



Student Attendance 3.8

Policy:

The principal of Tambelin Independent School maintains a register, in a form approved by the Minister, of the enrolments and daily attendances of all children at the school, which includes information for each student as required by Section 3.8 of the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) *Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools (NSW) Manual*.

Where the parents of a student of compulsory school age seeks an exemption from attendance at school or an exemption from enrolment, the principal will process the parent's application in accordance with the guidelines from NSW Department of Education.

The principal may exercise the Minister's delegation under Section 25 of the *Education Act* in relation to granting and cancelling a certificate of exemption from being enrolled and attending school in certain prescribed circumstances.

Procedures

Register of Enrolments:

- i) The Principal records the following information in the register of enrolments-
 - Name, age, address of students
 - Name, contact telephone number of parent(s)/guardian(s)
 - Date of enrolment, date of leaving the school and destination. When the destination is unknown the Department of Education is to be notified using a form Student Enrolment Destination Unknown (attachment 10) and emailed to attendance@det.nsw.edu.au. The following details will be completed on this form: students full name, date of birth, last known address, last date of attendance, parents' names and contact details and any other information that may assist officers to locate the student and any work health or safety risks associated with contacting the parent or student. The School will note that Department of Education has been advised on the enrolment register and copies of communication will be maintained on the students file.
 - For children older than 6 years, previous school they have attended.
- ii) The register of enrolments is retained for a minimum of five years before archiving.

Register of Daily Attendance:

- Classroom teachers record and monitor student attendance daily. Reasons for absence is followed up by the Principal/classroom teacher with the parent/guardian in writing or email within five working days of the absence. This is recorded by the Principal/classroom teacher and placed with the schools' daily attendance roll using codes in accordance in accordance to the NSW Minister. (Attachment B)
- If a student is late or leaving within school hours' parents are to sign in and sign out the student. This sign in/out form is in the front hallway of the school, the parent is required to fill in the child's name, date, time of arrival or departure, reason, signature and counter

signed by the teacher or principal. The principal/teacher then records this information in the Register of Daily attendance.

- The principal will notify parents or guardians regarding poor attendance or habitual lateness in writing (Attachment 8). Parents are notified of their responsibilities. *Section 22 of the Act notes that it is the duty of the parent of a child of compulsory school age to cause the child to be enrolled at, and to attend, a government school or a registered non-government school, or to be registered for home schooling.* Information about the importance of attending school and the legal requirements as a parent will accompany this letter. If the attendance does not improve within two weeks a follow up meeting with both parent(s)/guardian(s) and student will be made with the Principal. An Attendance Improvement Plan will be made (attachment 12).
- The Principal and Staff work with the student to increase engagement at school. This will vary from student to student. It may be in the form of rewarding a student for attendance (sticker chart).
- The Principal communicates in newsletters and School Stream the importance of attending school. The Information sent out to parents is from NSW Government Education and Communities “Compulsory School Attendance”. Other relevant information regarding attendance will also be communicated to parents via the School Stream app.
- Continued absentee the school will seek advise from the AIS then may proceed with legal action through the Department of Education’s legal branch. The principal will notify the parents in writing (attachment 8). In relation to where the student is at risk of significant harm a report should be made – see Tambelin Child Protection Policies.
- All correspondence to and from parents, meeting minutes with parents regarding absentee will be transferred to the student’s file.
- Where parents are seeking an exemption from school for their child, the parent/guardian will need to obtain an application for exemption from the principal (attachments 1,2,3 & 4, 6). This would include leave for family events, concerts or other exceptional circumstances. The written application must be completed by the parent/guardian and returned to the principal two weeks before the requested. The Principal may grant exceptions from attendance and enrolment under the Section 25 of the Education Act 1990 (see attached document Exemptions from Attendance and Enrolment for Independent Schools). The Principal will respond in writing as soon as possible declining or granting the application of Exemption. (Attachment 1, 5, 7)
- Any family holiday taken during term time will be counted as an absence. Families are requested to holiday or travel during school vacation time only. If “in-term holidays” are unavoidable, parents seeking leave for such a reason need to submit an Application for Extended Leave – Vacation/Travel form to the Principal for approval at least four weeks prior to the requested Leave/Exemption period. If approval is not granted, any absences will be recorded as unjustified.
- If the reason for requesting leave is in keeping with the requirements under the Education Act and considered to be in the student’s best academic interests, the Principal will accept the request and leave will be granted. The absence will be recorded as “L” (Leave/Absence). If the Principal does not accept the request for Leave, it will be recorded as “A” (Unexplained or Unjustified Absence). If leave is approved by the Principal, a Leave Approval letter and a Certificate of Exemption will be issued and emailed to parents. Parents will be notified by email if leave is not approved.

- All documentation is placed on the student's file. If the Exception from enrolment exceeds 100 days must be approved by a Delegate at the Department of Education through the AIS DMelrose-rae@aisnsw.edu.au (Attachment A)
- The daily attendance must be retained for a period of seven years after the last entry was made.

Exemption from school – Procedures for Parents and Principal

- Parents/guardians must apply for Exemption from enrolment/attendance to the school in writing (attachment 1,2, 3, 4 & 6) to the school principal.
- Exemption from enrolment/attendance will only be granted where conditions exist which make it and criteria in the DoE guidelines, under section 25 of the Education act 1990. Certificate of Exception/Decline (Attachment 1, 5 & 7) will only be issued under section 25 of the Education Act 1990.
- The certificate of exemption (See attachment 1, 5 & 7) will be issued to the parent (if the application is supported)
- original certificate is given to the parent
- A copy of the application, certificate and Minister's delegation is placed in the student's file.