



ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. Rationale:

In New South Wales, 'compulsory school-age' means that all children from six years of age are legally required to be enrolled at and attending school or to be registered for home schooling. After they complete Year 10, and until they turn 17 years of age, students then have the following options. They may also be in:

- full-time further education and training (e.g. TAFE, traineeship, apprenticeship);
- full-time, paid employment of an average of 25 hours per week; or
- a combination of both of the above.

Parents or carers are responsible for making sure that their children comply with these legal requirements. Henry Kendall High School support parents by monitoring student attendance and helping to address attendance issues when they emerge.

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their education potential. Schools, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, school staff, as a part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences.

2. Aims:

At Henry Kendall High school, we ask that parents are responsible for:

- Enrolling their children of compulsory school age correctly in school or registering them with for home schooling.
- Ensuring that their children attend school every day, unless a valid reason exists.
- Explaining the absences of their children from school promptly to the school. The *Education Act 1990* requires that all absences are explained within seven (7) days or an unjustified absence will be recorded.
- Taking measures to resolve attendance issues involving their children.

The responsibilities of Henry Kendall High School staff in supporting the regular attendance of students includes:

- Providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of belonging to the school community.
- Recognising and rewarding excellent and improved student attendance.
- Maintaining accurate records of student attendance.
- Implementing programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise
- Providing clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance.
- Reporting all unexplained absences daily.

3. Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

ATTENDANCE

PROCEDURES

The following procedures are implemented at Henry Kendall High School to manage student attendance.

- Parents will be notified of the attendance requirements and their obligations throughout the school year via the school newsletter and Facebook page.
- All enrolled students are required to attend school unless reasonable and valid grounds exist for them to be absent. Parents/carers have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school daily, and are only absent if ill or if absolutely necessary.
- It is the parents/carers responsibility to inform the school when their child/children are absent. This can occur via phone call, text message, email or in person. All explanations will be recorded in Sentral.
- Independent students not living with parents or guardians are also required to an explanation for absences.
- All staff at Henry Kendall High School have a duty of care in ensuring that student attendance is monitored at regular intervals throughout the school day.
- All teaching staff are required to keep accurate class rolls and these are to be marked at the commencement of every scheduled lesson in the school day.
- Classroom Teachers (CT's) are to follow up any suspected truancy and, if confirmed, are to issue a consequence (detention/s), record the truancy on Sentral, and are to notify parents.
- For each unexplained absence the school will send a text message to parents/carers on the day of the absence to inform them that their child is not at school. Parents/carers are encouraged to respond to this message to provide a valid explanation. SMS Messages are sent at 10.30am daily for all unexplained absences and late arrivals.
- The school will additionally inform parents/carers of all unexplained absences and late arrivals via email daily for the prior 6 days.
- A designated member of the SAS staff will make phone contact with parents/carers weekly for all remaining unexplained absences.
- Lateness is recorded as a partial absence and must be explained by parents.
- Travel during school time requires the authorisation of the Principal. Parents/carers need to complete an Application for Extended Leave.

Student absence below 90%

Students are required to attend school every day that the school is open unless a valid reason exists. It is expected that for the majority of students an attendance level of >90% will be maintained.

Justified reasons for student absences may include:

- being sick, or having an infectious disease
- having an unavoidable medical appointment
- participation in representative sports not aligned with the department
- being required to attend a recognised religious holiday
- exceptional or urgent family circumstance (e.g. attending a funeral)

Where an explanation is not provided within 7 days of the absence, the absence will remain recorded as Unexplained. This includes where an explanation is provided after the 7-day period.

Where parents provide an explanation for an absence that the Principal does not consider as acceptable, the absence will be recorded as Explained, however Unjustified.

Reasons considered as Explained, however Unjustified:

- Going for driving lessons
- Sleeping In
- Missed train/bus
- Learning from home

- Not wanting to do sport
- Not wanting to attend sports carnivals
- Running Late
- Could not find parking spot
- Parent could not get student to school as they were working
- School refusal

When a student demonstrates frequent absences or an unacceptable attendance rate, the following measures may be applied:

- Parent/carers requested to supply a medical certificate/s for long term or frequent absences cited as illness or medically related.
- Parent/carer meeting/s to develop an individual attendance plan.
- Part day exemption as a means of re-engagement.
- Student placed on attendance monitoring.
- Principal notification letters issued.
- Referral to the Home School Liaison program.

Student Absence Flow-Chart

