Baldivis Secondary College

Attendance Policy

1. Policy Statement

The Department of Education (the Department) monitors the attendance of all students enrolled in school, identifies students with attendance issues and implements appropriate measures to restore regular attendance.

2. Background

Where a student is enrolled in a public school, the School Education Act 1999 (the Act) requires that the student attends the school on site or an educational program of the school elsewhere as directed by the principal.

The parents of a child who is enrolled in a school are responsible under the Act for ensuring their child is attending on a daily basis. Parents or other responsible persons may be asked to provide an acceptable explanation for any absence to the principal. For the purpose of this policy, parent is defined as the parent at law. Further information about the terms parent and responsible person can be found in the definitions section.

The principal is responsible for creating and maintaining a safe and positive learning environment which promotes engagement and participation, and for the management of regular school attendance.

Consistent attendance and participation at school are essential factors in achieving social and academic learning outcomes. Schools that develop a supportive learning environment and an engaging and relevant curriculum create conditions conducive to regular school attendance.

3. Definitions

Attendance Panel

A small group of people appointed under the School Education Act 1999 to provide advice and assistance to students and the parents of students who are not fulfilling the legal requirements of school attendance. An attendance panel may recommend (via a Regional Executive Director) that the Director General make an application to the Children's Court for a Responsible Parenting Order. An attendance panel is not required prior to commencement of prosecution of a parent under the Act.

Authorised Absence

An absence where the reason provided by the parent or Department is considered to be legitimate and deemed acceptable by the principal or their nominee.

Children Whose Whereabouts Are Unknown (CWU) List

A list, usually referred to as the CWU List, contains the names of children who are missing from schools and educational programs in Western Australia. This list is distributed to administrators in private schools and some agencies by agreement.

Employee

A person who is currently employed under the School Education Act 1999 or the Public Sector Management Act 1994.

Parent

A person who at law has responsibility:
a)   for the long-term care, welfare and development of the child; or
b)   for the day to day care, welfare and development of the child.

Responsible Person

A person:
•   who is a parent of the student;
•   who, in the case of a student who has turned 18 or is a prescribed child, the student; or
•   who is an adult, responsible for the child and whose details have been provided on enrolment.

Responsible Parenting Agreement

A formal written agreement between a parent and an authorised officer in one of the Departments of Education, Child Protection or Corrective Services. Parents may be asked to enter into a Responsible Parenting Agreement where the child is under 15 years of age and demonstrating anti-social or offending behaviour, not attending school where there is no reasonable cause for the absence or is at risk of developing such behaviours. Agreements document support to be provided by the Department (and/or other agencies) and actions to be undertaken by parents.

Responsible Parenting Order

A Responsible Parenting Order compels a parent(s) to take up the support offered by agencies and to meet their responsibilities in exercising appropriate control over their child's anti-social, offending or truanting behaviour. A Regional Executive Director may endorse a principal's recommendation to the Director General that an application for an order be made in respect of the child, where every effort to engage the parent voluntarily has failed and it is considered that it will make a positive difference to the child's behaviour.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absences encompass truancy, those not considered acceptable by the principal, nominee or the Department and where an explanation has not been provided by the parent.

Baldivis Secondary College

4. Procedures

4.1 Attendance Records

The principal or their nominee will:

- keep accurate attendance records for every student enrolled at the school (including attendance at both morning and afternoon sessions for kindergarten, pre-primary and primary students, and every lesson/period for secondary students) that are able to be reproduced in a written form;

- record whether a student's absence was authorised or unauthorised;

- issue a leave pass to a student who has been granted permission to leave the school unaccompanied by a responsible adult; and

- record a student as:
  - present for a half day when the student has attended at least two hours of instruction;
  - attending if they are on a school-approved activity;
  - an authorised absence during the period of suspension;
  - an authorised absence if they are absent due to cultural/religious events.

Guidelines:

- *Students who arrive late or leave early but still attend two hours of instruction are recorded as attending a half day.*

- *All students enrolled in the school are required to have their attendance recorded, irrespective of where the educational program is delivered. This includes students who may be attending either part-time or full-time programs offsite as part of an educational program under a Section 24 Arrangement (see Enrolment policy) and those with a Notice of Arrangements that involves a component of school attendance.*

- *Schools should refer to the STIMS website for the full description of SIS Lesson Attendance codes.*

- *Authorised absences for religious observance or cultural reasons are best negotiated prior to the absence to avoid repetitive follow-up on the school's behalf and to support planning for the student.*

- *Leave passes allow students to be readily recognised by police and other agencies when legitimately off school site during school hours. The leave pass may be used in instances such as medical appointments or travel to another site to access an Endorsed Community Based Course (see Guidelines for the use of Standardised Leave Passes).*

4.2 Retention of Records

The principal or nominee will:

- keep records of all contact, or attempts to make contact, with the student's family;

- maintain documentation of all intervention strategies implemented in attempts to restore a student's attendance; and

- retain attendance records in accordance with the School Education Regulations 2000 (Regulations) and the Retention and Disposal Schedule for Department of Education School, College and Campus Records.

Guidelines

Relevant documentation to retain includes:

- *absentee notes that are not part of the student's file for two years from the date of receipt, including details recorded by the school when a parent provides the school with a verbal reason;*

- *attendance records for students in each year level for seven years; and*

- *unsatisfactory student attendance reports, including written notes and records of verbal explanations of absences, psychological reports, records of interviews with students and significant records relating to individual students until the student is 25 years of age (7 years after a mature aged (>18 years) student has left school).*

4.3 Management of Non-Attendance

The principal or nominee will:

- request an explanation from the student's parent or responsible person when a student has been absent from school and an acceptable explanation has not been provided after three days from the beginning of the absence;

- manage absences in conjunction with the alternative provider for students participating in alternative attendance arrangements under Section 24 of the Act (see DoE Enrolment policy);

- develop documented plans for all Aboriginal students. All schools are expected to set targets for Aboriginal students, including attendance targets, and implement strategies to address these targets as part of their core business. The use of documented plans will help to improve the educational outcomes of Aboriginal students at risk. A documented plan does not necessarily need to address all aspects of a student's educational program, only those aspects that require an individual approach. Schools may develop whole school strategies and write group plans where appropriate.

- refer a student to the Student Tracking Coordinator when he or she is deemed to be a 'student whose whereabouts is unknown'; and

- where attendance falls below 90 per cent over a term:

- further investigate the reasons for the student's absence;

- organise a parent/teacher meeting and/or case conference at the earliest opportunity to identify the issues related to the non-attendance and plan for improvement; and

- document all attendance improvement plans.

Guidelines

- *Student attendance is considered to be 'at-risk' if less than 90%.*

- *Where a student's attendance falls below 90% and acceptable reasons have not been provided for a number of absences, further investigation may assist the return to regular attendance. **Appendix 2: DoE Attendance Intervention Flowchart.***

- *In most instances, where an acceptable explanation for the absence has been provided, further action is not required.*

- *Principals or nominees should refer to Guidelines for Implementing Documented Plans in Public Schools and/or Improving Attendance: A Resource Package for Schools for further information and guidance on developing attendance improvement plans. Any plan*

developed should clearly indicate support to be provided by the school and/or network or regional officer, actions agreed to by the parent and timelines for achievement. Plans should be formally reviewed. Principals should offer support for parents from appropriate agencies at the earliest opportunity.

- *Principals or nominees should request a medical certificate for prolonged absences due to sickness or injury. In the instance of long term/severe medical conditions impacting on the student's attendance, the principal or nominee need not investigate further if documentary evidence has been provided outlining the nature of the illness and the expected duration of the absence.*

- *Western Australia's schools operate in various cultural and geographical contexts. Relationships between schools and the community are vital to establishing an improved understanding of the factors contributing to absences and their expected duration.*

- *Students up until the end of Year 10 must not be employed during the hours when required to attend school or otherwise participate in an educational program. Employment is only permitted as part of the student's educational program through an arrangement under Section 24 of the Act or through an Exemption from enrolment. Further information can be found in the Enrolment policy.*

- *Students in Year 11 or 12 are able to participate in an approved full-time option other than school under a Notice of Arrangements. Options include training (public and private registered training organisations), apprenticeships and traineeships, endorsed community based courses and employment.*

- *Principals (and nominees) should use all appropriate school based resources in the support of students, parents and their families.*

- *Principals may wish to use one of the checklists in Improving Attendance: A Resource Package for Schools to identify factors contributing to non-attendance and assist with planning.*

- *See **Appendix 4 - Information regarding Children Whose Whereabouts are Unknown**.*

4.3   Persistent Non-Attendance

If a student has been identified as being an irregular or chronic non-attendee and repeated efforts to work with parents to restore attendance have not been successful, the principal or nominee will:

- consult with an appropriate network or regional officer (or officers);

- inform the parent, using **Letter 6** (Letter to Parent from Principal Advising of Consultation with Network or Regional Officer); and

- revise any attendance improvement plan developed.

Guidelines

- *The principal or nominee may ask the network or regional officer to assist in revising existing strategies and the attendance improvement plan.*

- *The principal or nominee retains responsibility for restoring school attendance or engagement in an educational program and works collaboratively with the network or regional officer, the student's family and other agencies.*

> - *For students in Year 11 or 12, the principal or nominee may refer the student's case to the appropriate regional officer using Request for assistance from a school to the regional participation team.*
>
> - *Principals and nominees should be mindful of the cultural background and literacy levels of parents and any written communication to parents should also be explained face to face or verbally if required.*

4.4 Formal Meeting

If school attendance or engagement in an educational program is not successfully restored through consultation with an appropriate network or regional officer, the principal will request the parent attends a formal meeting using **Letter 4** (Letter from Principal to Parent Regarding Formal Meeting).

At the formal meeting, the principal or nominee will:

- ensure any factors preventing attendance or participation are explored;

- request the parent engages with alternative strategies to improve attendance; and

- document a formal attendance improvement plan.

Guidelines

- *The principal may request assistance from the network or region in facilitation of the formal meeting.*

- *The reasons for the failure to comply with attendance requirements should be explored, including any social, cultural, lingual, economic, geographic or learning difficulties.*

- *Parents (and students as appropriate) should be fully supported to attend and participate in the meeting.*

- *A formal meeting may address concerns relating to more than one family member.*

- *The principal may determine that a Responsible Parenting Agreement may be an appropriate course of action. Responsible Parenting Agreements may be drafted by principals but must be signed by an officer authorised under the Parental Support and Responsibility Act 2008. Authorised officers in regions will differ according to regional structure. Principals should refer to Guidelines for the use of education-related Responsible Parenting Agreements for guidance on whether a Responsible Parenting Agreement is appropriate and seek further advice if necessary. Parents should be provided with Responsible Parenting Agreements – a guide for parents.*

- *A process to monitor engagement with any plan or agreement developed in a formal meeting should be developed. The resulting plan should be documented and a date for review determined.*

- *Improving Attendance: a resource package for schools, provides guidance on the facilitation of meetings, including the documentation of attendance improvement plans.*

4.5 Recommending Prosecution of the Parent or Application for a Responsible Parenting Order

The principal will refer the matter to the Regional Executive Director where:

- a formal meeting has been unable to secure parental engagement and improvement in school attendance (or engagement in another educational program); and

- it is determined that either prosecution of the parent or application to the Children's Court for a Responsible Parenting Order is appropriate.

Guidelines

- *The prosecution of a parent or an application for a Responsible Parenting Order should be an action of last resort.*

- *Prior to referring the matter, the principal may wish to consult with the Regional Executive Director or nominee.*

- *Principals should refer to Guidelines for the use of education-related Responsible Parenting Orders and Guidelines for the use of prosecution in determining whether either of these actions are appropriate.*

If the principal decides to refer the matter, he or she will:

- complete and forward **Letter 9** (Referral to Regional Executive Director –Recommendation for Consideration of legal action)

If the Regional Executive Director endorses the principal's recommendation, he or she will refer to the relevant guideline document in order to:

- inform the parent and the principal of the outcome; and

- facilitate the required process.

Guidelines

Principals and Regional Executive Directors (and nominees) should refer to Guidelines for the use of education- related Responsible Parenting Orders, Guidelines for the use of prosecution and Guidelines for the use of attendance panels in determining whether any of these actions are appropriate.

Prior to the commencement of prosecution under the School Education Act 1999, the Director General is required to certify that all reasonable practical steps have been taken to secure compliance with attendance requirements but that breaches (of the Act) have continued.

The formation of an attendance panel is not required prior to referral for consideration of prosecution of the parent under the School Education Act 1999.

Consultation should occur with the Participation Branch regarding the use of prosecution in cases where the student is turning 16 or 17 in the calendar year.

Under the Parental Support and Responsibility Act 2008 (PSR Act), the Children's Court will not make a Responsible Parenting Order without demonstration that all other efforts to engage a parent voluntarily have been unsuccessful. This includes attempts to engage the parent in a Responsible Parenting Agreement.

4.3   Reporting and Disclosure of Attendance Data

The principal will comply with requests from regional offices and Central Office to provide information on student attendance.

Requests for school attendance data (for example, participation in the Attendance Audit) must include the attendance data of every student enrolled.

Baldivis Secondary College

Guideline

Principals may seek advice from an appropriate network or regional officer regarding requests for individual or group attendance data from an external agency.

5   Staff Roles and Responsibilities

Important Note - In carrying out their duties staff should have an understanding of the Department Of Education's Attendance Policy and how it relates to them. An adjusted copy of this is sections 2 to 4 of the Baldivis Secondary College Attendance Policy.

5.1   Class Teacher:

- Record roll using electronic system each session at the beginning of the lesson; Ensure roll is up to date;

- Accept students in to class late and record as late;

- As part of your classroom Behaviour Management Plan you ensure consequences for students that are late without reasonable cause;

- Follow up persistent Lateness by contacting parent/guardian and working with them and the student to resolve the issue;

- Refer ongoing lateness to the Curriculum Team Leader;

- Work with Curriculum Team Leader, student and parents/guardian to resolve the issue of lateness;

- Contact the parents/guardians of any student suspected of being Truant;

- Discuss with parent/guardian and student the truancy in order to resolve including possible consequences;

- Refers ongoing truancy to their Curriculum Team Leader;

- Work with Curriculum Team Leader, student and parents/guardian to resolve the issue of truancy;

- If truancy is confirmed contact the parent/guardian and then email the Attendance Officer who will adjust that student's attendance;

- Ensure ongoing attendance issues that cannot be resolved with Curriculum Team Leader assistance are referred to the appropriate Year Coordinator;

- Complete Absentee Query sheet as requested and return to Attendance Officer in Student Services;

- For students with a Risk Management Plan follow the procedures outlined in the plan in case of absence;

- Ensure all actions/plans/information regarding attendance are recorded on an Info Sheet and provided to Student Services for data entry; and

- Email Student Services at the earliest convenience when a student is sent to a Buddy Class.

  - Check the Whereabouts Unknown list thoroughly. If a student listed should have been in class, double check roll. If student was late change status to late in Academy

5.2 Registration Teacher:

- Records roll using electronic system before 8:45am;

- Accepts late students into class until 8.45am. Following this they are directed to Student Services to sign in;

- Ensures consequences for students that are late without reasonable cause;

- Follow up persistent lateness by contacting parent/guardian and working with them and the student to resolve the issue;

- Refer ongoing lateness to Registration to the Year Coordinator;

- Works with the Year Coordinator, student and parents/guardian to resolve the issue of lateness;

- For students with a Risk Management Plan follow the procedures outlined in the plan in case of absence;

- Discuss with the class general issues concerning attendance. Including operating activities about attendance;

- Monitor Unexplained Absences using the Form Absence Report received from the Attendance Officer weekly;

- Contact parent/guardian of students with whole or half day absences. Record reasons for absence and return adjusted Form Absence Report to the Attendance Officer in Student Services. Inform parent/guardian that for ongoing or repeated illness a medical certificate may be required;

- Contact Parent/Guardian of students that in the Form Absence Report demonstrate a pattern of late arrival at school; and

- For students with a Risk Management Plan follow the procedures outlined in the plan in case of absence.

5.3 Curriculum Team Leader:

- Ensure teaching staff are aware of their attendance roles and responsibilities;

- Assist Learning Area Teachers with issues of truancy (including lateness);

- Refer ongoing truancy or absences to the Year Coordinator;

- Ensures all actions/plans/information regarding attendance are recorded on an Info Sheet and provided to Student Services for data entry; and

- For students with a Risk Management Plan follow the procedures outlined in the plan in case of absence.

5.4 Non-Teaching Staff:

- If you have students in your care during period time ensure that you notify the Attendance Officer in Student Services within that period;

- If you have a program in operation ensure that an accurate roll is taken and sent to the Attendance Officer in Student Services at the beginning of the program that day;

- If you are operating a program across a break time (e.g. you have students Period 2, they leave for recess, then you also have them Period 3) please ensure you take the roll again after the break and send any adjustments to the Attendance Officer; and

- For students with a Risk Management Plan follow the procedures outlined in the plan in case of absence.

5.5   Relief Teachers:

- Records roll using electronic system tem session one; and

- For students with a Risk Management Plan follow the procedures outlined in the plan in case of absence.

5.6   Buddy Class Teacher:

- Buddy Class Teachers will sign off on the student blue withdrawal form to indicate to the class teacher that the student has arrived at and completed the time in the buddy class.

5.7   Teacher in Charge of Excursion/Camp

- Potential list submitted with application;

- Class List sent out to All Staff and Student Services/Front Office at least 7 days prior to the excursion/camp;

- Two copies of the Roll/List marked morning of excursion/camp and one copy sent to Attendance Officer in Student Services. Second copy retained by Teacher in Charge of Excursion;

- Follow excursion emergency management plan in the event of 'lost'/truant student while on excursion or camp; and

- For students with a Risk Management Plan (RMP) follow the procedures outlined in the plan in case of absence. This includes ensuring you are aware of and have a copy of the RMP.

5.8   Year Coordinator:

- Monitor Year Groups overall attendance;

- Monitor percentage attendance using Percentage Attendance Analysis received from Attendance Officer fortnightly;

- Call parent/guardian of students who's attendance falls below 90%;

- Send Letter 1 requesting a meeting with parent/ guardian and student when attendance has fallen below 85%. Use **Individual Student Checklist** to identify factors affecting attendance. Important – In cases where a student's attendance is below 85%, the Letter 1 should still be sent, HOWEVER a phone call should be made to the parent/guardian first explaining that we understand the reasons but are required by the DoE to send the letter. Also that we expect the Attendance percentage to increase;

- Develop Attendance Improvement Plan if required;

- Issues Attendance Monitoring Sheet if required;

- For ongoing truancy or absence resulting in further decline in a student's attendance percentage send **Letter 2** and adjust the existing or develop an Attendance Improvement Plan with the student and parent/guardian;

- Refer students with increasingly declining or rapidly declining (e.g. non-attenders) to the Student Services Manager;

- Carry out duties as part of Case Management as directed by the Student Services Manager or Deputy Principal;

- In conjunction with the Student Services Manager ensure that all Aboriginal Students have documented plans (Individual Education Plans) that include an attendance plan;

- Ensure all actions/plans/information regarding attendance are recorded in the SIS Behaviour Module;

- Ensure copies of any Attendance Improvement Plan or other plans/information relating to attendance and student wellbeing are distributed to relevant staff and a copy stored in their central student file; and

- For students with a Risk Management Plan follow the procedures outlined in the plan in case of absence.

5.9 Student Services Manager:

- Convenes regularly Attendance Management meetings with Year Coordinators, Attendance Officers and Year Coordinators to review, address and strategise actions in relation to attendance issues;

- Monitor Attendance Processes;

- Ensure Year Coordinators perform their attendance roles and responsibilities;

- Liaise with relevant external agencies;

- Organise and conduct Case Conferences (**Letter 3**). Use **Individual Student Checklist** to identify factors affecting attendance;

- Adjust any attendance plan in consultation with all stakeholders;

- Issue **Attendance Monitoring Sheet** if required;

- Consults with Deputy Principal and Regional Office if attendance issues are persistent. Sends **Letter 4**;

- Commence the Students Whose Whereabouts are Unknown (SWU) referral process students whom have not attended for 10 Days and for whom no contact can be made with or the parent/guardian is unaware of their whereabouts. Complete the referral within 15 days;

- In conjunction with the Year Coordinator ensure that all Aboriginal students have documented plans (Individual Education Plans) that include an attendance plan;

- Ensure all actions/plans/information regarding attendance are recorded in the SIS attendance module;

- Ensure copies of any Attendance Improvement Plan or other plans/information relating to attendance and student wellbeing are distributed to relevant staff and a copy stored in their central student file; and

- For students with a Risk Management Plan follow the procedures outlined in the plan in case of absence

5.10 Senior School Manager:

- Monitor the attendance processes pertaining to senior school students;

- Oversee the student's participation in any off-site program. This includes:
  - consulting with the student's parent/s;

  - consulting with the alternative school/provider;
  - assessment of the environment of the alternative arrangement to ensure the student's duty of care needs, including health needs, will be met (may involve a site visit to the provider);
  - maintenance of attendance and achievement records; and
  - continue to review the arrangement to ensure these requirements are still being met.
- Facilitate the student's should return to full-time school or another arrangement is entered into if arrangement is terminated.

5.11 Deputy Principal/s:

- Monitor attendance processes;

- Ensure all staff perform their attendance roles and responsibilities;

- Case Manage attendance issues in consultation with the Student Services Manager;

- Approves **Letter 3** and **Letter 4;**

- Ensure all actions/plans/information regarding attendance are recorded in the SIS attendance module;

- Ensure copies of any Attendance Improvement Plan or other plans/information relating to attendance and student wellbeing are distributed to relevant staff and a copy stored in their central student file; and

- For students with a Risk Management Plan follow the procedures outlined in the plan in case of absence.

5.12 Attendance Officer/s:

- Monitor Daily Absences;

- Call the parent/guardian of students that have three consecutive absences;

- Refer on going consecutive absences to the Year Coordinator;

- Manage text messaging service and data entry;

- Run, Print and distribute (or email) Absence Report and Percentage Attendance Report for each registration Group/Year Coordinator;

- Send out Absentee Query sheets (Whereabouts Unknown emails). Monitor returns. Enter data. Refer non returns to Deputy Principal responsible for attendance;

- Track teachers that do not return data and send out reminders.

- Refer ongoing lack of data return to Deputy Principal responsible for attendance.

- Produce **Letters 1,2 & 3**, **Letters of Concern**, **Attendance Reports** etc. at the request of the Year Coordinator, Student Services Manager or Deputy Principal.

- Ensures all actions/plans/information regarding attendance are recorded in the SIS Behaviour module;

- For students with a Risk Management Plan follow the procedures outlined in the plan in case of absence;

- Records all actions on SIS Behaviour module, this includes contacts with guardians and attempted contact with guardians; and

- Maintain Attendance Records in accordance with the Department of Education's Attendance Policy (described in 4.2).

5.13 Student Services School officer

- Monitor students who arrive to school post 8.45am. Refer ongoing late students to Year Coordinator;

6. Student and Parent Roles and Responsibilities

Staff can discuss these points with students and parents when contacting them with attendance concerns.

6.1 Student:

- If a student is going to be late they should where possible request a late note from their parents on that day and give it to their Registration Teacher if they arrive prior to 8.45am or to Student Services after 8.45am. If it is not possible to get a note that day (e.g. parents at work) they should provide it to Student Services the following day.

- Students who are late but arrive before 8.45am should proceed to their Registration class. Their Registration teacher will 'sign them in'.

- Students who are late and arrive after 8.45am are to proceed to Student Services to 'sign in'. Student Services will provide them with a note to enter class.

- A student that is absent should provide absentee notes or Medical Certificate to their Registration Teacher or directly to Student Services.

- Students can only leave school early if they have permission from their parent/guardian to do so. This may be in written form or a phone call.

- Students who are leaving early with permission are to 'sign out' at Student Services. Student Services will provide them with an exit pass to show staff and police if requested.

- Students that are late to classes during the day may be marked late. This can impact upon their attendance and is a form of truancy.

6.2 Parent/Guardian:

- If your student is absent from school please provide an absentee note or Medical Certificate.

- If your student is absent from school please call to notify school the morning of the day of absence. Please provide the following information;
  - Your name
  - Student's full name
  - Student's Year Group
  - Reason for absence

- This can be done by phoning the Student Services Absentee Line on (08) 9523 3660 or

Baldivis Secondary College

Administration on (08) 9523 3600; emailing Student Services on cathy.mcguire@education.wa.edu.au; responding by text or through the College app.

- If you need to sign your student out early, where possible please provide a note. Alternatively a visit or phone call to Student Services.

- Please discuss with your student the importance of regular attendance and ensure that they attend school whenever fit to do so.

- Avoid scheduling family holidays during school terms. Whilst the college respects that travel can be an educational experience in itself it is important that it does not come at the cost of the child's education. Parents are required to negotiate their child's absence with the college principal prior to first day of non-attendance, otherwise the absence will be considered to be 'unauthorised' and recorded as such. Absence due to family vacation is deemed by the Education Department to be an unacceptable reason for a student's absences from school.

- If your student is refusing to attend school, please contact the Year Coordinator or Student Services Manager as a matter of urgency.

7. Out Of Class Pass System

All students should be in class during period times. Any student out of class must have an Out of Class Pass. Students who are out of class without a valid reason will be considered to have 'truanted' and therefore may be required to make up the class time they missed.

8. Lesson Attendance Codes

There are 14 different codes used to record and monitor student attendance. Under the School Education Act 1999, principals are required to record whether a student 'attended or participated in an educational program of the school or whether they failed to so attend or participate'.

8.1 Codes for students who are NOT absent:

/   Present code is used to indicate that the student is attending class.
There are three other codes to use in situations when students are NOT absent but are not attending their classes on the school site.

E   **Educational Activity**
The Educational Activity code is used when the student is involved in an approved educational program such as an excursion, work placement or an off-site program. No follow up is required and the student is not recorded as absent.

W   **Withdrawn**
The Withdrawn code should be used when a student is withdrawn from classroom activities but is still present at school. For example this may be used when a student is sent to the office or a buddy class.

M   **Medical or Sick Bay**
The Medical or Sick Bay code should be used when a student is in the medical or sick bay but is still present at school.

8.2 Codes for students who are late:

L   **Late**
The Late code is used when a student is late to school but the degree of lateness is insufficient to be recorded as a period or session absence. If the student is so late that

they have missed more than 25% of a period then they are recorded as absent for that period or session.

8.3 Codes for Authorised Absences

When students are absent from school there are a range of codes which apply. There are five codes which may apply when a student's absence is authorised by the principal.

R   Reasonable Cause
The Reasonable cause code is used when the principal has authorised the reason provided as acceptable. This code is not be used when the reason provided is suspension, a cultural absence, illness or a holiday.

Z   Suspended
A student is automatically recorded as absent using the Suspended code when they have been formally suspended from school.

C   Cultural Absence
The Cultural absence code is used when the principal has authorised a student's absence because of cultural or religious significance to the family such as funerals, weddings and sorry time. The nominated days for this absence should be approved by the principal. If the days absent extend beyond the number of approved days and no acceptable reason is given the additional absences should be recorded as unauthorised.

N   Notified as Sick
The Notified as Sick code is used when a student is absent from school and the Principal has authorised this absence due to confirmation of the student's ill health by the parent. The principal has the discretion to request a medical certificate when the student is absent from school due to illness.

V   Vacation
The Vacation code is used when the Principal has authorised a student's absence due to a holiday. The absence will only be approved through negotiations between the principal and the parent prior to the absence. The negotiation may involve the student completing a work package during the holidays.

Q   Not Required to Attend

8.4 Codes for Unauthorised Absences

There are three codes which may be used when a student is absent from school and the principal does not authorise the absence.

X   Unacceptable Reason
The Unacceptable reason code is used when a student is absent from school and the reason which has been given for the absence is deemed unauthorised. In this situation the principal has not approved the reason and further follow up is required.

T   Truant
The student is absent from class or school without permission or approval.

U   Absence – cause not yet established

Baldivis Secondary College

The 'U' code is used when a student is absent from school and no reason has been established. This code is sometimes called an unexplained absence and in this situation further follow up is required.

K   **Unauthorised Vacation**

The 'K' code is used when a student is absent from school due to unauthorised vacation.

9.   Students at Educational Risk Years 8 to 12 Overview

The monitoring and recording of attendance is to proceed as per the General Attendance Policy. This will ensure regular review of student attendance and appropriate response.

As an overview and assistance to the attendance process, Learning Area teachers, Curriculum Team Leaders and Year Coordinators should do a weekly or fortnightly review of attendance data as described in the Staff Response to Escalating Attendance Issues flow chart.

If additional intervention is required then some or all of the following can be initiated by the Teaching Staff/Curriculum Team Leaders (as outlined in the Staff Response to Escalating Attendance Issues flow chart):

•   Monitor attendance closely and inform parents (phone/letter).

•   Request parents attend meeting.

•   Refer to Year Coordinator.

When a student's attendance has dropped to 90% attendance or lower, clear communication with parents needs to happen in writing regarding their responsibility and possible consequences according to Regional Office policy and the Education Act. Year Coordinators will contact parents by email or phone if a student's attendance falls below 90%. If the student's attendance continues to fall the Year Coordinator will:

•   Send **Letter 1** requesting a parent interview to be posted. Attendance Improvement Plan developed.

•   If regular attendance is not restored – send to parent information regarding attendance and the Education Act (**Letter 2**)

•   Attendance continues to be unsatisfactory or commences again to be unsatisfactory refer to the Student Services Manager.

The Student Services Manager will:

•   Schedule and coordinate a Case Conference with stakeholders and relevant support staff/agencies (including School Psychologist) (**Letter 3**). Attendance Improvement Plan adjusted.

•   If attendance is not improved the Student Services Manager is to coordinate with Associate Principal and Regional Office regarding an Attendance Panel (**Letter 4**).

If Attendance Panel is not convened quickly or the students' attendance is not restored after the intervention of the Attendance Panel; the Deputy Principal or Student Services Manager will seek permission from Regional Office to place the student on 'zz'.

Baldivis Secondary College

10. Encouraging Attendance—Benefits For All

Regular attendance has significant benefits for students, educators, parents/guardians and the community. The following information can be used by staff with the relevant stakeholders to help development of shared understanding about attendance.

Benefits of regular attendance for students

- Getting the maximum benefit from school will optimise your life choices.

- Attending school regularly will develop skills and attitudes that will help you to be successful in later life. These include self-discipline, punctuality, being organised and sticking to routines.

- Regular attendance leads to an increased likelihood of being successful at school.

- Attending regularly leads to making friends and learning to maintain relationships over a length of time.

- You will learn social skills necessary to live and work successfully with others.

- You are safer at school than on the streets.

- People will be more positive about you if you have a good attendance record.

- Attending school provides opportunities for socialising with your friends.

- The more you attend, the more you learn, and this will probably mean you will like school more.

Benefits of regular student attendance for educators

- You are able to fulfil your responsibilities to the students in your care.

- There will be improved learning outcomes.

- You will enjoy less complex management of the learning program as you will not need to re-teach parts of it to students who were away when you introduced something new.

- There will be less complex classroom management because you will not need to help students re-establish relationships following periods of absence.

- You will be able to help students develop habits such as punctuality, self-discipline and organisation which will be of value to them in everyday situations.

- Resources currently being spent on following up absences can be spent on the classroom program.

Benefits of regular student attendance for parents/caregivers

- By encouraging regular attendance you will know that you have positively influenced you child's education.

- You will know that your child is safe at school and not at risk elsewhere.

- You will know that your child is engaged in more appropriate activities than if they were truanting.

- Regular attendance by your child will ensure that you have fewer contacts with government agencies.

- You will have peace of mind in knowing that children who attend school regularly are less likely to engage in risk taking behaviour.

- You will enjoy more structured family routines.

- Your child is more likely to finish year 12 and have broader opportunities.

- You will avoid a fine or legal action due to your child's poor attendance at school.

Benefits of regular student attendance for the community

- As a member of the community and a participant in promoting regular school attendance, you will have contributed to the next generation of community leaders.

- Through addressing attendance issues, you have an opportunity to work in partnership with schools to achieve a shared goal.

- You will be supporting young people in being less likely to be involved in crime.

- You will be helping to ensure that young people are spending their days safely.

- The community as a whole will experience less cost, both financially and socially.

- Regular attendance by students will promote an increased level of safety for all.

Baldivis Secondary College

11. Importance of Regular Attendance

The likelihood of success in learning is strongly linked to regular attendance and appropriate participation in educational programs. It is crucial that children and students develop habits of regular attendance at an early age, even from the time they are enrolled in a preschool setting.

Children and students who have poor patterns of attendance are at risk of not achieving their educational, social or psychological potential and are disadvantaged in the quality of choices they are able to make in later life situations. These learners may:

• be socially isolated;

• place themselves at risk of harm during times of absence;

• be more likely to be involved in socially unacceptable and/or illegal activities;

• have gaps in their knowledge and understanding of basic concepts;

• be more likely to leave school early;

• be over-represented in the juvenile justice system; and

• be the victims of bullying and harassment.

Early Warning Signs

Early intervention for students at risk of developing irregular patterns of attendance is crucial in order for these patterns to be reversed.

Indicators of students at risk of developing these patterns include the following:

• frequent lateness;

• leaving school early missing lessons;

• being the victim of bullying and harassment;

• learning difficulties;

• many days absent, either through illness, unexplained reasons or family commitments;

• unresolved issues with school personnel (staff or students);

• social or emotional issues;

• difficulties at times of transition; and

• health issues experienced by the student and/or family members.

Intervention

Although there will be individual situations for particular students, Baldivis Secondary College will be expected to increase their level of intervention when a student's attendance falls below 90%.

All intervention strategies are to be documented (see Staff Response to Escalating Attendance Issues). Active involvement of students in joint planning to address attendance issues is critical.

Baldivis Secondary College Attendance Management Flow Chart

Student truants from or is regularly late to class:

1. Class Teacher contacts parents.
2. Class Teacher discusses truancy/lateness with student to resolve the issue.
3. Teacher explains to student that deliberately being late is Truancy.

Student Absent for three (3) consecutive days:

1. Monitored by Attendance Officers
2. Attendance Officer phones parents
3. Records any contact or attempted contact on SIS Behaviour module.

Student Attendance Falls below 90%:

1. Attendance Officer sends Form Attendance Percentage Report to Year Coordinator fortnightly.
2. Year Coordinator calls or emails Parents.
3. Year Coordinator sends any adjustments to the Attendance Officer.
4. Year Coordinator sends **Letter 3** and monitors student attendance

Student absence unexplained:

1. Registration teacher discusses with student and request provision of evidence
2. Attendance Officer sends Form Absence Report to Registration Teachers weekly.
3. Registration Teacher calls or emails parents multiple times (if email not replied to within 4 days a call **MUST** be made).
3. Adjustments or attempted contact recorded on Form Absence Report and returned to Attendance Officer within the week.
4. Attendance Officer records contact or attempted contact on Academy adjusts attendance codes.
5. Attendance Officer sends fortnightly letter home requesting evidence be provided.

Student continues to truant class regularly or is increasingly 'late':

1. Class Teacher notifies Curriculum Team Leader
2. Class Teacher or Curriculum Team Leader contact parents.
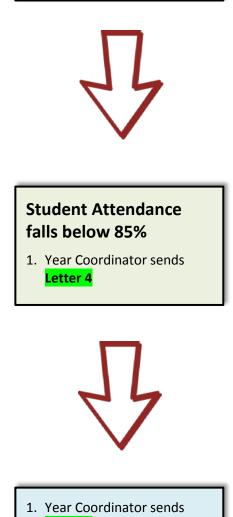3. Formal meeting held between Curriculum Team Leader, Class Teacher, Parent/Guardian and student

Student absence continues and/or no reasonable response from parents:

1. Attendance Officer refers issue to Year Coordinator.
2. Year Coordinator sends **Letter 1**

Student Attendance falls below 85%

1. Year Coordinator sends **Letter 4**

Student continues to regularly truant class/ arrive late:

1. Class Teacher or Curriculum Team Leader refers to Year Coordinator using Student Services Referral Form.

1. Year Coordinator sends **Letter 5**
2. Year Coordinator continues to monitor in collaboration with Class Teacher and Curriculum Team Leaders

1. Year Coordinator sends **Letter 2** requesting attendance meeting with parents and student.
2. Meeting held and Attendance Plan* developed.
3. Year Coordinator feeds back outcome of meeting to referring and relevant staff and continues to monitor student's attendance.
5. If attendance continues to be of concern a further letter outlining the agreements and concerns may be sent, and a further meeting may be held to review any plan.
6. Ongoing issues referred to Student Services Manager.

Ongoing unexplained absences:

1. Registration Teacher continues to monitor and make calls to Parents.
2. Registration Teacher refers to Year Coordinator using Student Services Referral Form.

1. Student Services Manager attempts to resolve issues through contact with Parents and Student. **Letter 6**
2. If unable to resolve Student Services Manager engages relevant internal and external agencies to help address the issues.
3. **Formal Meeting** (**Letter 7**) convened to develop Attendance Action Plan held with Student Services Manager, relevant Deputy Principal, parent/guardian, student, relevant Student Services Support Staff and other agencies engaged in the case.
4. Student Services Manager or delegate provides feed back to relevant staff regarding outcomes and monitor.
5. If there is no significant improvement, Student Services Manager sends **Letter 8** (Offer to Convene an Attendance Panel)
5. Ongoing Attendance Issues where parents have failed to engage may result in a referral to the Regional Director to determine if either prosecution or Responsible Parenting Order is appropriate. (**Letter 9**)

Baldivis Secondary College

Appendix 2: DoE Attendance Intervention Flowchart

Student absent from school without reasonable explanation → The principal or nominee notifies parent/responsible person and requests explanation

Reasonable explanation received

No

Attendance restored? — **Yes** → Document and monitor.

No

For further info on attendance improvement plans, refer to *Improving Attendance: a Resource Package for Schools* or *Guidelines for Implementing Documented Plans in Public Schools.*

Family located?

Yes

Organise parent/teacher attendance meeting at earliest opportunity to identify issues related to non-attendance. Develop and implement attendance improvement plan.

Restore attendance or remove from current roll when transfer advised

Attendance restored? — **Yes** → Document and monitor.

No

No

Located

Consult with network or regional officer

- Inform the parent
- Work collaboratively with parents, other agencies and network or regional officer/s to revise attendance improvement plan

Further investigation by the school

Not located

Attendance restored from interventions? — **Yes** → Document and monitor.

No

Seek assistance from network or regional officer (guideline only) Refer to Student Tracking for placement on CWU List (usually after 15 days).

Convene a Formal Meeting with the Parent

Inform parent
At the meeting:

- Explore factors preventing attendance or participation;
- Ask parent to engage with alternative strategies to improve attendance;
- Document plan; and
- Refer to *Guidelines for the use of education-related Responsible Parenting Agreements.*

Remove from current roll when advised by Student Tracking Coordinator

Attendance restored? — **Yes** → Document and monitor.

No

Consider referral to Regional Executive Director, recommending:
- Prosecution of the parent; or
- Recommendation for a Responsible Parenting Order application

Refer to *Guidelines for the use of education-related Responsible Parenting Orders, Guidelines for the use of prosecution, Guidelines for the use of attendance panels* and *Guidelines for Implementing Documented Plans in Public Schools.*

Student Attendance
All policy and procedural statements contained within this document are lawful orders for the purposes of section 80(a) of the Sector Management Act 1994 (WA) and are therefore to be observed by all Department of Education employees.

NEALS

Baldivis Secondary College

Appendix 3: Attendance Letters

Attendance Letters are accessible on the college's shared drive;

S:\AdminShared\All Staff\1 Student Services\Attendance\Attendance Letters

Attendance Letter 1   Letter of Initial Concern

Attendance Letter 2   Letter re Initial Attendance Meeting

Attendance Letter 3   Letter re 90% Attendance

Attendance Letter 4   Letter re 85% Attendance

Attendance Letter 5   Letter re Ongoing Lateness and/or Truancy

Attendance Letter 6   Letter re Consultation with Regional Office

Attendance Letter 7   Letter re Formal Meeting

Attendance Letter 8   Letter re Offer of Attendance Panel

Attendance Letter 9   Letter re Referral to Regional Director

Baldivis Secondary College

Appendix 4: Students Whose Whereabouts are Unknown (SWU)

The Department of Education's Behaviour and Wellbeing website has further information for schools in relation to student attendance:
http://det.wa.edu.au/studentsupport/behaviourandwellbeing/detcms/navigation/student- attendance/

Students Whose Whereabouts Are Unknown (SWU) and Student Tracking Guidelines
SWU Resources

Regional Staff Contact Details
The following regional staff support schools in improving student attendance and engagement;

Regional Attendance Coordinator	**Denise Henden**
Email: Denise.Henden1@education.wa.edu.au	9336 9578
Networks: Applecross `	0432 758 621
Cockburn Central Education Community	
Fremantle / Cockburn Kwinana	
Federation Riverton / Rossmoyne	
Roe Education	

Regional Attendance Coordinator	**Delia Parker**
Email: Delia.Parker@education.wa.edu.au	9336 9504
Networks: Belmont Schools	0411 426 859
Bibbulmun	
Darling Range Learning Peron North	
Network(PS's) Riverside	
South East Education Community(PS's)	

Youth Engagement Coordinator	**Christine Williams**
Email: Christine.Williams2@education.wa.edu.au	0477 356 948
Networks:	Mandurah Education
Murray / Waroona Schools Peron North	
Network(SHS's) Peron South Education	

Youth Engagement Coordinator	**Rebecca Smart**
Email: Rebecca.Smart2@education.wa.edu.au	9336 9531
Networks: Curtin Education Community	0477 311 377
Cannington/Maddington	
South East Education Community (SHS's) South East Corridor	

The following regional staff support the region in relation to region level initiatives, policy enquiries and whole school practices in attendance.

Manager Attendance, Behaviour and Wellbeing	**Sue Rowe**
Email: Sue.Rowe@education.wa.edu.au	9336 9551

Consultant Behaviour and Attendance (0.8)	**Katharine Ingram-Sheno**
Email: Katharine.Ingram@education.wa.edu.au	9336 9529

Consultant Behaviour and Attendance	**Melanie Couzens**
Email: Melanie.Couzens@education.wa.edu.au	9336 9572