

Gladesville Public School

Attendance Guidelines for Parents and Caregivers

Updated 2019



Gladesville Public School, in partnership with parents and caregivers, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. Whilst parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, school staff, as part of their duty of care, record and monitor part and whole day absences. These guidelines reflect the Student Attendance in Government Schools Policy from the NSW Department of Education's website.

Responsibility of Parents

- To ensure their children of compulsory school age are enrolled in a government or non-government school, or are registered with NESA for home schooling.
- Ensure their children attend every day the school is open for instruction.
- Provide an explanation for absences to the school within 7 days from the first day of any period of absence through means such as telephone call, written note or email. The 7 day timeframe for explaining absences is a requirement of the *Education Act (1990)*.
- Work in partnership with the school to plan and implement strategies to support regular attendance at school. This includes communicating with the school if they are aware of issues impacting on their child's attendance or engagement with school.
- Apply for extended leave when the time away is longer than 10 days.

Partial Attendance - Late Arrivals & Early Leavers

- Students who arrive after 9.10am require a late slip from the office. Parents will either need to:
 - accompany their child to the office to sign them in,
 - or
 - provide a hand written note to explain the late arrival.
- Parents/ caregivers must attend the office when collecting their child prior to the end of the day.

If the above does not occur, parents will be sent home a note to provide an explanation. This will need to be returned to the class teacher.

Daily Absences – School Procedures

- As an added measure to ensure student safety, Gladesville Public school will send an automatic notification to parents the morning of an absence. This notification will be set for 10am and sent to those with an 'unexplained absence' (please note that class teachers may not update explanations until later in the day, so even if you have provided an explanation that morning, the system may not yet reflect this). Although this is not a Department requirement, it will ensure that parents are notified if their child is not at school. In the unlikely event that a child should be in attendance, parents are encouraged to contact the school in the first instance.
- To support parents who may forget to provide an explanation, an automatic notification system will send a reminder email the day after an unexplained absence. This will be sent to the family 'preferred' email address only. If absences are still not explained, the class teacher will make further contact with parents.

Contact teachers via written note, telephone (02) 9817 2388, the school's e-mail gladesville-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au, direct email address if provided to you or phone the school office on to advise of non-attendance. Notification can also be made through the School Stream App.

Responsibility of School Staff

- To promote regular attendance at school through teaching and learning activities that acknowledge the learning and support needs of students.
- To maintain accurate records of student attendance.
- To alert the principal, and staff member responsible for monitoring attendance, when a student's pattern of attendance is of concern, or if no explanation is received from the parent or carer within required timeframes.

School staff who have concerns about the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child or young person must report their concerns to the Principal.

Frequent Absence due to Illness

- Where frequent absences are explained as being due to illness, consultation with parents must occur regarding the health care needs of the child.
- Principals can request that the parents provide a medical certificate if they have concerns with the explanation provided, or where there is a history of poor attendance.
- Where principals have ongoing concerns, they can request the parent's consent for a doctor to provide information to the school about their child's health condition. It is essential the school has all relevant information so that the learning and health care needs of the student can be addressed.
- Principals can seek information from prescribed bodies under Chapter 16A of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 where they have ongoing concerns regarding a student's safety, welfare or wellbeing. They should also contact the Child Wellbeing Unit (CWU) or if they believe the student is at risk of significant harm the Child Protection Helpline.

Unsatisfactory Pattern of Attendance

- Parents are responsible for the regular attendance of students at school. Principals and school staff, in consultation with students and their parents, will usually be able to resolve problems of non-attendance.
- A child is considered to have an unsatisfactory school attendance when they have:
 - regular absences without explanation (despite follow-up from the school)
 - regular absences and explanations provided by parents are not accepted by the principal, or
 - extended periods of absence without an explanation or the explanation is not accepted by the principal. An extended period of absence may be consecutive or irregular patterns of non-attendance.
- Resolution of attendance difficulties may require more targeted school based strategies including:
 - meeting with the student and parents
 - referral to the school's Learning and Support Team to identify and implement strategies that address the learning and support needs for the student
 - development of a school-based attendance improvement plan with the student and parents
 - engaging identified groups of students in programs that support regular attendance and punctuality
 - referral to the school counsellor
 - requesting and sharing information and working collaboratively with other government or non-government agencies
 - seeking advice about culturally appropriate responses from relevant services and working collaboratively with them.
- If a range of school-based interventions has been unsuccessful in resolving attendance difficulties, the principal should request support by making an application to the Home School Liaison Program and submitting the application to their local Educational Services Team for consideration.

Parent Copy - Attendance Codes

Unexplained – Unjustified Partial (Late Arrival)

- No parent

Unjustified Reasons

- Shopping
- Sleeping in
- Working around the house
- Caring for siblings/other relatives
- Minor family events such as birthdays
- Hair cuts
- Weather conditions: rainy/windy/hot
- Frequent car problems
- Frequent late train/bus
- Non-Attendance at Excursions/Carnivals/Sports/Camps
- Airport/Visitors from overseas or interstate
- Other member of the family is sick
- Hospital visits to relatives or friends
- Head lice
- Last day of school term
- Tutoring during school hours
- Leaving early for a 'long weekend'

Justified Leave – Should be applied for in ADVANCE

- Misadventure or unforeseen event
- Domestic necessity such as serious illness of an immediate family member
- Attending funerals
- Travel in Australia or overseas with prior permission for granting leave from school
Less than 10 school days, a note to the classroom teacher. More than 10 school days a formal '*Application for Extended Leave – Travel*' must be completed and documentation of the proposed travel supplied to the Principal
- Recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions
- Speech Therapy/Occupational Therapy
- Employment in the entertainment industry – short term

Justified – Sick

- General sickness/illness
- Medical appointment which could not be arranged outside of school hours, including dental
*For periods of 3 days or more it is advisable to get a medical certificate

Exemption – Via Application to Principal

- Exceptional circumstances
- Employment in the entertainment industry – long term
- Participation in elite sporting event including for short periods of time i.e. for one or two days, and at short notice
- Participation in elite arts program – long term