School Attendance Policy and Procedures
Updated Nov 2021

1. **Policy Statement**

   As a WA Government school, Aspiri Primary School must monitor and manage student attendance in order to maximise the opportunities of all students to learn (DoE Student Attendance Policy).

   Every day that a student does not attend school can have a negative impact on their learning. The Department of Education monitors student attendance and works with other agencies and service providers to maximise student engagement with learning. It does this in a way that builds shared responsibility for student attendance between schools, students, parents, and the broader community.

   Aspiri Primary School expects students to attend school regularly and to participate fully to gain maximum benefit from schooling. Regular attendance enables students to access a full education, enabling them to reach their full potential.

2. **Policy Rules**

   Staff manage student attendance in accordance with the Student Attendance in Public Schools Procedures. This includes:

   - Promoting the importance of school attendance to the school community;
   - Engaging in community-initiated approaches to strengthen student attendance;
   - Developing plans in partnership with students, families, communities and other agencies to improve student attendance, including documented plans where required, to address the persistent absence of individual students;
   - Maintaining accurate attendance records;
   - Responding to Department requests for reporting and disclosure of attendance data;
   - Managing alternative attendance arrangements where these are in the best interests of the student; and
   - Retaining all relevant documentation.

3. **Beliefs about the importance of attending school**

   It is important that students, staff and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school. Aspiri Primary School:

   - is committed to promoting the key message "every day counts";
   - monitors, communicates and implements strategies to improve student attendance
   - believes attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community.

4. Responsibilities

Administration responsibilities:

- promotes student attendance through clear statements of expectations and procedures.
- promotes attendance through regular articles in the school's newsletters.
- develops and implements rigorous and effective systems to record and monitor attendance.
- ensures that student attendance is recorded in every class.
- maintains accurate attendance records in SIS (School Information System)
- facilitates prompt processing of student transfers.
- monitors and analyses school attendance records frequently.
- ensures Attendance Plans are developed as required.
- supports teachers to develop Attendance Plans.
- generates absence follow-up letters once per term.
- provides ongoing monitoring and support for students in the "moderate" and "severe" categories, as well as support for their teachers and parents/carers.
- develops Responsible Parenting Agreements in conjunction with parents/carers as required.
- invites families to Attendance Advisory Panels as appropriate and completes all required documentation.
- consults with Regional Office who will continue to provide resources and templates to assist teachers to complete their attendance responsibilities when student attendance concerns escalate.
- consider requests for extended student absence on a case by case basis and communicate the outcome with both parents and teachers.

Teacher responsibilities:

- monitors and records each student's attendance in SIS with 100% accuracy, for both morning and afternoon periods daily.
- promotes and encourages attendance.
- seeks advice from administration if unsure about what absence code to use. (see Appendix A)
- records notes against all absences in SIS.
- follows up on all unauthorised absences in person, via a note/email/phone/Seesaw message, or by contacting emergency contacts.
- notifies administration when students have been absent for 10 consecutive days and the reason is not known.
- develops and monitors Attendance Plans for students whose attendance is of concern, with support from Administration.
- refers parents to Administration to negotiate in-term vacations.

Student responsibilities:

- attends school at all times when the school is open for instruction.
- arrives at school and attends all classes on time.
- remains on the school premises during school time unless they have the permission from both their parent/carer and the school Administration to leave.
- completes any work that is missed due to absences *if requested by the teacher*.
- works cooperatively with the school and is actively involved in improving their attendance.

Parent responsibilities:

- ensures their child attends school at all times when the school is open for instruction (see School Education Act, 1999).
- promotes and provides organisational support to their child to allow them to attend school and participate on all designated school days.
- ensures their child is on time for school each day.
- notifies the school on the first day of their child's absence.
- Notifies the school in advance if an absence is planned.
- supports their child's learning during continued or prolonged absences through completion of educational activities
- works cooperatively and collaboratively with the school to develop and implement improvement strategies when their child's attendance has been inconsistent due to reasons deemed unsatisfactory by the schoolwork cooperatively with the school to support their child when returning to school after prolonged absences.
- meets with school Administration staff to discuss and seek authorization for vacations during school term.
- ensures the school has correct and up to date contact details.

At Aspiri Primary School, teachers will manage student attendance in accordance with the *Student Attendance in Public Schools Procedures*. This includes:

Maintaining accurate attendance records;
Keep accurate records for every student enrolled at the school including attendance at both morning and afternoon sessions for Kindergarten, pre-primary and primary students that are able to be produced in a written form (INTEGRIS)
-        Morning attendance by 9am
-        Attendance updated throughout the day if applicable (Late students and students who are signed out are entered by the Front Office Staff)
-        Use approved lesson attendance codes (see Appendix A)

Record student attendance

To record attendance for a student:

- Select 'Lesson Attendance' from the sidebar.
- Select 'Day View'.
- Select students – use Form / Teaching Set / Student Find / My Form / My Sets.
- Select 'Date'.
- Select 'Code' from the right-hand side.
- Change student attendance code by left clicking in the relevant box.
- Right click to place the code under the relevant date.
- Add a note by right clicking the tickbox next to the date. *This can be done after the day, if a reason is provided at a later date e.g. on return to school.* This note is to include: who notified the teacher of the absence, the reason for the absence, the teacher's initials and the date the information was entered. *e.g. Message from XXX on Seesaw / sick / KS / 11/9/21*
- Select 'OK' to save.

Recording whether a student's absence was authorised or unauthorised;

Recording a student as (-) present for a half day when the student has attended at least two hours and five minutes of instruction; and present if they are on a school-approved activity of attending off-site under a section 24 arrangement.

Request a reason for a student's absence;
An explanation of a student's absence is required to be provided to the school within three days from the start of the absence. This may include via a note/email/phone/Seesaw message or by contacting emergency contacts. Where a response is not received, follow-up should be made by the teacher and a log of attempted contact (including the date, time and method of contact) should be kept.

Where a student's attendance is below 90% or is identified as concern;
Investigate the reasons for the student's absence;
- Notify the SAER Coordinator (Associate Principal) of your concerns.
- Contact the parent/guardian and/or organise a parent/teacher meeting at the earliest opportunity to identify issues concerning the student's absences; plan improvement strategies.
- Organise a Case Conference where appropriate and include the Associate Principal where followup strategies / Responsible Parenting Plan are required.
- Include identified attendance improvement strategies in a Documented Plan.

APPENDIX A LESSON ATTENDANCE CODES

Codes for students who attend school;

- Present
This default code should be used when the student is at school, attending more than two hours and five minutes of instruction.

E - Educational Activity
This code should be used when the student is participating in an approved educational program off school site, such as a Section 24, Alternative Attendance Arrangement, an excursion, work placement or programs such as PEAC. This code is not classified as an absence. This code is not to be used for students on the Participation List.

M - Medical or Sick Bay
The M code should be applied to students when they are on school grounds in the medical or sick bay. This code is not classified as an absence. Sick students that are not at school should be marked with an N – Notified as Sick.

W - Withdrawn
Where a student is withdrawn from school activities as a planned response to a breach of school discipline but is present at school. For example, when a student is sent to the office or a buddy class but is still at school. This code is not classified as an absence.

Codes for students who are late;

L - Late
To be used when a student is late to school but is not late enough to be recorded as a half day absence. This code is not classified as an absence. *NB: A student is absent if they have attended less than two full hours and five minutes of continuous instruction.*

Codes for Authorised Absences

R - Reasonable Cause
This code should be used when the **principal** has deemed the reason provided as acceptable other than an absence due to suspension, cultural absence, illness or family holiday.

C - Cultural Absence
Absences **authorised** for cultural or religious significance to the family such as funerals, sorry time and religious observances.

N - Notified as Sick
Applied to a student whose reason for absence is due to illness. The principal may request a medical certificate.

V - Vacation
This code may be used when the absence has been negotiated in advance and the **principal** is satisfied that reasonable grounds for authorising the absence apply.

Z - Suspended
This code is automatically recorded in Lesson Attendance by the Behaviour Module when a student is formally suspended. This code is classified as an **authorised** absence.

Codes for Unauthorised Absences

U - Absence – cause not yet established
To be used when a student is initially absent from school and no explanation has yet been provided. Further follow up is required to establish a reason for the absence and once obtained, the code should be changed accordingly.

K - Unauthorised Vacation
This code identifies students whose parents have taken them on an in-term holiday and the principal has **not authorised** the absence.

X - Unacceptable Reason
This code is used when the school has sought an explanation but the response from the parent is not considered reasonable, and the **principal** does not believe it satisfies the requirements of Section 25 of the School Education Act 1999.

T - Truant
This is be used for a student that is absent from school and an investigation has revealed that the student has truanted. This will usually require a teacher or parent witnessing the student leaving the school grounds or educational program without permission.

Ratified by Aspiri Primary School Staff.

Review Date: 2023

APPENDIX B CASE CONFERENCE RECORD & INDIVIDUAL ATTENDANCE PLAN

Student Surname:	First Name:
Parent/carer 1:	2:
Year:	Teacher:
Date of Birth:	Date of Meeting:

Participant	Relationship (or agency)	Phone	Email	Signature

Discussion notes:

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Action plan:

What	Who	When by

Review date: …………………………………………………………………………..

APPENDIX C

APPLICATION FOR EXTENDED STUDENT ABSENCE

Dear Parents/Carers,

As stated in the School Education Act 1999, it is expected all students attend school each day that it is open for instruction unless unwell and/or physically incapable of attending.

The Act also states parents need to obtain permission from the Principal for their child/children to have a leave of absence from school for an extended holiday or for any other reason than health related.

Parents are asked to use this form to request an absence from school to participate in a holiday or other activities. This form should be submitted at least one month prior to the requested departure from school, except in extenuating circumstances.

Please note –

•   It is the responsibility of parents to ensure they have informed their child's class teacher of the absence.

•   We recommend the following educational opportunities for your child/ren. Daily reading, writing journal, research project on the holiday destination, diary with photos, drawings, sketches and student writing, real life educational experiences such as maps, history, languages, science according to your destination.

•   Missed assessments and absence from the class teaching program may have a detrimental effect on a child's academic progress and learning which may result in a lower than expected grade.

Please complete and return the form below.

Request for extended leave of absence during school term

Student First Name	Student Surname	Class Teacher	Year Level

I would like to request an extended leave of absence from class at Aspiri Primary School for a total of _____ days.

Date from _____/_____/_____   Return to school ____/____/_____

Please state the reason for this application:

_____

_____

_____

Please sign and submit this form to the front office

Parents signature: _____Date: _____

Parents email address: _____ Phone number: _____

OFFICE USE ONLY

The absence is authorised and is recorded as a 'V'   Lesson Attendance

The absence is not authorised and recorded as a 'K'   Email Teacher/Parent

Principal (or Representative) _____

Date _____/_____/_____