

Clifton Hills Primary School

Attendance Policy – 2021



Ratified by the CHPS School Board February 2021

Rationale

All schools in Western Australia are committed to providing safe and supportive learning environments for all students, which address their educational needs. Regular attendance at school is fundamental to all students' learning. Consistent attendance and participation are essential for all students' social and academic learning. We follow the DOE's 4 R approach to attendance, by Recognising, Recording, Resolving, and Restoring Attendance across the school:

- Recognise - identify every absence
- Resolve – seek a reason for every absence
- Restore – identify when attendance is a concern (to an individual, target group and whole- school levels) and implement improvement strategies
- Records – maintain accurate records that would withstand external scrutiny

School community 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 regularly at our school.

- Is committed to promoting the key message of the importance of regular attendance.
- Believes all children should be enrolled at school and attend all day, every school day where possible.
- Monitors, communicates and implements strategies to improve regular school attendance.
- Believes vacations taken within the school term will impact on student learning and will be recorded as an unapproved absence and.
- Believes attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community.

At Clifton Hills Primary School there is an expectation that once enrolled, students will attend on a regular basis, and positive attendance patterns should be fostered. It is our focus to wrap positive support around each student to maximise their attendance.

Recording Attendance

Clifton Hills Primary School will ensure that accurate attendance records are kept for each student enrolled at the school. This includes recording attendance for morning and afternoon sessions for kindergarten, pre-primary and primary students. The following codes are used by teachers to record attendance electronically on Integris:

It is expected that a parent/carer/guardian will have provided an explanation for all absences except 'U – unexplained'.

****See Appendix A for Lesson Codes and Descriptors***

Monitoring

The school will utilise the following to monitor student attendance:

- Student Attendance Reporting (via IKON), Regular Class Attendance Analysis Report (Via SIS), Percentage Attendance Report (via SIS)
- At the completion of each Term: Attendance Summary Report, Unexplained Absentees Report and Longitudinal Attendance Report
- Parents /caregivers will be contacted by email if their child's attendance falls below 90%-80% (per semester) A CHPS Attendance Plan will be put into place if a student's attendance falls below 80% (per semester).
- Staff and the School Community will be given regular updates on Whole School Attendance Data.

Clifton Hills Primary School Data

Schools Online – Attendance -

https://www.det.wa.edu.au/schoolsonline/attendance_ov_yrlev.do?schoolID=5550&pageID=SP10

Attendance Targets

NB: As with all schools, COVID-19 has impacted the CHPS Attendance Data significantly.

- By 2022, all year groups, P – 6 to maintain their attendance rates at 'above WA Public Schools'.
- By 2022, increase Kindergarten attendance to 90% or above.
- By 2022, increase whole school attendance to 94% or above.
- By 2022, all cohorts to have 'unexplained' absences under 10%.

Attendance Procedures

Accurate entry of attendance in SIS using the appropriate code is vital in ensuring data is valid and can be collected to inform decisions regarding student attendance.

Daily Attendance

- Student attendance will be recorded by 9.00am and updated when necessary throughout the day. This is the responsibility of the teacher in charge of the classroom between 8:30 - 9:00am.

Absences

- Parents/Caregivers are required to advise the classroom teacher the reasons for an absence as soon as practical. This can be written or verbal.
- If a student is away for three consecutive days without the school being notified, the teacher will contact the parent/caregiver.
- For prolonged or repeated absences that are due to sickness or injury the school will require a medical certificate.
- Classroom teachers will enter the reason (either verbal or written) for the absence. This must be entered into SIS Lesson Attendance for the absent days using the 'Add Note' feature. This will include teacher's initials and the date.
- Our aim is to have no unexplained absences in our attendance data.

Students with Diagnosed Special Needs and/or Medical Conditions

- Children with special or additional needs, and those with medical conditions may have unavoidable absences due to medical and therapist appointments. These students will be considered on an individual basis by the Principal.

Students 'at risk'. Attendance below 90%

- Students with attendance below 90% will be deemed 'at risk'. Teachers will be in regular contact with Parents/Caregivers of students in this category. Students deemed 'at risk' will be monitored carefully by the classroom teacher.
- If attendance falls to below 80% the student will be placed on a CHPS Attendance Plan.
- If unsuccessful in making contact with Parent/Caregiver of students 'at risk' or non-attendance does not improve after classroom level intervention and support, the student will be referred to the Attendance Team.

Late or Students Leaving Early

- Any students who arrive after 8:30am will need to go through the Administration Building where they will be provided with a blue 'Late Card'. A reason must be given and entered in SIS. If students arrive unattended, they will be given a late slip. Parents/Caregivers are required to fill in a reason and return to the classroom teacher the following day.
- Parents/Carers of children who are being picked up before 2:40pm will need to go to the Administration Building. Office staff will update attendance details and provide a yellow 'Leaving Early' slip. A reason must be given and entered in SIS.
- For students arriving late (L) regularly, teacher to follow up with contact with Parents/Caregivers. If there is no improvement teachers are to refer to Admin.
- Students who are consistently late will be placed on a CHPS Attendance Plan.

Planned Leave

- All planned leave needs to be approved by the Principal.
- If the leave is approved, it will be considered as authorised leave.

Vacation Leave

- Families taking Vacation Leave during school terms is discouraged. Parents/Caregivers must send notification of vacation leave to the Principal. All vacations must be approved by the Principal. If approved this will be entered as 'V' (authorised vacation) in SIS Lesson Attendance. If not approved, it will be entered as a 'K' (unauthorised vacation).
- Teachers are not obliged to provide work to students on unapproved leave.

Authorised Leave

- All authorised leave will need to be pre- approved by the principal. Teachers will provide students with a journal to complete if the leave is authorised.
- For authorised absences the appropriate code will need to be entered.

Illness/Health Conditions

Where a student has a mental or physical illness and/or health care needs which may impact on their ability to attend the usual school site, the principal will:

- Arrange access to an educational program for a student who has a physical and/or mental health condition and/or health care needs and who cannot attend the regular site.
- Follow the procedures described in School of Special Educational Needs: Medical and Mental Health (SSEN:M&MH).

If a child is reluctant to come to school for any reason, parents are encouraged to contact the classroom teacher as soon as possible.

Our school firmly believes that by working together in this way that we can ensure your child achieves the best possible results.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

STUDENTS

- Take age-appropriate responsibility to ensure they are able to arrive at school before the 8:30 am siren (bed on time, following instructions, being organised etc).
- Prompt attendance outside respective classrooms after recess and lunch.

PARENTS

- Assist with the communication of the school wide message of the importance of regular and punctual attendance.
- If your child is absent from school, you need to notify school the morning of the day of absence or as soon as possible in the following ways:
Call: 08 9234 7800, Text Message: 0447 958 751 or Email: cliftonhills.ps@education.wa.edu.au
- Parent to provide written/verbal explanation of child's absence immediately preceding or prior to absence, "in any case within three days of the day on which the non-attendance started." (School Education Act 1999)
- Prolonged or repeated absences that are due to sickness or injury the school will require a medical certificate.
- Parents attend non-attendance case conference as deemed necessary by Attendance Team.
- Parents to notify school principal and teacher of any intended vacation leave during school term in writing.
- Avoid scheduling family holidays during school terms. Parents are required to negotiate their child's absence with the principal prior to first day of non-attendance, otherwise the absence will be considered 'unauthorised' and recorded as such. Absence due to family vacation is deemed by the Education Department to be an unacceptable reason for a student's absences from school. We ask that a Request for Holiday in Term Time Form to be completed.
- If your student is unwilling or refusing to attend school, please contact your child's teacher, Deputy or Principal as a matter of urgency.

TEACHERS

- Consistently communicate the expectation and importance of regular and punctual school attendance.
- Attendance rolls to be completed in Lesson Attendance on Integris by 9:00am and 12:30pm daily using correct attendance codes.
- Accept students into class late with a late pass or redirect to office to collect a late pass.
- Absentee notes are to be collected by teachers and entered into the Comment window of Lesson Attendance for the corresponding date/s.
- Verbal explanations for absences are entered in the Comment window indicating that the advice was given verbally and identifying who provided the explanation for the absence/s.
- The staff member entering comments in Lesson Attendance will identify themselves by putting their initials at the end of the comment.
- On the third consecutive day of unexplained absences the class teacher is required to contact the parent/caregiver to check on the student and record the reason for absence.
- Promptly follow up unexplained absences via phone, email, Connect, student communication books or by sending home the absence follow up note. If you have not been able to make contact to obtain a reasonable explanation for the absence within three days, refer to aAdmin.
- Contact parent/caregiver if you have concern with lateness.
- Report any attendance concerns (including regular lateness) to the Attendance Deputy.
- Distribute Unexplained Absence letters (printed by lesson attendance coordinator) and record the explanation subsequently provided by the parent/caregiver on Integris.
- Document Individual Education Plans for Aboriginal students with an attendance rate of less than 90%, all students under the care of CPFS and those students at Severe Risk due to their attendance, have these signed by parents/caregivers and save these according to school protocols.
- Monitor all student attendances and be aware of students sitting below 90% attendance.
- Develop classroom strategies to encourage student attendance at school.
- To create attendance plans for students consistently late to school, or who are sitting below an attendance rate of 80%.
- To participate in any attendance plan meetings, case conferences or attendance advisory meetings as required.

OFFICE STAFF

- Manage MessageYou
- Copy and paste parent responses to MessageYou into Lesson Attendance in INTEGRIS
- Process enforced school closures for off kindy weeks
- Process late students into lesson Attendance in INTEGRIS
- Process early leavers into Lesson Attendance in INTEGRIS
- Set up Attendance at beginning of the year
- Process forced closure (Bushfires etc)
- Enter absent students into lesson attendance, in INTEGRIS as calls, emails, messages come through from families.

ATTENDANCE COORDINATOR/DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

- Identify, monitor and follow up those students whose attendance falls bellows 90% and monitor these students weekly.
- Produce and distribute follow up letters for unexplained absences for class teachers every 2 weeks (even weeks).
- Make parent contact to discuss student's attendance and arrange case conferences if required.

- Send out Attendance Letters if attendance does not improve (See Appendices).
- Collaboratively set annual attendance targets and provide information in relation to these for the school's Annual Report/School Review.
- Produce reward certificates for classes with zero unexplained absences and best attendance for the fortnight to be presented at assemblies.
- Supervise 10 minutes extra play 'reward' for the classes with best attendance and least number of unexplained absences for the term. This will occur within the last week of school that best fits the school calendar.
- Review absences for each fortnight.
- Provide support to staff.
- Provide operational support for Individual Attendance Plans.
- Coordinate or liaise with relevant regional office staff.
- Set annual attendance targets and provide information in relation to these for the school's Annual Report.

REWARDS:

- A certificate, fortnightly trophy and reward is given to the class with the best attendance for the fortnight.
- A certificate is awarded at assembly for the classes with zero unexplained absences.
- Ability to participate in the end of term 'Reward Days' (attendance must be above 85%)
- Year 6 only – ability to participate in Big Days Out (attendance must be above 85%)

Attendance and 'Good Standing'

The Department of Education expects all capable students to have an attendance rate above 90%.

We at CHPS aspire to this ideal, but understand that, due to illness etc, this is not always possible. Our expectation is that all students should be able to maintain an attendance rate of 85% or above. Any student that falls below 85% may be deemed to have lost their 'Good Standing'. This will result in certain privileges, such as the ability to attend excursions and incursions (including choir performances), or be included in Class Reward Days being withdrawn. Year Six students may also become ineligible to attend 'Big Days Out' and Graduation. The ability to participate in these events is always at the discretion of the Principal.

Department of Education view point

Clifton Hills Primary School is bound by The School Education Act 1999, Attendance Policies and Procedures of the Department of Education. As a result the following rules apply for reasons for absences:

Section 25 of the School Education Act (SEA) 1999 specifies that a student is "excused" from attending if:

The student is prevented from attending at school, or from participating in an educational program by – temporary physical or mental incapacity; or any other reasonable cause.

And

If a responsible person has notified the principal of the cause as soon as practical or in any case, within three days. This notification can be provided in any way that is determined by the principal to be acceptable, either generally, or in a specific case. Principals can request that a medical certificate be provided.

Reference:

A. Department of Education, Student Attendance Policy and Procedures

B. Department of Education, Focus documents

APPENDICIES

Appendix A

CODE	DESCRIPTION	TYPE	STATUS	NOTES
/	Present	Present	Resolved	The student is recorded as being present at school. This is the default when daily records are created.
E	Educational Activity	Present	Resolved	The student is recorded as NOT absent from school. The student is involved in an approved educational program such as an excursion or PEAC. No follow up is required.
W	Withdrawn	Present	Resolved	The student is recorded as NOT absent from school. The student is withdrawn from classroom activities but is still present at school.
M	Medical or Sick Bay	Present	Resolved	The student is in the medical or sick bay but is still present at school. The student is recorded as NOT absent from school.
L	Late	Late – but now Present	Resolved	The student is late, but the degree of lateness is insufficient to have been recorded as a period or session absence. If the student is so late as to have missed more than 25% of a period or session, then they should be recorded as absent for that period or session.
R	Reasonable Cause	Authorised Absence	Resolved	The student is recorded as absent from school. An acceptable reason for the student's absence has been provided. Pre- authorised absences will be recorded as an R.
Z	Suspended	Authorised Absence	Resolved	The student is recorded as absent from school. This is an authorised absence.
C	Cultural Absence	Authorised Absence	Resolved	The student is recorded as absent from school. The Principal has authorised this absence because of cultural or religious significance to the family.
N	Notified as Sick	Authorised Absence	Resolved	The student is recorded as absent from school. The Principal has authorised this absence due to confirmation of the student's ill health by the parent.
K	Unapproved Vacation	Unauthorised Absence	Resolved	The student is recorded as absent from school. The Principal has not authorised this absence.
X	Unacceptable Reason	Unauthorised Absence	Resolved	The student is recorded as absent from school. A reason has been given for the student's absence from school but has been deemed unacceptable and further follow up will be required.
U	Absence – cause not yet established	Unauthorised Absence	Unresolved	The student is recorded as absent from school. Sometimes called an Unexplained absence. No reason has yet been established for this absence.
T	Truant	Unauthorised Absence	Resolved	The student is recorded as absent from school. Investigation has revealed that the student has truanted.
Y	Enforced Closure	Not required to attend	Resolved	The student is not required to attend on the selected day. A school can be closed for AM, PM or the whole day for a selected date. The Y code can be applied to the whole school or a selected group of students. Schools can use this code for critical events or amending Kindergarten programs.
F	Flexible Code	Not required to attend	Resolved	The student is not required to attend on the selected day. The F code can be applied to an individual student or a group of students. Schools can use this code for study leave or flexible study arrangements.

Appendix B

Examples of Department of Education letter templates for parents.

Letter 1



(08) 9234 7800 
cliftonhills.ps@education.wa.edu.au 
1 Butler Pass, Kelmscott WA 6111 
www.cliftonhillsps.wa.edu.au 

25 February 2021

<AddeeSalutation>
<AddeeAddress>

Dear <AddeeSalutation>

It has come to our attention that your child, <FirstName>'s attendance is below an acceptable level.

At Clifton Hills Primary School, we are striving to increase the attendance of all students. The *School Education Act 1999* requires parents to send their children to school each school day unless there is a good reason for them not to attend.

Everyday attendance increases their educational outcomes thereby increasing their lifelong and career opportunities.

Please contact me, if there are issues that you wish to discuss or if you would like support in ensuring your child's attendance at school each day.

Kind regards,

Merranie Beal
Deputy Principal

|



(08) 9234 7800

cliftonhills.ps@education.wa.edu.au

1 Butler Pass, KelmScott WA 6111

www.cliftonhillsps.wa.edu.au



25 February 2021

<AddeeSalutation>

<AddeeAddress>

Dear <AddeeSalutation>

You have been notified previously that your child, <FirstName>'s attendance has fallen below an acceptable level.

At Clifton Hills Primary School we are striving to increase the attendance of all students. The *School Education Act 1999* requires parents to send their children to school each school day unless there is a good reason for them not to attend.

Everyday attendance increases their educational outcomes thereby increasing their lifelong and career opportunities.

If your child's attendance does not improve within the next few weeks, you will be required to work with school personnel to develop and implement an Individual Attendance Plan.

Kind regards,

Merranise Beal
Deputy Principal



(08) 9234 7800

cliftonhills.ps@education.wa.edu.au

1 Butler Pass, Kelm Scott WA 6111

www.cliftonhillsps.wa.edu.au



25 February 2021

<AddeeSalutation>
<AddeeAddress>

Dear <AddeeSalutation>

I am writing regarding the attendance of your child, <FirstName>, at school.

The *School Education Act 1999* requires parents to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend school on each day that the school is open for instruction. If children are absent from school, a parent or responsible person must provide the school with an acceptable explanation within three days of the absence. Attendance requirements do not apply for students undertaking home education.

I have previously advised you that <FirstName>'s attendance is a matter of concern. We have tried to work with you and implemented a range of strategies to encourage <FirstName>'s regular attendance at school without success. Strategies attempted include the following:

- [insert a list of strategies offered or attempted here]

I have recently reviewed <FirstName>'s pattern of attendance and it is clear that absences without a good reason being provided are still at an unacceptable level. A summary of absences is attached for your reference. It is very important that we work together to resolve this issue and I intend to consult with officers from the South Metropolitan Education Regional Office to provide additional support and advice.

I will ask the consulting officer to assist me to review the case and to provide advice to the school. As part of this process, the officer may contact you directly and arrange a meeting to <FirstName>'s attendance or attend a planning meeting so we can develop further strategies together.

If <FirstName>'s attendance does not improve through these strategies, I will ask you to attend a formal meeting to discuss the situation and will advise you in writing when this will happen. In the event that we are unable to resolve this situation together it may be necessary to refer the matter to the Department's solicitors for legal action.

It is important that we work together to resolve the issue.

Yours sincerely

Patricia Joss
Principal



(08) 9234 7800



cliftonhills.ps@education.wa.edu.au



1 Butler Pass, Kelmscott WA 6111



www.cliftonhillsps.wa.edu.au



25 February 2021

<AddeeSalutation>
<AddeeAddress>

Dear <AddeeSalutation>

NOTIFICATION OF FORMAL MEETING

I am writing regarding the attendance of your child, <FirstName>, at school. The *School Education Act 1999* requires parents to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend school on each day that the school is open for instruction unless there is good reason for them not to attend. If students are absent, a parent or responsible person is required to provide the school with an acceptable explanation within three days of the absence.

Parents who fail to ensure that their children attend school regularly or who fail to provide satisfactory explanations for absences may be committing a serious offence. The maximum penalty is \$1,000 for each offence.

I have previously advised you that <FirstName>, attendance is a matter of great concern. I have also consulted with [Name and Role of Network or Regional Officer] to provide additional advice and support and develop alternative strategies with us to improve the situation.

I am very concerned that <FirstName>'s attendance is still at an unacceptable level and that we need to work together to resolve this issue.

I am now asking you to attend a formal meeting to discuss this matter. At this meeting it will be important for you to talk about any problems that might be preventing <FirstName>'s attendance. A plan will be developed with you to improve <FirstName>'s attendance and it will be expected you take all reasonable steps to ensure your child attends school.

[Name of Organising Officer] will be contacting you shortly to arrange the formal meeting. Alternatively, you may wish to make contact on telephone number XXXX XXXX. It is very important that you attend the formal meeting and work closely with the school to avoid the matter being referred to the Department's solicitors for legal action.

Yours sincerely

Patricia Joss
Principal

Kindy Letter



(08) 9234 7800

cliftonhills.ps@education.wa.edu.au

1 Butler Pass, Kelm scott WA 6111

www.cliftonhillsps.wa.edu.au



25 February 2021

<AddeeSalutation>

<AddeeAddress>

Dear <AddeeSalutation>

Re: Attendance for <FirstName>

Students enrolled in Kindergarten must comply with the attendance requirements for students enrolled at a government school. Your child must attend on the days in which they are enrolled. Whilst Kindergarten is not compulsory, once enrolled attendance is compulsory.

It is important that all students attend school on a regular basis to gain maximum educational benefits and to optimise life opportunities. At Clifton Hills Primary School we place a high priority on time spent learning, and we seek to work with parents and caregivers to maximise student learning time.

Your child's attendance for [term and year] was [attendance percentage]. When absence rates rise a student may be at risk of not reaching their full potential. You have received this letter because your child has attended less than 90% of the possible days of the school year.

If you are experiencing any problems with getting your child to school, or you have any other concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Yours sincerely

Merranie Beal
Deputy Principal



(08) 9234 7800

cliftonhills.ps@education.wa.edu.au

1 Butler Pass, Kelmescott WA6111

www.cliftonhillsps.wa.edu.au



<AddeeSalutation>

<AddeeAddress>

Dear <AddeeSalutation>

Re: Children Arriving Late to School

Clifton Hills Primary School is committed to maximising every student's learning opportunities by working with parents and families.

According to our records, <FirstName> arrived to school late on XXX occasions over a XX week period last term.

At Clifton Hills PS we are striving to improve all aspects of attendance, including the promptness of students arriving at school in the morning. It is vitally important to have your child at school 10-15 minutes prior to school commencing at 8:30am so that they can get ready for the day's teaching and learning activities. Very often teachers schedule their richest literacy and numeracy sessions first thing in the morning while students are fresh in order to optimise learning opportunities.

Benefits of students arriving on time include:

- Being organised at the start of the day.
- Being calmer and more receptive to learning.
- Maintaining better relationships with peers and teachers.
- Accessing the full curriculum through continuity of learning.
- Less disruption for all students mid-way through a lesson.

If you would like to discuss these concerns or require support in getting your child to school, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Kind Regards,

Merranie Beal
Deputy Principal

25 February 2021



(08) 9234 7800

cliftonhills.ps@education.wa.edu.au

1 Butler Pass, Kelmscott WA 6111

www.cliftonhillsps.wa.edu.au



<AddresseeSalutation>
<AddresseeAddress>

Dear <AddresseeSalutation>

Re: Attendance for <FirstName>

It is important that all students attend school on a regular basis to gain maximum educational benefits and to optimise life opportunities. At Clifton Hills Primary School we place a high priority on time spent learning, and we seek to work with parents and caregivers to maximise student learning time.

Your child's attendance for [term and year] was [attendance percentage]. When absence rates rise a student may be at risk of not reaching their full potential. You have received this letter because your child has attended less than 90% of the possible days of the school year.

I know in some cases absences may have been due to an extended illness, if this is the case this letter is just to inform you that your child's absentee percentage is below the recommended level for this semester.

If you are experiencing any problems with getting your child to school, or you have any other concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Yours sincerely

Merranie Beal

Deputy Principal

25 February 2021



(08) 9234 7800

cliftonhills.ps@education.wa.edu.au

1 Butler Pass, Kelmscott WA 6111

www.cliftonhillsps.wa.edu.au



<AddeeSalutation>

<AddeeAddress>

Dear <AddeeSalutation>

RE: <FirstName>'s attendance

Our records for Term indicate that your child's average attendance over the course of the term was %.

All children enrolled in school are expected to attend on a regular basis (90% or higher as determined by the Department of Education). As a parent or carer it is your responsibility to support the development of regular patterns of school attendance for your child. This can be achieved by making sure your child attends school on all school days and is on time every day.

Going to school every day is not just important for your child's education – it's the law. It is important that you:

- Provide us with an explanation as soon as possible if your child is away;
- Arrange for a medical certificate to explain absences if we ask for one;
- Contact us if you are having difficulty getting your child to school;
- Where possible arrange doctor and dentist appointments out of school hours;
- Arrange personal shopping trips with your child or birthday celebrations out of school hours; and
- Do not allow your child to stay at home for minor reasons.

As a school we are committed to improving the quality of education we deliver to every child. We need your child to attend school regularly in order to receive the best possible education.

I appreciate that you may have already provided good reasons for your child being away. This letter is a reminder about the importance of regular attendance. Even if the reasons are valid, missing too much school has an effect on your child's learning and we should work together to ensure your child catches up on lessons missed.

If your child is missing school without a good reason, we will monitor the situation closely. We may ask to meet with you to look at the reasons why your child is away, what help you might need and plan for improvement.

Clifton Hills Primary School and the Department of Education set targets for school attendance. We have an expectation of regular attendance for all students and look forward to working together with you to meet these targets.

If you are experiencing difficulty getting your child(ren) to school each day, please come in to speak to us so that we can discuss how the school may support you in improving your child's attendance.

If you have any questions or would like further information or assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the school on 9234 7800 and ask to speak with us.

Yours sincerely

Patricia Joss

Principal

25 February 2021

FACTS ABOUT SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Is regular attendance at school important?

- *Yes – from the first day of Kindy and Pre-Primary. If your child misses the basic skills in primary school, he or she can experience difficulties with learning.*
- *Regular attendance is essential to make sure learning is not disrupted and provides building blocks for the future.*
- *Schools help children to develop important social skills, such as friendship building, teamwork, communication skills and a healthy self-esteem.*

What can I expect from the school?

- *Monitoring of student attendance and reviews of progress.*
- *The school will follow up unexplained absences.*
- *Strategies to help you as a parent or carer encourage your child to go to school.*

What help can I get if my child refuses to go to school?

The school may offer a range of support options:

- *teacher working with the student or providing a mentor*
- *strategies to help you encourage your child to go to school*
- *develop an incentive program to encourage your child to attend school*
- *links with community agencies and help to contact other Department of Education officers for support.*

Do I have to send my child every day?

Yes, all students are expected to attend school unless:

- *the child is too sick to leave the house or has an infectious disease such as chicken pox, mumps or measles.*
- *the child has an injury preventing movement around school.*
- *the child is going with his/her parents or carers on a family holiday that cannot be arranged during school holidays. This should be discussed with the principal first.*
- *the principal is provided with any genuine and acceptable reason for the child being away.*
- *a medical or dental appointment could not be made out of school hours (whenever possible, appointments should be made out of school hours).*

Do I have to tell the school if my child has been away?

Yes. On the day your child is away or on their return, you can write a note, talk to the teacher, or SMS, phone or email the school. You are also encouraged to contact the school in advance if your child is going to be away. If your child has seen a medical practitioner (e.g. doctor, dentist) a note or appointment card from the practitioner will help explain the absence. All absences must be explained within three days of the first day of non-attendance.

Did you know?

- *Missing one day a week of school from Year 1 to Year 11 is the same as missing two years and one term of schooling.*
- *Frequent absences make it difficult for teachers who have to continually re-teach information and skills.*
- *Patterns of attendance/absence are set up in the early years of schooling.*
- *Poor attendance makes it difficult for students to form good relationships with their peers.*

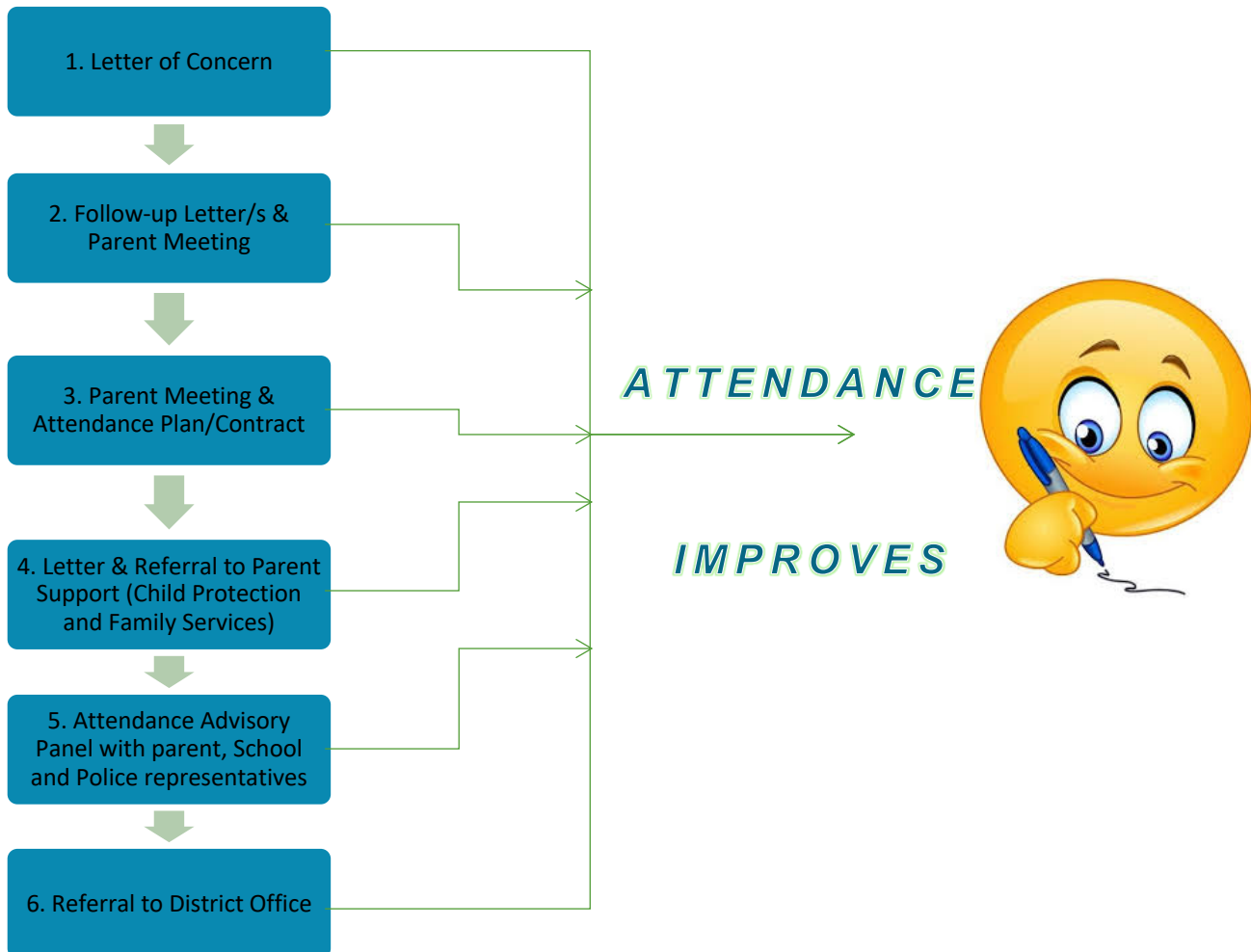
Days off Add up

<i>If your child misses...</i>	<i>that equals...</i>	<i>or...</i>	<i>From Kindy to year 12 that adds up to...</i>	<i>Which is the equivalent of attending until:</i>
1 day per fortnight	20 days per year	1 month per year	nearly 1 ½ years	part-way through year 11
1 day per week	40 days per year	2 months per year	over 2 ½ years	part-way through year 10
2 days per week	80 days per year	4 months per year	over 5 years	the end of year 7
3 days per week	120 days per year	6 months per year	nearly 8 years	the end of year 4

ATTENDANCE FLOW CHART

Below is a flowchart showing our school Attendance procedures for students that fall below 90% attendance. This process follows the mandated framework provided by the Department of Education. We understand that students have legitimate reasons to be away from school. This process is to help restore good attendance for students with continued attendance concerns over time.

Procedures for Attendance Concern



At any stage, if the attendance is restored to acceptable levels (+90%) then the Attendance Process stops. All attendance concerns are reviewed on a case by case basis every fortnight by the Principal/Deputy Principal and other relevant staff members.

At Clifton Hills PS we have high expectations for all our students across all areas, including attendance. Our current whole school attendance for Semester 2, 2020 is 92.8%. Our attendance motto is **"Every day counts"**. Student learning is a long staircase; a day missed is not as simple as missing the learning of that day but affects the quality of learning for many days after as the student tries to catch-up on what they missed. Our aspirational target for attendance is 94% as we recognise that there are legitimate reasons for students to miss school.

Punctuality - Persistent lateness can also have serious implications on your child's education. Very often the most important learning of the day happens first thing in the morning, as teachers try to maximise the impact of their teaching while children's minds are fresh. Missing the first half hour of each day adds up to a whole day per fortnight.

GOOD REASONS for students to be away:

- Sickness, especially if contagious
- Medical appointments that cannot be made out of school hours
- Important family business – like a funeral

POOR REASONS for students to be away (which the school marks as Unacceptable) are:

- Extended holidays
- Extended weekends
- To spend time together
- If the student is worried about school or a problem at school
- Your child doesn't like a particular teacher or subject that they have that day.
- Incomplete homework
- A parent returning from work or a trip
- Visiting family
- Birthdays or other events where not attending school is given as reward for a child

As a school we recognise that improving student attendance is a shared role between families and school. To encourage consistent attendance we acknowledge students and classes in a number of ways.

DID YOU KNOW??

- Starting in kindergarten, too many absences can cause children to fall behind in school.
- Missing 10 percent (or about 18 days) can make it harder to learn to read.
- Students can still fall behind if they miss just a day or two days every few weeks.
- Being late to school may lead to poor attendance.
- Absences can affect the whole classroom if the teacher has to slow down learning to help children catch up.

Attending school regularly helps children feel better about school—and themselves. Start building this habit in preschool so they learn right away that going to school on time, every day is important. Good attendance will help children do well in high school, college, and at work.

WHAT YOU CAN DO?

- Set a regular bed time and morning routine.
- Lay out clothes and pack backpacks the night before.
- Make clear expectations of regular school attendance. Do not allow opportunities for your child to 'opt out'.

- Don't let your child stay home unless they are truly sick. Keep in mind complaints of a stomach ache or headache can be a sign of anxiety and not a reason to stay home.
- If your child seems anxious about going to school, make contact with the class teacher or deputy principal so that we can provide the appropriate assistance.
- Develop back-up plans for getting to school if something comes up. Call on a family member, a neighbour, or another parent.
- Avoid medical appointments and holidays when school is in session.

When Do Absences Become a Problem?

CHRONIC ABSENCE - 20 or more days per year

WARNING SIGNS - 12 to 19 days per year

SATISFACTORY - 11 or fewer absences per year

Note: These numbers assume a 200-day school year.