



# WILLOUGHBY GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL POLICY DOCUMENT

Procedure Name: Student Attendance: Student and Parent Responsibilities  
Procedure Version: 3.0  
Created: 2 September 2022

## Preamble

The NSW Government has determined that parents, caregivers or persons having custody of a child are responsible for the regular attendance of that child at school until the child is 17 years of age, as stated in the NSW Department of Education and Communities; DoE School Attendance Policy, updated in 2015. All students who are enrolled at school, regardless of their age, are expected to attend school whenever instruction is provided.

Regular attendance at school is essential to assist students to maximise their potential and increase their career and life options. The encouragement and maintenance of regular school attendance remains a core responsibility of parents, caregivers, students, the Principal and teachers. Consistent absenteeism may result in a Child Wellbeing or Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO) referral. HSLO's are specially trained teachers who support schools by working with students and their families when regular attendance is an issue.

## The Why

Research highlights a clear correlation between student attendance and the achievement of quality academic, socio-economic and health outcomes. This research tells us that students with an attendance rate below 90% are educationally at risk.

## Impact of school attendance on academic, socio- economic and health outcomes

### Lower scores and poorer academic outcomes<sup>1</sup>

1 AITSL (2019). Attendance matters. Spotlight. Melbourne: Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership

### Increased likelihood of dropping out of school earlier<sup>2</sup>

2 Smerillo et al., 2018; Featherston, 2010; Lamb et al., 2004; Suh & Suh, 2007

### Decreased likelihood of engaging in vocational education<sup>3</sup>

3 Hancock, K. J., Gottfried, M. A. & Zubrick, S. R. (2018). Does the reason matter? How student-reported reasons for school absence contribute to differences in achievement outcomes among 14–15 year olds. *British Educational Research Journal*, 44 (1), 141-174.

### Poorer long-term mental health and social outcomes<sup>4</sup>

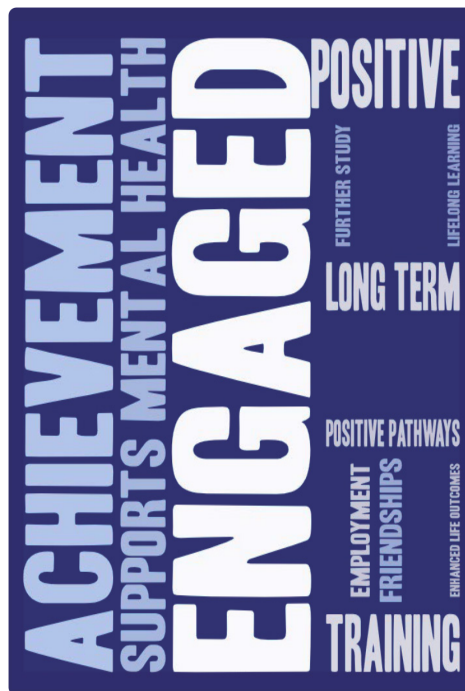
4 Kearney, C. A., Graczyk, P. A. (2014). A Response to Intervention model to promote school attendance and decrease school absenteeism. *Child and Youth Care Forum*, 43(1), 1-25.

### Increased likelihood of involvement with criminal activity<sup>5</sup>

5 Tanner-Smith & Wilson, 2013 as cited in Kearney, C. A., Graczyk, P. A. (2014). A Response to Intervention model to promote school attendance and decrease school absenteeism. *Child and Youth Care Forum*, 43(1), 1-25.

### Increased likelihood of requiring social assistance<sup>6</sup>

6 Christenson & Thurlow, 2004 as cited in Kearney, C. A., Graczyk, P. A. (2014). A Response to Intervention model to promote school attendance and decrease school absenteeism. *Child and Youth Care Forum*, 43(1), 1-25.



## Outcomes

- The implementation of the Willoughby Girls High School attendance policy with associated procedures ensures the provision of consistent systems across the school to meet Department of Education (DoE) Policy.
- The Willoughby Girls High School attendance policy provides clarity to all stakeholders - students, parents, caregivers and staff about Willoughby Girls High School expectations, responsibilities and requirements for student attendance.
- The encouragement and maintenance of regular attendance for each student will ensure students at Willoughby Girls High School maximise their learning potential.

## Student Attendance

	Responsibilities
<b>Principals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must provide clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance</li> <li>• Can request parents to provide a medical certificate if they have concerns with the explanation provided, or where there is a history of poor attendance.</li> <li>• Can decline to accept an explanation for an absence and record the absence as 'unjustified'. The parent should be advised that the explanation has not been accepted and a reason for the decision provided.</li> </ul>
<b>Parents/Carers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is the duty of the parent/carer of a child of compulsory school-age to ensure the child to be enrolled at, and to attend, a government school or a registered non-government school.</li> <li>• Explain the absences of their children from school promptly via the Attendance button in the <a href="#">Parent Portal</a> within 7 days of the first day of any period of absence.</li> <li>• Provide a medical certificate for 3 absent days or more, if notified as 'sick'.</li> <li>• Notify the school if a student needs to <b>leave early or arrive late</b> via the Absences button in the <a href="#">Parent Portal</a> <b>before 8.45am</b>. Parents should put the times in the comments section. If a Late student's parent has not requested this leave in the <a href="#">Parent Portal</a>, an SMS will be sent out to relevant parents/carers. Parents must respond via a return text as soon as possible. The SMS will be recorded in the system.</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>
<b>Students</b>	<p><b>Daily Attendance</b></p> <p><b>All students are required to attend all lessons scheduled on their timetable.</b></p> <p><b>Year 7 to 10:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The class teacher marks student attendance in each period throughout the day.</li> <li>• If a student arrives after 9 am, which is considered a late arrival, they must go to the front office to sign in, with an explanation.</li> </ul> <p><b>Years 11 and 12:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The class teacher marks student attendance in each period throughout the day.</li> </ul>

- If a student's first scheduled lesson is period 1 and they arrive after 9 am, they are considered a late arrival; they need to present to the front office to sign in, with an explanation.
- If a student does not have a scheduled lesson in period 1, they must sign in at the front office upon arrival or after attending period 0.
- If a student arrives after period 1 or is late to their first scheduled lesson of the day, they must sign in at the front office.
- If a student's last timetabled lesson is before period 6, they must sign out before leaving the school.

### Absence from School

- The parent must explain all absences via the Absences button in the Parent Portal within the first 7 days of any absence.

### Early leave

- Parents must notify the school if a student needs to leave early via the Absences button in the Parent Portal **before 8.45am**. Parents should put the times in the comments section.
- The student should go to the Front Office at the time they need to leave to signout and receive an early leave slip.

### Late arrival to school

- Parents must notify the school if their daughter will be late to school via the absences button in the Parent Portal **before 8.45am**.
- A student, who arrives **after 9.00 am**, is required to go **directly** to the **front office** to sign into school.
- If a Late student's parent has not requested this leave in the Parent Portal, an SMS will be sent out to relevant parents/carers. Parents must respond via a return text as soon as possible. The SMS will be recorded in the system.

Early and direct contact with parents and carers of students who are frequently late to school will be undertaken by the Attendance Officer, Year Adviser/Assistant Year Adviser, Head Teacher Administration and relevant Deputy Principal.

Refer to [Attachment 1 \(page 6\)](#) for the procedures.

### Truancy: Full day and fractional

Refer to information on page 5 and [Attachments 4 and 5 \(page 10 and 11\)](#) for the procedures.

### Study periods / Flexible timetable

- Year 12 students and their parents/carers must sign and return a Senior Privileges form. If the Year 12 students do not follow the requirements listed on the Senior Privileges form, their flexible timetable may be revoked.
- Senior students who have no classes at the start of the day must sign in at the front office using their ID card, and select their reason as "flexible" timetable.

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior students with no timetabled classes in the afternoon are given the opportunity to do their study period(s) at home. All students are required to sign out at the Office using their ID card and select their reason as “flexible” timetable.</li> <li>• Students who have their study period(s) in the library (Y11 &amp; 12) or Senior Study (Y12) <b>must</b> sign in and out using their ID card at the front Office and then stay in the Library or Senior Study.</li> <li>• Y12 students who have approved Y12 Senior Privileges may leave the school grounds during their study periods. They must sign out and in at the front office to register their departure and return times.</li> </ul> |
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## Application for Leave, Extended Leave, Exemption from Attendance

### Application for Leave (competitive sport, competition, audition or other reasons)

Students should submit the necessary documentation to the Front Office for the Principal’s approval before going on leave.

If the leave is accepted the student is required to see the relevant Deputy Principal regarding class work and assessments for the period they will be away.

### Application for Extended Leave (travel or holiday)

Students are expected to attend school whenever instruction is provided.

From the beginning of 2015, Family holidays and travel are no longer considered under the **Exemption from School – Procedures**. Travel outside of vacation period is now counted as an absence for statistical purposes and will be shown as such on school reports.

If a student needs to be absent from school for three (3) days or more, the following procedure must be followed:

1. An application for Extended leave must be submitted to the Front Office for the Principal to review at least 7 days prior to travel. Educational, social and participation reasons should be specified on the application. Travel documentation, such as travel itinerary or e-ticket should be included.
2. Parents will be advised by email if the leave is granted or declined. The Principal will not accept a reason for travel during term if it is not in the best interest of the student. If approved, absences relating to travel will be marked as leave on the roll, and therefore contribute to the student’s total absences for the year.
3. If leave is approved, the student is required to see the relevant Deputy Principal about classwork and assessments for the period they will be away.

If the leave is approved, the student is required to see the relevant Deputy Principal regarding class work and assessments.

## Exemption from Attendance/Enrolment at School

Application for Exemption from Attendance/Enrolment at School must be made in writing and in advance. Parents can seek assistance from the principal or delegate when completing an Application for Exemption from Attendance /Enrolment at School.

## Truancy – Full Day and Fractional

Truancy refers to unauthorised absences from school, indicating that a child has missed school without permission or appropriate reason. This unauthorised absence can occur for a whole or partial day.

This includes a student who:

- Is absent from school without a valid reason and without the knowledge/approval of a parent/caregiver;
- Has been marked present at period 1 lesson but does not attend timetabled class(es) throughout the day;
- Leaves class without the permission of the teacher;
- Is loitering in the school without a valid reason;
- Leaves the school grounds without written approval from parent/caregiver and without the Leavers Pass

Regular attendance at school is essential to assist students to maximise their potential. Although truancy may be symptomatic of underlying issues, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken to ensure that all students understand requirements of attendance and school safety.

[Attachments 4 and 5 – page 10 and 11](#) – outlines the school process that applies to Truancy at Willoughby Girls High School.

## References

The following documents may be of assistance with the attendance process:

*School Attendance Policy* - <https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/school-attendance-policy>

*Exemption from School Procedures* -

[https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/exempt\\_gui.pdf](https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/exempt_gui.pdf)

## Attachment 1

### LATE TO CLASS PROCEDURES

THE FOLLOWING APPROACH IS USED TO PROMOTE POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR,  
WELLBEING AND LEARNING HABITS AT WGHS

NOTE: Students arriving late to Period 1 must have a late note from the front office

#### Structure

Student	Teacher	Steps to action
Arriving late	Class Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Send student to sign in at the front office</li> <li>● Warning to be explicitly relate to unexplained lateness to class</li> <li>● Amend PXP when the student returns</li> <li>● Persistent lateness -               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Warnings -follow teacher's student management strategies, eg lunch detention, level 1 etc.</li> <li>- refer to Head Teacher Admin/Faculty</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Repeated lateness	Head Teacher Administration (period 1)  Faculty Head Teacher (other periods)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Issue lunch detention - complete Sentral Negative log in follow-up action</li> <li>● Monitor the student's lateness. If the lateness persists - Level 2</li> <li>● Parent and student interview</li> <li>● Refer to the Year Deputy Principal</li> </ul>
Repeated lateness	Deputy Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parent and student interview</li> <li>● Implement appropriate strategies/interventions:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- issue after school detention &gt; Level 3 - complete Sentral Negative log in follow-up action</li> <li>- Y11 and 12 - Student Senior Privileges may be withdrawn</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Attachment 2a

## APPLICATION FOR EXTENDED LEAVE – TRAVEL



**Education & Communities**

**NOTE:** **PART A** is to be **completed by the student's parent** and returned to their child's school principal.

Separate applications are to be completed for each school if siblings do not attend the same school.

### PART A: STUDENT DETAILS

Please complete table below with details of all students associated with the period of travel:

FAMILY NAME	GIVEN NAME	DOB	AGE	GRADE	SRN
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		/ /			
		/ /			
		/ /			
		/ /			
		/ /			

Student address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

School name: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of extended leave applied for: From \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ to \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Number of school days: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for travel \_\_\_\_\_

Relevant travel documentation such as an e ticket or itinerary (in the case of non flight bound travel within Australia only) must be attached to this application.

### DETAILS OF PRIOR EXEMPTIONS/EXTENDED LEAVE – TRAVEL (if applicable)

Date of prior exemption/extended leave: From: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ to: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Number of school days: \_\_\_\_\_

Copy of Certificate of Exemption/Extended Leave-Travel attached (Please tick  Yes  No

### PARENT DETAILS (Applicant)

Family name: \_\_\_\_\_ Given name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to student: \_\_\_\_\_

As the parent and applicant, I hereby apply for a *Certificate of Extended Leave-Travel* and understand my child will be granted a period of extended leave upon acceptance by the principal of the reason provided.

I understand that if the application is accepted:

- I am responsible for his/her supervision during the period of extended leave
- The provided period of extended leave is limited to the period indicated
- The provided period of extended leave is subject to the conditions listed on the *Certificate of Extended Leave-Travel*
- The period of extended leave will count towards my child's absences from school

I declare the information provided in this application is to the best of my knowledge and belief; accurate and complete. I recognise that should statements in this application later prove to be false or misleading any decision made as a result of this application may be reversed. I further recognise that a failure to comply with any condition set out in the *Application for Extended Leave- Travel* may result in the provided period of extended leave being cancelled.

Signature of parent/s: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

#### PRIVACY STATEMENT

The Department of Education and Communities is subject to the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998. The information that you provide will be used to process your child's Application for Extended Leave-Travel during the period indicated.

It will only be used or disclosed for the following purposes.

- General student administration relating to the education and welfare of the student
- Communication with students and parents
- To ensure the health, safety and welfare of students, staff and visitors to the school
- State and National reporting purposes
- For any other purpose required by law.

The information will be stored securely. You may access or correct any personal information by contacting the school. If you have a concern or complaint about the way your personal information has been collected, used, or disclosed, you should contact the school.

#### PART B : TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PRINCIPAL

I accept this *Application for Extended Leave- Travel* (Please tick one box 

Yes  No

Please provide more detail here (if required):

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Principal's name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of principal: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Note: Please complete the Certificate of Extended Leave - Travel if requested leave is to be provided.**



### Attachment 3

## CERTIFICATE OF EXTENDED LEAVE - TRAVEL



Education &  
Communities

The student/s whose details appear below has been provided a period as indicated, of extended leave from school for the purpose of travel.

Where an application is made by a parent with more than one child a separate copy of this *Certificate* should be placed in each student's file.

### STUDENT DETAILS

Please complete table below with details of all students associated with the period of travel:

FAMILY NAME	GIVEN NAME	DOB	AGE	GRADE	SRN

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

School name: \_\_\_\_\_ School's telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of extended leave: From \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Reason for providing the period of extended leave:

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Conditions applicable to providing the period of extended leave:

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It has been explained to the parent of the above mentioned student/s that they are responsible for his/her supervision during the provided period of extended leave.

The parent understands that the period of extended leave is limited to the period indicated and acknowledges that the provided period of extended leave is subject to the conditions listed.

Principal name: \_\_\_\_\_ Principal signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

**This certificate has been issued without alteration and must be produced when requested by police or other authorised attendance officers.**

**Attachment 4**  
**Management of Fractional Truancy at Willoughby Girls High School**

**Structure**

<b>Student</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Steps to action</b>
Attendance	Class Teacher	Marks electronic roll on PXP (class lesson, incursion or excursion)
Student's absence cannot be validated - partial day truancy	Class Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Check Sentral Wellbeing for a daily incident record</li> <li>● Create a new Sentral incident recording Traunting – Lesson(s)</li> <li>● Notify SASS to call home</li> <li>● Follow up with student upon their return and implement appropriate classroom management actions: lunch detention to catch up on missed work. Repeated truancy - detention and level 1 etc.</li> <li>● Repeated truancy - refer to Head Teacher</li> </ul>
Repeated partial day truancy in one subject	Faculty Head Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Interview student and monitor fractional truants</li> <li>● contacts parent</li> <li>● Strategies/interventions to be implemented as required - Lunch and Level 2</li> <li>● Complete the Negative log &gt; follow-up actions</li> </ul>
Persistent truancy	Faculty Head Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Refer to the Year Deputy Principal</li> </ul>
Persistent truancy	Deputy Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parent and student interview</li> <li>● Implement appropriate strategies/interventions:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- issue after school detention &gt; Level 3 - record action on Sentral</li> <li>- Y11 and 12 - Senior Privileges may be impacted</li> </ul> </li> <li>● develop attendance plan, referral to learning support and Wellbeing team.</li> </ul>

**Attachment 5**  
**Management of Full Day or multiple periods Truancy at Willoughby Girls High School**

When a student truants a full day or multiple periods on a day, the relevant Deputy Principal will conduct a Parent/Caregiver/Student interview and implement appropriate strategies/interventions as required: after school detention, level 3 and formal warning so on. Note: Y11 and 12 - Senior Privileges may be impacted.