



Attendance Policy and Procedures

Effective: February 2017
Version: 2.0
Last updated: February 2017

**Related Department of Education
policies and documents**

Student Attendance Policy v3.2
Student Attendance Procedures v3.2

Related SIDE Policies and documents

SIDE Staff Handbook
Students at Educational Risk Policy

History of Changes		
Date	Version	Change
January 2015	1.0	None
October 2015	1.0	Adapted to differentiate policy and procedures. Clarified definition of attendance Edited.
February	2.0	Edited. Clarified procedures. Updated hyperlinks.
January 2018	2.0	School logo updated.

5.1 Policy

SIDE monitors and manages student attendance in accordance with the Department of Education's *Student Attendance Policy and Procedures*.

Staff at SIDE are required to manage attendance by:

- maintaining accurate attendance records;
- responding to Department requests for reporting and disclosure of attendance data;
- managing alternative attendance arrangements where these are appropriate;
- addressing student absence;
- developing plans for students with persistent absence; and
- retaining all relevant documentation.

5.2 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.

Consistent attendance and participation at school are essential factors in achieving social and academic learning outcomes. To comply with the *Education Act 1999* and the *School Education Regulations 2000*, SIDE has established clear expectations about student contact and participation in the educational program.

Students in face to face schools are considered to be 'at-risk' if attendance falls below 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. The Department of Education [Student Attendance Policy](#) requires schools to follow up on cases of non-attendance and work with parents and students to improve the situation. This may involve the support of a specialist school, network or regional officers and connect parents with agencies that are able to help.

5.3 How attendance at SIDE is monitored

Monitoring attendance at SIDE brings unique challenges with students not physically on site, but satisfactory attendance can be broadly based on the notional level of 90% completion one or more of these areas:

- satisfactory submission of work according to the work calendar or to a negotiated schedule and/or
- teacher/student contact and/or
- participation in online lessons and courses.

Essentially, once on an agreed program, it is expected that all the activities are undertaken, unless variations are negotiated and agreed with the teacher. With the variation of enrolment

types, professional judgement, collaboration and consultation is required to determine when attendance becomes an issue.

5.4 Improving attendance

Teachers

Teachers are expected to keep accurate attendance records in SCILS for every student enrolled at the school that are able to be reproduced in a written form. SCILS entries are to show records of all contact, or attempts to make contact, with the student's family and document all intervention strategies implemented in an attempt to restore a student's attendance.

Student attendance must not be considered in isolation. Schools and teachers play an important role in encouraging attendance by creating welcoming and inclusive learning environments that engage students.

Effective teachers:

- Develop positive relationships.
- Establish and maintain regular contact through a range of communication tools.
- Use a wide range of teaching tools, strategies and systems.
- Demonstrate high expectations.
- Develop awareness of contextual and cultural understandings of the student population.
- Maintain records of contact and work submission- SCILS notes, emails, letters and phone calls. Non-submission of work is recorded in SCILS, using the Moodle button with status as failure.
- Utilise the SAR process.
- Complete the attendance audit.

HOLA/PC

The HOLA/PC is expected to monitor the attendance of students enrolled in the learning area.

- HOLA/PC generates Letter of Concern – Attendance to Parent/Carer and School/Supervisor – notes in SCILS.
- If the issue is not resolved, the HOLA/PC is to work with teachers to commence the Documented Plan process – notes in SCILS.
- Updates student coordinator.
- Completes attendance audit.
- Records learning area attendance tracking.

Student Coordinators

- Request an explanation from the home-based student's parent or responsible person when a student has been absent from school and an acceptable explanation has not been provided after 3 weeks from the beginning of the absence.
- Identify patterns of student non-attendance.
- Follow up on students who persistently do not attend using SIDE time lines.
- Gather contact and work submission records from teachers through SCILS.
- Record reasons for non-attendance in SCILS.
- Generates Letter of Concern – Attendance to Parent/Carer and School/Supervisor – notes in SCILS.
- Decide upon any informal and formal interventions in liaison with Program Coordinator – Student Services.

Program Coordinator - Student Services

- Assess assistance and resources required to re-establish school attendance and involve DoE personnel when appropriate.
- Liaise with the Deputy Principal on persistent non-attendees – student coordinator notes records in SCILS.

Actions recommendations from DP re Attendance Audit. The Deputy Principal will involve SIDE Attendance Team for case-management.

Deputy Principal- Students

Where the situation does not improve and students are persistently absent without good reason, the principal may ask the parent to attend a formal meeting to discuss the situation and develop a plan for improvement. The Department has developed new processes for the prosecution of parents or may apply to the Children's Court for a Responsible Parenting Order as an action of last resort to engage the student's parents.

The Deputy Principal will 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.

5 Attendance Processes

5.1 Current roll student attendance processes years K–12

Home based students are expected to meet the required level of attendance as defined at SIDE.

If a teacher believes there is an acceptable reason for negotiating a change in the work plan or contact arrangements - no further action is required. An 'acceptable reason' may vary according to the cultural context of the student or their individual circumstances. Students who have not attended for three weeks, without an acceptable reason, will be referred to the Student Services Team for actioning through Students at Educational Risk processes.

Teachers, HOLAs/PCs and student coordinators (SC) should make every reasonable effort to contact the parent/caregiver regarding attendance. This should include emails, phone calls and letters. The following timelines and action plan details the process to be used. Parents/care-givers are expected to provide reasons for a student's absence.

Stage 1
Day 3–7 of no contact <ul style="list-style-type: none">Teacher should make every attempt to contact the student e.g. email/phone/letter. Early, informal intervention is preferred.Teacher documents absences in SCILS as authorised (reasonable reason) or unauthorised (no reason provided).
After Week 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Teacher advises HOLA.Email parent/carer of attendance concern sent by the teacher. Copies to be sent to other stakeholders.Teacher should continue to attempt to contact via email/phone/letter.If there is no response/change send Attendance Letter of Concern. Copies to be sent to other stakeholders.
Stage 2
After Week 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Teacher requests HOLA send Letter of Concern.Letter of Concern - Attendance sent by HOLA. Teacher to notify SC and document in SCILS. Red Flag.Teacher should continue to attempt contact via email/phone/letter.Commence Documented Plan process as required.
Stage 3
Week 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none">HOLA requests SC send Letter of Concern – Attendance.SC to run attendance check across learning areas. If attendance is a problem in one learning area, SC to advise HOLA.Letter of Concern - Attendance sent if this is a general pattern across several learning areas. Document in SCILS.Teacher should continue to attempt contact via email/phone/letter.
Stage 4
Week 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none">SC confirms no contact with teachers and requests DP Attendance Letter.Deputy Principal Attendance Letter sent.Teacher should continue to attempt contact via email/phone/letter.

Stage 5
Week 5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC confirms no contact with teacher and requests Principal Attendance Letter. • Principal Attendance Letter sent. • DP/SC advises Regional Education Office for follow-up. • SC monitors weekly.
Stage 6
Week 7 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No response from student. • CRP processes commence. • Monitoring by Program Coordinator – Administration.
Week 8 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision made regarding lodging a SWU (student whereabouts unknown). • Non-engagement referral to Regional Office by SC in liaison with DP.

5.2 External roll student attendance processes years 8–12

School based students are expected to meet the required level of attendance as defined at SIDE.

SIDE is sensitive to individual circumstances including social and cultural contexts and offers flexible delivery and individual educational programs. Resources at SIDE are limited and SIDE cannot continue to provide tuition to students enrolled in other schools who do not meet minimum attendance requirements. Students who have not attended for three weeks, without an acceptable reason, will be referred to the Student Services Team for actioning of the withdrawal process from SIDE enrolment.

Generally, when SIDE is the sole provider of the curriculum and assessment for a school-based student, the definition of SIDE attendance and procedures should apply and appropriate action negotiated with the local school supervisor. This is to be coordinated by SIDE's student coordinators.

Teachers, HOLAs and student coordinators should make every reasonable effort to contact the parent/caregiver regarding attendance. This should include emails and phone calls.

- The partner school is responsible for the student attendance process.
- Teacher to inform student services of inactivity via SCILS and SAR processes.
- Student coordinator communicates with partner school.
- SC monitors inactivity over a 4 week period.

Stage 1
Day 3–7 of no contact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher should make every attempt to contact the student e.g. via email/phone/letter. Early informal intervention is preferred. • Teacher to document in SCILS.
After Week 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher advises HOLA. • Email parent/carer of attendance concern sent by the teacher. Copies to be sent to other stakeholders. • Teacher should continue to attempt to contact via email/phone/letter. • If there is no response/change send Attendance Letter of Concern. Copies to be sent to other stakeholders.

Stage 2
<p>After Week 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher requests HOLA send Letter of Concern – Attendance. • Letter of Concern - Attendance sent by HOLA. • Teacher to document in SCILS. Red Flag. • Commence Documented Plan when student reengages. • Teacher should continue to attempt contact via email/phone/letter.
Stage 3
<p>Week 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HOLA/teacher requests SC send Letter of Concern – Attendance. • Letter of Concern - Attendance sent by SC. Document in SCILS. • Teacher should continue to attempt contact via email/phone/letter.
Stage 4
<p>Week 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC emails the partner school to confirm non-attendance after 3 weeks of non-attendance.
Stage 5
<p>Week 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC withdraws student from SIDE when confirmation received. • SC advises teachers via details update.