

# SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

## *Information for parents and caregivers*

### **Attendance requirements for compulsory school-aged students**

#### **Why must I send my child to school?**

The law in NSW (Education Act 1990) states that all children between the ages of six and fifteen years are required to attend school regularly.

It is the responsibility of parents or caregivers to make sure that their children attend school every day.

At Kingswood High School we are keen to ensure regular student attendance. When students' attendance is irregular, the continuity of teaching is broken and this makes it difficult for the student to progress.

By law students should remain on the premises from the time of their arrival until their dismissal from school, unless they are attending approved school excursions under teacher supervision or have written permission from parents/caregivers to leave school for private reasons.

Parents will always be asked to sign permission notes for these activities.

#### **Must I send my child to school every day?**

YES unless:

- your child is too sick to go to school
- your child has been injured
- your child has to attend a special religious ceremony
- your child has an infectious illness for example, chicken pox, mumps or measles
- there is a serious family situation which requires their involvement.

#### **Must my child attend sport?**

YES. Sport and other exercise help the healthy physical development of children. Sport is part of normal school activity, which students must attend.

#### **Why is regular attendance at school important?**

Attending school every day makes learning easier for your child and helps build and maintain friendships with other children.

If students miss the basic skills in the early years of school, they may have problems later on.

Regular attendance at school will help your child to succeed in later life.

Unsatisfactory school attendance may affect the awarding of both the School Certificate and the Higher School Certificate (HSC).

Please do not keep your child away from school for:

- birthdays
- pension day
- minding other children
- hair cuts
- interpreting for other family members.

**Always try to make children's appointments with people like dentists or doctors before or after school.**

### **What should I do if our family is going on holiday in school time?**

Families should try to arrange holidays during school vacation periods.

If you can only arrange your family holiday during school time, you should inform the school principal in advance and request permission for your child to be absent.

You can ask the school to provide homework that can be completed while your child is absent.

### **What should I do if my child has to stay away from school?**

It is important to let the school know when your child will be away and why your child was absent.

The parent or caregiver should telephone the school or provide a written note addressed to the school explaining the child's absence.

### **My child won't go to school what should I do?**

You should contact the principal as soon as possible to discuss the problem and ask for help.

The principal may ask a Home School Liaison Officer to contact you to discuss the issue.

### ***The role of the home school liaison officer***

Parents have the major responsibility for maintaining the regular attendance of their children at school. Home School Liaison Officers provide additional support to students, parents and schools to encourage the full participation of all students in schooling.

### ***Support provided by Home School Liaison Officers includes:***

- conducting periodic checks on Attendance Registers and other attendance and enrolment information
- providing advice to principals and teachers on legislation, policy and procedures relating to attendance
- liaison with principals and teachers on attendance problems and other matters that may require direct contact with the home
- working on cases of non-attendance referred by a school to the Home School Liaison Program liaison with students and parents on attendance issues
- making home visits where necessary
- providing assistance to schools in identification of school-based factors contributing to nonattendance \_ assisting schools in the development of a school attendance policy
- working with Department of Community Services officers where family and welfare issues are present
- working with police in addressing attendance issues.

Home School Liaison officers are authorised to approach any child who is apparently over six and under 15 and is not at school and ask for their name and address and the name of the school they attend.

They can accompany the child to either their home or school to verify that the information provided by the child is correct.

# Roll Marking Procedures for Years 7 to 10

## **A normal day**

Period 1 begins at 8.15am followed by Roll Call in your allocated room.

## **If you are late**

On arrival at School report to the Front Office to collect a late pass. Remember to bring a note explaining your lateness. Failure to do so will result in a lunchtime detention. You must hand your green late pass to your classroom teacher. Your name is recorded in the Partial Absence Roll for that day.

## **If you need to leave school early**

To leave School you must have written permission from your parent/caregiver. On arrival at School, report to the Head Teacher of Administration where an early leavers pass will be granted.

**Note: Early Leavers notes must include a reason for leaving early as well as a contact number for your parent/caregiver.**

## **If you are on a school activity**

If you are on a school excursion, sport event or work placement your teacher notifies the Front Office the day before. Please check with your teacher. Students are marked present on the School records if he/she is absent from school on a school activity

## **IMPORTANT:**

**You need to have your name marked at normal roll call or at the Front Office everyday. Failure to do so means you are marked absent for the day and this affects your Attendance Report if the error is not corrected.**

## **Completing Absentee Notes and Notices**

### **Information for parents and caregivers**

#### **Absentee Notes**

Three absentee notes are available for you to inform the school of your child's absence from school. These notes are available in a number of different languages. If you require one of these please contact the school.

#### **Absentee Note 1:**

Should be used when a child is absent for 1 whole day

#### **Absentee Note 2:**

Should be used when a child is absent for more than 1 day

#### **Absentee Note 3:**

Should be used when a child is absent for part of the day.

## Completing details of absences

Sections of the *Absentee Notes 1, 2 and 3* and the *Absentee Notice* ask you to provide details for your child's absence or partial absence. For the school to be able to understand the reasons given these sections should be completed in English. Possible reasons are given below and have been translated into English for you to copy onto the forms.

If you have difficulty understanding this note or providing a reason for an absence you can telephone the school to explain. If you telephone the school to explain you do not need to fill in a written note as well. If you need an interpreter to assist you to telephone the school, you can ring the Telephone Interpreter Service on 131 450, ask for the language of your choice and they will phone the school for you. This service will be free of charge to you.

### Absentee Notices

If the school has not received an explanation for a child's absence they may send you an *Absentee Notice*. Principals use the *Absentee Notice* to contact parents within two days of an unexplained absence. The *Absentee Notice* must be completed in English and returned to the school within seven school days, giving a reason for the absence.

As with *Absentee Notes 1, 2 and 3* you may telephone the school to explain. If you telephone the school you do not need to fill in a written note as well.

#### Possible reasons (Absentee Notes 1 and 2)

##### Sickness:

Flu, Stomach-ache, Cold, Headache/Migraine  
Fever, Broken bone, Vomiting,  
Infectious illness e.g. chicken pox  
Nose bleed, Asthma, Rash, Injury  
Medical appointment, Dental appointment  
Optometry appointment, Physiotherapy appointment  
Specialist appointment  
Other – I will ring the school to explain.

##### Family Reasons:

Funeral  
Moving residence  
Arrival or departure of an immediate relative from overseas  
Unavoidable involvement in a serious family situation  
Other - I will ring the school to explain.

##### Other Reason:

Misadventure and unforeseen events, e.g. fire, floods  
Participation in special event  
Family holidays  
Other - I will ring the school to explain.

#### Possible reasons (Absentee Note 3)

##### Family reasons:

Funeral  
Moving residence  
Arrival or departure of an immediate relative from overseas  
Unavoidable involvement in a serious family situation  
Other - I will ring the school to explain.

##### Other Reason:

Transport difficulty  
Unavoidable delay  
Participation in special event  
Other - I will ring the school to explain.

## ***ROLL MARKING PROCEDURES FOR YR 11& 12***

### **A Normal Day**

Normal roll call starts at 8.15 am in your allocated room. (You need to bring notes to your roll teacher explaining all absences within seven days of the absence).

### **IF YOU HAVE A STUDY PERIOD, PERIOD 1 or PERIOD 1 and 2**

**On arrival at school you need to sign on at the Front Office, ticking the appropriate column on the sign in sheet. You must have your red senior ID card with you. You do not need a green late pass if you have study leave.**

### **IF YOU ARE LATE**

**On arrival you must sign on at the Front Office, and tick the late column. A green late pass will be issued to you – this pass is to be handed to your class teacher. You must carry your red Senior ID card with you.**

### **IF YOU NEED TO LEAVE SCHOOL EARLY**

You need to report to the Head Teacher of Administration in the Rolls Office with your permission note before school or as soon as you arrive. You will collect a red leavers pass. Your name is recorded on the Partial Absence Roll for that day. All early leavers notes should be presented by 9.30am so that names can be printed on the daily Student Absentee Sheet.

- Note:**
- **Early Leavers notes must include a reason for leaving early as well as a contact number for your parent/caregiver.**
  - **If you have study leave at the end of the day you may leave the school but you must carry your Senior ID card. There is no need to sign out.**  
**A student who has study leave during the day with a class afterwards, must report to the library and sign in for these study periods.**

### **IF YOU ARE ON A SCHOOL ACTIVITY**

**If you are on a school excursion, sport or work placement your teacher notifies the Rolls Office the day before. Please confirm this with your teacher. A student is marked present on the School Records if he/she is absent from school but on a school activity.**

### **IMPORTANT**

**You need to have your name marked at normal roll call or the front office every day. Failure to do so means that you will be marked absent for the day and this affects your Attendance Report if the error is not corrected.**

## **Attendance requirements for post-compulsory school-aged students**

### **Attendance requirements for students in Year 10**

For the award of a School Certificate, the Board of Studies requires students to attend school until the completion of the final School Certificate tests. The dates of the tests may vary from year to year.

Satisfactory completion of School Certificate courses is judged, among other things, by a student's attendance and level of involvement in class, assignments and homework.

Students who can demonstrate they are leaving school to enter into continuing employment and will not be returning to take up study in Year 11 are able to leave after the final School Certificate tests provided they have completed all their clearance obligations with the school.

Students intending to continue into the senior school to study for the Preliminary and Higher School Certificate (HSC) courses are to attend school until the final day of term. They are to participate in a meaningful course of study in order to maximise their readiness to engage in senior work. Exceptions may be made, at the discretion of the school principal, in the case where parents verify in writing that students have gained temporary vacation employment. Such employment may be appropriate if it complements the objectives of careers and vocational training in assisting students to gain clearer understandings of, and experience in, the world of work.

Temporary vacation work for Year 10 students is discouraged until the release of the School Certificate result notices, in December.

If a student leaves before the last day of Year 10 without an exemption or approval they will not be awarded either a School Certificate or a Record of Achievement Part A. However if a student has sat for the School Certificate tests, they will receive a Record of Achievement Part B.

Unauthorised early departure may also jeopardise entry into Preliminary and HSC courses in Years 11 and 12.

### **Attendance requirements for students in Years 11 and 12**

For post-compulsory school-aged students, principals may determine an appropriate attendance pattern(s) that will allow each student to achieve the outcomes of each course being studied.

Students whose attendance is called into question will be required to prove to the principal's satisfaction, following a review of their performance, that they are meeting the course completion criteria.

Principals must give students early written warning of the consequences of absences in terms of course completion criteria.

## **Granting of leave**

Granting of leave is a matter for the individual school principal to determine. Principals may grant up to 12 days leave a year. The principal has discretion in granting leave provided that he or she is satisfied that the reason for the absence is substantial and that the progress of the student towards course outcomes will not be unduly affected.

Where the period of leave requested is extensive, the student must demonstrate to the principal that outcomes in each course will be achieved.

Educational progress can be ensured by a variety of means, including assignments set by the school, tuition or private study, attendance at another school, distance education lessons and catching up.

## **Last day of term for Year 11 students**

Students in Year 11 are to attend school until the final day of term four, continuing studies as appropriate to curriculum requirements.

## **Attendance requirements for Year 12 students**

Students in Year 12 must attend formal learning activities until the penultimate day of term 3. Individual schools may determine that a defined private study period will best assist its students in preparation for the Higher School Certificate in the period between the end of the term three vacation and the commencement of the Higher School Certificate examinations. Alternatively a formal timetabled period of revision may be provided.

Student absence records will not be generated in term four.

## **For further information**

For further information please contact the Student Welfare Consultant in your local Department of Education and Training Area Office.