

## ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Updated August 2019

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### Statement of purpose

Our aim is to ensure regular attendance at school to ensure our children and young people achieve their educational best and increase their career and life options. As a NSW public school we are committed to working in partnership with parents to encourage and support regular attendance of children and young people. When children attend school every day, learning becomes easier and social relationships can develop.

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### School Procedures

The following procedures have been developed according to the tenets of The Department of Education School Attendance Policy and in consultation with students, parents and staff.

Parents of children of compulsory school age are legally responsible for their enrolment and regular attendance at The Forest High School. Students will be required to attend all day on all school days, which includes sporting carnivals, excursions, performing arts opportunities and Wednesday sports day.

### Attendance Procedures

Information for parents will routinely be published in the school newsletter, student diaries and on parent information evenings.

The Department of Education policy documents on Compulsory School

Attendance can be found here:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/student-wellbeing/attendance-behaviour-and-engagement/school-attendance>

School attendance is recorded in roll call at 8:35am every morning. Students who are late to school must report to the student kiosk to sign in and must have a note of explanation. Students who do not arrive by 8:35 am will be marked as unjustified late (truant).

All school absences, including partial, require a note of explanation (including electronic) to be submitted within 7 school days of absence, otherwise the absence will be marked unjustified.

Teachers will mark rolls electronically every lesson. For truancy, refer to 'Partial Absence (truancy) Action Flowchart' for process.

Medical and other appointments should be scheduled outside of school hours. Special circumstances will be considered.

In specific cases of frequent absence, the Principal can mandate that a medical certificate is required for future absences. This must be instructed in writing and parents must comply.

Parents will be notified of daily absence through SMS. This is automatically generated and parents cannot opt out.

Parents can monitor their child's attendance through the Sentral student/parent portal.

- Any queries regarding daily absence should be directed to the office.
- Any queries regarding partial absence (absence from a lesson) should be directed to the classroom teacher.

## Attendance Before and After School

### Before School

Supervision of students commences at 8:05am\* in the West and East Quad. Parents are responsible for the care and supervision of their child until this time.

### After School

Supervision of students takes place in East Quad. Students are not permitted on site after 3:30pm\*. Students who miss their bus must report immediately to the teacher on duty.

*\*Excluding scheduled classes and extra-curricular activities.*

## Exemptions and Partial Attendance Procedures

Students needing to leave school early are expected to leave an explanation of absence note signed by a parent/carer with the front office staff. A pass will be generated by School Administration and Support Staff (SASS) and delivered to their class, which is to be shown to their teacher in order to leave class early.

Students who need to leave early during the course of the day (*e.g. a parent calls and needs the student to return home*) must see a Deputy Principal, who will give them permission to sign out. The student will then proceed to sign out at front office.

Senior Students (Year 11 and 12) who do not have a class scheduled in Period 1 or Period 5 are entitled to a flexible late start or early leave. Students using a flexible leave pass must sign in upon arrival and departure. Year 12 have the additional privilege of signing out when not in a timetabled class. If their attendance drops below 85% this privilege may be revoked.

Unless they have a flexible late start, senior students must attend roll call.

The Principal may grant a student an exemption from attendance at school, up to 100 days in a 12 month period.

Parents/carers may apply for exemption due to:

- exceptional circumstances (including the health of the student where sick leave or alternative enrolment is not appropriate)
- the child being prevented from attending school because of a direction under the Public Health Act 2010 (*The parent is not required to complete an application for exemption*)
- employment in the entertainment industry, participation in elite arts or elite sporting events.

Refer to *Department of Education School Attendance Policy - Exemption from School Procedures 2015*.

Students travelling during school terms are not to be exempt. Parents/carers must apply for extended leave on the appropriate leave form available at the front office. If the Principal accepts the reason then leave is granted, the 'L' code will appear on the student's attendance record.

## Procedure - Staff

	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>ALL STAFF are required to:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Monitor student attendance and help address issues as they emerge.</li> <li>2. Consider whether habitual absence places the child or young person at suspected risk of harm.</li> <li>3. To report risk of harm concerns and provide support to young people. The Mandatory Reporter Guide is an appropriate tool for informing decision making.</li> <li>4. Participate in a child protection induction and in annual updates.</li> </ol>
<b>Roll call teachers are required to:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mark rolls accurately on Sentral. If using a paper roll, use a pen and mark any absent student with a capital "A". If you make a mistake, block out the square.</li> <li>2. Monitor late arrivals and make phone calls home to advise parents on the importance of roll call information, the importance of punctuality and routine, and to reduce classroom disruption.</li> <li>3. Actively engage students by monitoring student attendance and helping to address issues when they emerge.</li> </ol>
<b>Classroom teachers are required to:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure every child they teach is known, valued, and cared for.</li> <li>2. Mark Period by Period rolls on Sentral.</li> <li>3. Maintain a record of attendance of students in their classes.</li> <li>4. Monitor and communicate classroom truancy. Refer to '<i>Partial Absence (truancy) Action Flowchart</i>' for process.</li> <li>5. Communicate attendance concerns to their supervising Head Teacher, Year Advisor and parents.</li> <li>6. Issue classroom monitoring card and communicate with parent when partial lesson attendance (late arrival) accumulates in excess of 120 minutes. If no improvement in late arrival occurs, escalate to wellbeing team.</li> <li>7. Communicate with students and parents (verbally or in writing) where attendance issues and truancy impact work completion, and for RoSA and HSC students, issue N-Warning letters for non-completed course work.</li> </ol>

<p><b>Head Teachers are required to:</b></p>	<p><b><i>As HT of Year Groups/Roll Call</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Supervise roll call year groups as assigned.</li> <li>2. Mark roll call where teachers are absent (as required).</li> </ol> <p><b><i>As HT of Faculty</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Issue detentions to truants. Refer to 'Partial Absence (truancy) Action Flowchart' for process.</li> <li>2. Communicate attendance concerns to the Head Teacher Wellbeing.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Year Advisors are required to:</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Monitor attendance for their year groups (fortnightly).</li> <li>2. Communicate concerns to the Head Teacher Wellbeing.</li> <li>3. Attend Learning and Wellbeing meetings to discuss student attendance issues and develop strategies to support re-engagement with school.</li> <li>4. Liaise with the HT Wellbeing and/or HT Admin regarding reasons for non-attendance and whether absentee letters should be sent to parents (there may be confidential reasons which do not necessitate a letter).</li> <li>5. Liaise with students and families to re-engage students with school.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Head Teacher Wellbeing is required to:</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lead school based interventions for students with unsatisfactory attendance.</li> <li>2. Manage Wellbeing Team and provide timely and accurate data on students at risk of unsatisfactory attendance.</li> <li>3. Liaise with Deputy Principal and external support networks fortnightly to discuss and coordinate intervention programs.</li> <li>4. Facilitate meetings with parents whose child is at risk of unsatisfactory school attendance.</li> <li>5. Ensure Attendance Concern letters and absence data are communicated to parents and recorded on Sentral.</li> <li>6. Submit Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO) Applications and liaise with HSLO on case management.</li> <li>7. Generate data for 95% semester attendance certificates to be signed by the Principal and awarded at Year Meetings</li> </ol>

<p><b>Deputy Principals are required to:</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support parents with completion of Application for Extended Leave requests.</li> <li>2. Liaise with external providers supporting parents to re-engage their child with school.</li> <li>3. Support Head Teacher Welfare, Head Teacher Administration, and Year Advisors in supporting parents to re-engage students with school.</li> <li>4. Attend Learning and Wellbeing meetings to provide strategic oversight on student attendance issues and support staff to develop strategies to support re-engagement with school.</li> <li>5. Work with Home School Liaison Program to develop Attendance Improvement Plan.</li> <li>6. Support teaching staff in monitoring and communication of truancy. Refer to '<u>Partial Absence (truancy) Action Flowchart</u>' for process.</li> </ol>
<p><b>The Principal is required to:</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure all staff have participated in an initial child protection induction and an update during the past year.</li> <li>2. Ensure all staff are aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect of children and young people.</li> <li>3. Ensure all staff are aware of their obligation to advise the principal or workplace manager of concerns about the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people that arise during the course of their work.</li> <li>4. Ensure that all staff are aware of their mandatory obligation to report suspected risk of significant harm and of the procedures for doing so.</li> <li>5. Adjudicate exemption/part day exemptions/leave applications and inform teachers of student leave, and discuss distance education enrolment for travel periods over 50 school days.</li> <li>6. Decline to accept explanations of non-attendance if they believe it is not in the best interests of the child.</li> <li>7. Support parents whose child has unsatisfactory attendance.</li> <li>8. Inform parents of attendance requirements via information evenings and website.</li> </ol>

**SASS are required to:**

1. Track completion of Roll Call marking and ensure accurate attendance data is on Sentral.
2. Update leave to '*explained*' when notified by parent within 7 days.
3. Contact parents to reconcile daily attendance errors.
4. Organise SMS to be sent to parents of late and absent students.
5. Support teaching staff in monitoring and communication of truancy. Refer to '*Partial Absence (truancy) Action Flowchart*' for process.

## Partial Absence/Truancy Flowchart

Schools support parents by monitoring student attendance and helping to address attendance issues when they emerge.

The Forest High School **Partial Absence/Truancy Flowchart** supports consistency in reporting and responding to truancy. It also ensures age appropriate consequences for young persons and families of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age. **Accurate and timely roll marking supports the management of student truancy.**

Step 1 Identifying Truant	Year Group	Step 2 Communication	Step 3 Low Level Behaviour Management	Step 4 Medium/High Level Management ( <i>Repeat Truancy</i> )
1. A student is suspected of truanting 2. Crosscheck against PxP 3. Confirm with verbal witness statements ( <i>students</i> )	7-9	1. Classroom teacher - contact front office immediately 2. Office refers to DP*, and DP will confirm with class teacher if truancy has occurred	1. DP - call home to inform of truancy 2. Parent to follow up with class teacher ( <i>as required</i> ) 3. Teacher mark as truant and faculty detention issued to complete work	1. Wellbeing Team referral 2. Whole School Monitoring 3. After School Detention ( <i>Tuesday Afternoon</i> ) 4. Formal Caution 5. HSLO Referral
	10		1. Same process as steps 1-3 for Y7-9 2. Student verbally warned that repeated truancy will result in N-Warning Letter 3. <i>2<sup>nd</sup> instance</i> of truancy phone call to parent to notify of N-Warning risk 4. <i>3<sup>rd</sup> warning</i> escalate to Step 4	1. N warning letter issued by classroom teacher ( <i>not applying themselves with diligence and sustained effort</i> ) 2. Referral to Wellbeing team 3. After School Detention ( <i>Tuesday Afternoon</i> )
	11-12	1. Classroom teacher - contact parent within 24 hours 2. Contact office immediately if indicated on students Risk Management Plan 3. If truancy confirmed, classroom teacher to mark as truant on Sentral Wellbeing	1. Teacher mark as truant and faculty detention issued to complete work 2. Student verbally warned that repeated truancy will result in N-Warning Letter 3. <i>2<sup>nd</sup> instance</i> of truancy phone call to parent to notify of N-Warning risk 4. <i>3<sup>rd</sup> truancy warning</i> escalate to Step 4	1. N warning letter issued by classroom teacher ( <i>not applying themselves with diligence and sustained effort</i> ) 2. Referral to Wellbeing team 3. Formal warning/improvement plan and/or expulsion for unsatisfactory participation in learning by a student over 17 years of age

\*Office to call home if DP/Principal unavailable