



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 (NESAs) *Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools (NSW) Manual*.

Student absences and variations to attendance will be recorded using the Minister's codes.

Tambelin will monitor student attendance data and implement intervention strategies to improve unsatisfactory attendance of students.

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 "Attendance Student Destination Unknown Notification" (attachment 4) 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 enrolling who are older than 6 years, previous school they have attended is also recorded.

- ii) The register of enrolments is retained for a minimum of five years before archiving.

Register of Daily Attendance:

- Classroom teachers are responsible for marking the role. At the start of the school day at 9am. The roll is marked using the exception method which assumes that all students are present.

- Classroom teachers record and monitor student attendance daily. Reasons for absence is followed up by the Principal/classroom teacher with the parent/guardian with a text message 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)
- Parents are to fill out an absentee form on the Schoolstream app, stating the child's name, date of absents and reason for absence. This absentee form is printed off by the principal/classroom teacher and kept with the roll. If the reason for absence has not been provided to the school after 7 days the absence will be recorded as unexplained or unjustified. The school will text/email a friendly reminder to parents/carers to provide explanation within five days of the child being absent.
- 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/roll at the end of the school day.
- The principal will notify parents or guardians regarding poor attendance or habitual lateness in writing (Attachment 5). 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 6).
- Improvement Plan will set out clear guidelines for student attendance, strategies to support the parents and students – and guided by the principal. The plan will vary for each scenario.
- 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 5). In relation to where the student is at risk of significant harm a report should be made – see Tambelin Child Protection Policies.
- The school principal has the discretion to decline a reason provided for absence if they are not satisfied with the reason provided or do not think the absence is in the best interest of the student.
- All correspondence to and from parents, meeting minutes with parents regarding absentee will be transferred to the student's file.

Exemption from Attendance:

An exemption from attendance enables a student of compulsory school age to not attend school for a specified dates (part or full days). The student continues to be enrolled at Tambelin.

Parents can seek exemption from school attendance if:

1. exceptional circumstances (including the health of the student where sick leave or alternative enrolment is not appropriate) (Attachment 3)
2. the child being prevented from attending school because of a principal's direction under the Public Health Act 2010. (Note the case of an outbreak of a vaccine –preventable disease, the school is required to advise an unvaccinated student not to attend until advised to do so. The parent is not required to complete an application for exemption.
3. Employment in the entertainment industry (attachment 2)
4. Participation in elite arts or elite sporting events (attachment 7)

For any other matters not covered by the above points, the principal will contact the AISNSW regulation team on (02) 92992845 or regulations@aisnsw.edu.au

- The attendance code for full day exemptions are “M”
- The attendance code for part day exemptions are “P/M”
- Exemptions cannot be granted for absence from school for travel purposes
- The Principal is the delegated authority to grant or cancel exemptions from attendance for 100 days or more for students in the circumstances listed above.
- 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 two weeks prior to the requested dates (attachments 2,7 or 3,)
- 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 10)
- Students travelling during school terms are not to be exempt, but have “leave” granted if the principal accepts the reason, then leave is granted and the “L” code is used, consistent with implementation of National Standards for Students Attendance Data and reporting. (attachment 10)
- 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. Leave is only approved if it is in the best interest of the child.

Exemption from school enrolment

An exemption from enrolment enables a student of compulsory school age to not be enrolled in a school or registered for home schooling for a specified period of time.

The principal is the delegated authority to grant or cancel the following exemptions from enrolment on behalf of the NSW Minister for Education:

- a) Age where the child turns six years on or after 1st October or later in the school year (attachment 9)
- b) Health, learning or social needs or disability of a child necessitating the continuation of an individual program supported by medical specialists not longer than six months after the child's sixth birthday
- c) Special circumstances - the principal will contact the AISNSW regulation team on (02) 92992845 or regulations@aisnsw.edu.au (attachment 3)

Procedures for Parents and Principal

- Parents/guardians must request a form for Exemption from Enrolment/Attendance/leave to the school.
- The principal will email to correct form for the parent to fill out and return to school.
- Exemption from enrolment/attendance will only be granted where conditions exist which make it and criteria in the Department of Education 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.
- Students travelling/holidaying during school terms are not to be exempt, but have "leave" granted if the principal accepts the reason, then leave is granted and the "L" code is used, consistent with implementation of National Standards for Students Attendance Data and reporting (attachment 10).
- The certificate of exemption 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 and kept until the student reaches 25 years of age and then destroyed.

Updated August 2022

Review 2024 (or when changes are made by the Minister or NESAs)