

Attendance Procedure

Our Values: Curious Connected Learners, shape the Shirley Smith Way of Being and underpins how we relate to each other and our environment, how we respond to the aspirations of our community, and how we design our learning. All of our procedures, including our Attendance Procedure reflect this.

Rationale

The Attendance Procedure sets out expectations, roles, and responsibilities relating to the attendance of student learners at Shirley Smith High School.

Background

Regular attendance at school is important for your child's intellectual, social, emotional and physical development. All children and young people in the ACT are required to participate in full time education from six years of age until they complete Year 10. Young people are then required to participate in full time education, training or employment until they complete Year 12 or they turn 17, whichever happens first.

Implementation

The staff at Shirley Smith High School will support attendance of student learners by:

- Working with the community to develop positive attendance habits
- Providing a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment where young people want to come to learn
- Using effective and consistent practices to monitor and manage absences
- Promoting the importance of education
- Providing targeted support to address barriers to attendance, learning, and wellbeing
- Evaluating the need for further intervention or referral to Allied Health or the Student Engagement Team

Attendance Expectations

Shirley Smith High School's timetable commences at 9.30 each day and concludes at 3.30 each day. Student learners are expected to ensure regular attendance within these timeframes.

Attendance Expectations on Tuesdays

On Tuesday's, Shirley Smith High School's timetable commences at 9.30 except for IMP students who need to be at school at 9:15am. Tuesday mornings are set aside for student enrichment activities which change each term depending on student passion and need. Rolls will be marked for each of these activities.

Attendance Responsibilities of Student Learners

- Attend school everyday that it is open, unless they are unwell, have extenuating circumstances, family or religious commitments, or have an agreed exemption
- Arrive to school and to all lessons and activities on time and sign in at the Student Hub if they are late
- Participate positively in all learning and extra-curricular activities

Attendance Responsibilities of Families

- Make sure their child attends school everyday that it is open, unless they are unwell, have extenuating circumstances, family or religious commitments, or have an agreed exemption. For illness related absences of three or more days, a medical certificate may in some circumstances be required.
- Assist their child to arrive at school on time and ready for positive participation
- Inform administration of their child's absence along with any documentation that may be required (this may include medical certificates or statutory declarations in some circumstances)
- Provide the school with their child's most up-to-date contact information
- Provide permission if their child is late or is required to leave early
- Respectfully and positively participate in the referral process if intervention or referral to Allied Health or the Student Engagement Team is required

Attendance Responsibilities of Staff

- Ensure that all parents and carers are aware of attendance expectations and relevant policies and procedures
- Accurately record absences, late arrivals, or early departures using SENTRAL attendance
- Contact parents or carers if there is no permission given for absences, or if there is a pattern of absences occurring
- Record all contact with parents and carers about absences, including unsuccessful attempts to make contact
- Consult with student services or senior leadership if required
- Make mandatory reports if deemed necessary
- Provide appropriate follow up and support to student learners and their families

Follow-up of non-attendance or extended absences

- Daily absences will be communicated to families via SMS. Parents can reply to this SMS with absence permissions
- If no permission was given for absences, it will be the responsibility of the Connect Group teacher to follow up with families
- If absences exceed three consecutive days, the Connect Group teacher will reach out to families and may in some circumstances ask for documentation to explain the absences
- If unexplained or insufficiently explained absences exceed 10 consecutive days or show a consistent and regular pattern (such as every Monday), the Principal or delegate may ask for medical documentation or a statutory declaration to support the absences.
- If an individual student has regular absences, referrals to Allied Health or the Student Engagement Team may be deemed necessary in order to provide appropriate supports to the students and their families
- In years 9 and 10, if unexplained or insufficiently explained absences exceed 20%, Year 10 Certification may be at risk.

Follow-up of student lateness

- Students arriving late to school must sign in at the Student Hub.
- Student lateness to school will be communicated to families via SMS. Parents can reply to this SMS with permission for lateness (or contact the school in advance or send student with a note)
- If the lateness was not authorised by the parent/carer of the student they are urged to follow this up with their child as appropriate
- If lateness becomes habitual, it will be the responsibility of the Connect Group teacher to follow up with the young person and their families
- If it is deemed necessary by either the family or the school, referrals may be made to Allied Health or the Student Engagement Team in order to provide appropriate supports to the students and their families

Authorisation for Exemptions

For exemptions of three or more days that are not related to illness In the first instance, communication about why the extended absence was or is required should be between the family of the student learner and their learner's Connect Group teacher. If deemed necessary, this may need to be forwarded on to the Principal or the Principal's Delegate for consultation.

For exemptions of a term or more, the principal (or delegate) has authority, in certain circumstances, to apply to the exemptions office for a full-time or part-time exemption from schooling for a student learner. The referral process for this will require active participation from the family in the application process and a certain level of documentation. This can be discussed on a case by case basis. Exemptions are counted as approved absences.

PLEASE NOTE: This procedure applies to all students and parents/carers of Shirley Smith High School and should be read in conjunction with the ACT Education Directorate Compulsory Education: Student Enrolment and Attendance Policy and the ACT Public School Attendance and Roll Marking Procedures and the Non Compliance Procedures. The procedure does not replace or change the obligations of Shirley Smith High School, parents/carers and Education Support Office under relevant legislation such as the Education Act 2004.

Here is a link to where you can access all Education Directorate policies related to schooling: https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/policies

Date Procedure was written	October 2024
Version	2
Date for review	2025
Author	Deputy Principal