Attendance Policy at Eastlakes Public School

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. Research demonstrates a strong correlation between student learning, attendance at school and improved life outcomes. Students who attend school regularly are more likely to achieve educational success, and increase their career and life options. Schools, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. Encouraging school attendance is a core school responsibility.

Effective practice principles at Eastlakes Public School

To support the maintenance of our school rolls that are accurate reflections of attendance the school:

- Works in partnership with parents and the community;
- Recognises and rewards excellent and improved student attendance;
- Maintains accurate records of student attendance;
- Provides clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance;
- Engages and works with external supports;
- Develops and implements training opportunities for teachers and delegated staff;
- Provides clear school process for roll marking (staff training);
- Uses information held in the school roll to assist the school’s learning support team to develop plans to address emerging non-attendance issues;
- Follows up on absences;
- Has a school procedure for recording verbal explanations of absences including phone calls and during conversations with parents.

Attendance Registers (rolls)

- At EPS manual rolls are currently used. The school attendance register should reflect the highest professional standards.
- Attendance registers (rolls) must be maintained on all days on which the school is open for instruction, including school sports days, swimming carnivals, excursions and similar events.
- The exception method (marking absences only) is to be followed by all schools. Only the codes listed in the Attendance Register Codes are to be used.
- The teacher is required to sign the register each day in the place indicated.
- School attendance must be recorded early in the school day.

Part Day Absences

- In the case of late arrival or early departure, the precise times of arrival or departure must be recorded with the relevant attendance register code. This also includes incidents of fractional truancy that may occur during the school day.

Explanation of Absences

- Parents are required to explain the absences of their children from school promptly and within seven school days to the school. These explanations can be:
  - Verbal - including a phone call or a conversation in person with the parent. A record of the conversation must be made by school personnel and kept with other absence explanations.
  - Written - a letter from the parent or a doctor’s certificate explaining the absence.
  - Electronic - an email or text message explaining an absence. A record must be made by school personnel and kept with other absence explanations.

Security of attendance registers (rolls)

- Registers (rolls) must be stored in a secure location within the school.
- Rolls must not be removed from the school premises unless removal is warranted by exceptional circumstances such as fire or flood.
- Staff must not take attendance registers home.

School sport rolls

- School sport is an integral part of the curriculum. Principals must ensure adequate attendance monitoring practices at school sport to ensure the safety of students.
- Specific sports rolls must be marked at the beginning and conclusion of each sports session.
- Attendance information contained on sports rolls must be transferred to the attendance register (roll).

References: School Attendance Policy (Implementation Date: 27-01-2010 - Reference No. PD/2005/0259/V06) and A Guide to Effective Roll Marking
Teaching staff are responsible for documenting student attendance daily. Notations must be up to date, accurate and monitored by class teachers.

- Absences recorded from 9am.
- Attendance is recorded by calling the roll and noting absence.
- Students arriving late at school must report to the office before attending class and be signed in by a parent or caregiver. A late note is issued which must be given to the class teacher. The class teacher enters this late arrival in the roll.
- Partial absences cannot be validated without a parent or caregiver’s signature or verbal statement. Partial absences are recorded as PA unless a parent or caregiver provides the school with a justified reason for the absence within 7 calendar days.
- If students need to be collected before 3pm, parents or caregivers must report to the office and collect an Early Leaver’s slip. SAS will place in the class roll folder and the teacher must enter this early leave in the class roll.
- If students are going to be absent for an extended period, their parents or carers need to apply for an exemption from school attendance. This exemption needs to be approved by the principal or delegate, and in some cases the Director. Once exemption has been granted, SAS staff will place a copy of exemption form in the class roll and class teachers will enter this period of leave in the roll. If students do not return on the given date, their absence is recorded as usual.
- All reasonable measures must be taken to contact parents promptly and within two days of an unexplained absence. Explanation for absence must be provided by parents in writing or verbally within seven calendar days of return to school.
- Instructions for noting absence types are located in the manual register under Roll Marking Procedures
- Class teachers are to monitor the attendance of all their students. If any student is absent for longer than two days, and you are not able to contact their parents, speak to your supervisor. This includes those students who have not returned from a period of exemption by the expected date.
- RFF teachers are expected to mark the class roll at 9.00am as per instructions above. If the students are with their Community Languages teachers, the roll must be marked when the class meets with their teacher at 10.00am.
- Student absences are to be recorded in the Student Record Card by the class teacher at the end of each term.
- Additional information regarding justified / unjustified absences and teacher intervention is included in Appendix A below
- In the event of a class teacher being absent, the casual teacher will be expected to mark the roll with the support from an executive member.
- Executive review class rolls in week 4 and week 8 of each term – included on school calendar
- The principal will include regular newsletter articles promoting daily attendance and punctuality
- K-6 end of term assembly awards presented for 100% attendance and 100% punctuality
- Principal’s class award for best attendance rate per year group

References: School Attendance Policy (Implementation Date: 27-01-2010 - Reference No. PD/2005/0259/V06) and A Guide to Effective Roll Marking
Appendix A - Unjustified and Justified Reasons

Absences for reasons such as some of the following may not be justified:

- Shopping
- Sleeping in
- Working around the house
- Minding siblings/other children/older relatives
- Minor family events such as birthdays
- Hair cuts
- Weather conditions: Rainy/Windy/ Hot...
- Frequent car problems
- Frequent late train/bus
- Excursions/Carnivals/Sports/Camps...
- Airport/Visitors from overseas or other states
- Other member of the family is sick
- Hospital Visits to relatives or friends
- Head lice

Absences for reasons such as some of the following may be justified:

- Unavoidable medical or dental appointments (encourage appointments outside school hours, or close to home time)
- Religious holiday
- Urgent family situation (funeral)
- Sick or infectious disease

Children are not absent and they should be marked present if they are:

- Representing school at approved activities
- Attending alternative programs/schools
- Attending Stewart House
- Temporary enrolment at other school

As at October 2014