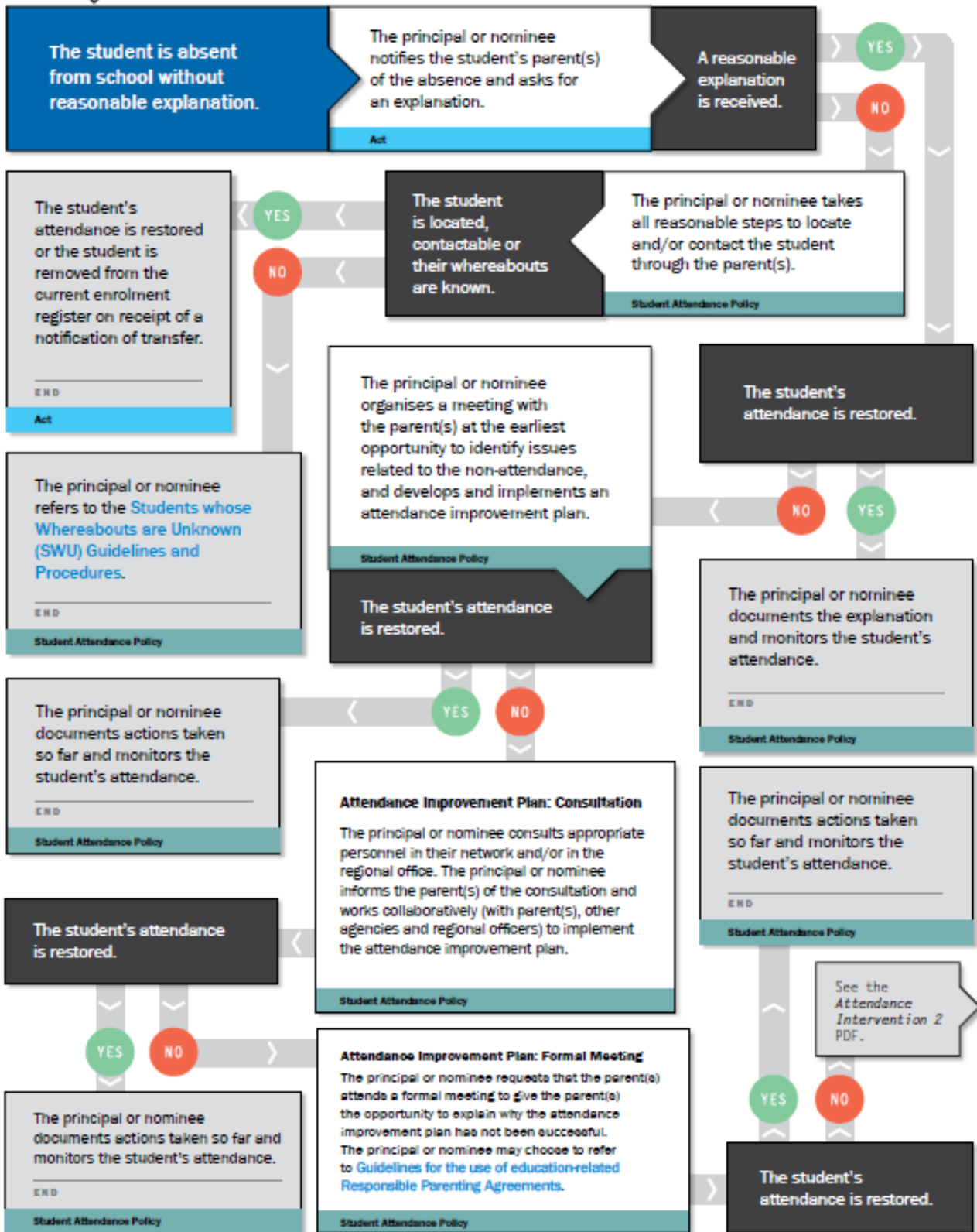
Date	Person & method of contact	Notes

Staff Member	Role	Contact

Appendix 2 – WBPS Students At-Risk Attendance Tracking Form

Student	Year	Teacher	Attendance Rate & Date	Attendance Rate & Date	Attendance Rate & Date	Attendance Rate & Date	Attendance Rate & Date	Attendance Rate & Date	Attendance Rate & Date	Attendance Rate & Date	Attendance Rate & Date	Attendance Rate & Date

ATTENDANCE INTERVENTION 1

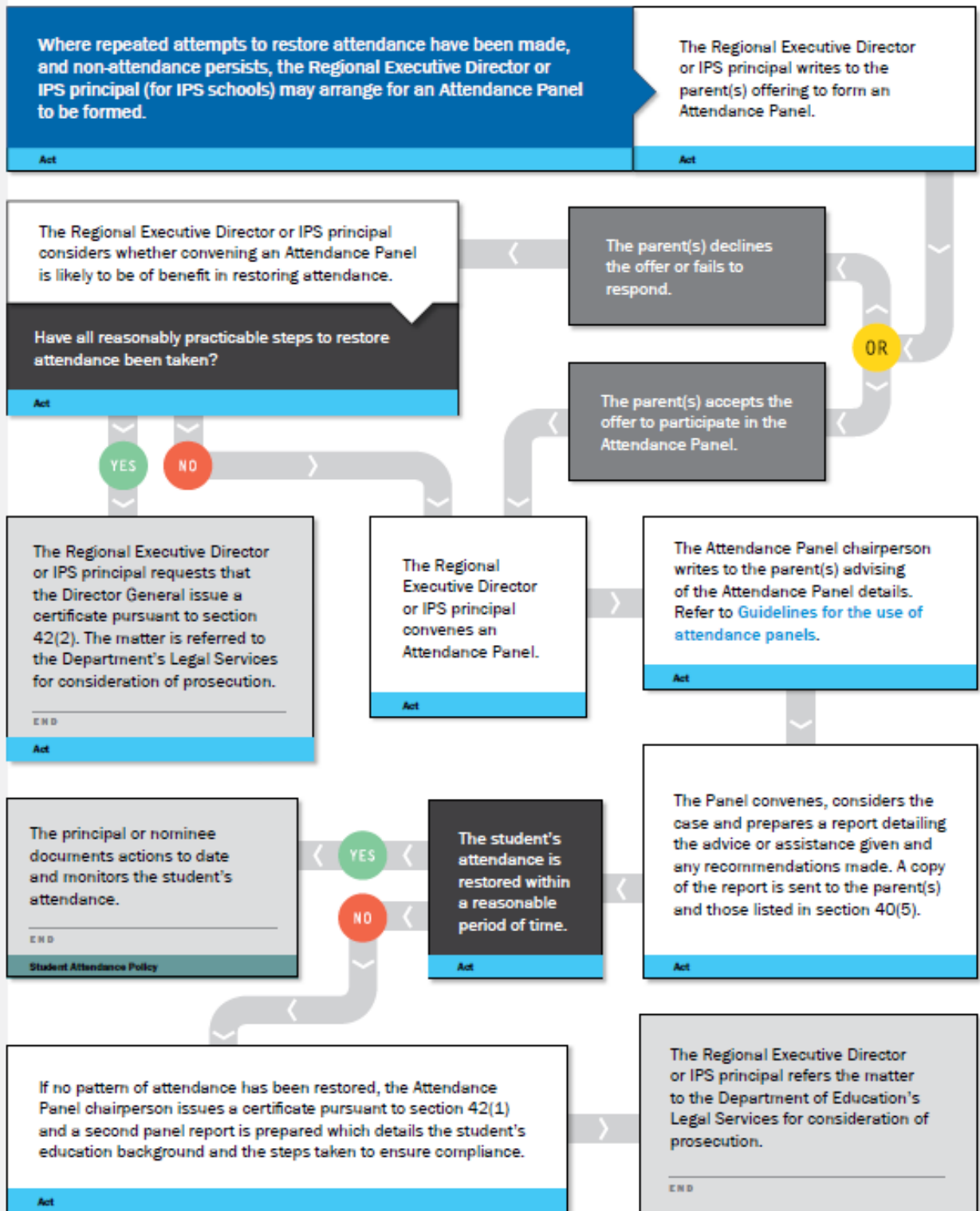


Act	School Education Act 1999
Policy	Department of Education Student Attendance Policy
Guidelines	Department of Education Guidelines For the use of education-related Responsible Parenting Agreements Department of Education Students whose Whereabouts are Unknown (SWU) Guidelines and procedures



 Government of Western Australia
 Department of Education

DATE CREATED: August 2013

ATTENDANCE INTERVENTION 2



Act	School Education Act 1999
Policy	Department of Education Student Attendance Policy
	Department of Education Guidelines for the use of attendance panels
Guidelines	Department of Education Guidelines for the use of prosecution
	Department of Education Guidelines for the use of education-related Responsible Parenting Agreements


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DATE CHANGED: August 2013



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