STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

East Wanneroo Primary School

Policy Statement

As a WA Government school, East Wanneroo Primary School must monitor student attendance and work with other agencies and service providers to maximise student engagement. It does this in a way that builds shared responsibility of student attendance between schools, students, families and external agencies.

Rationale

At East Wanneroo Primary School we are committed to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for all students which addresses their educational needs. Regular and consistent school attendance and participation are essential for all students' social and academic learning.

East Wanneroo Primary School expects students to attend school regularly and to participate fully to gain the maximum benefit from schooling, enabling them to reach their full potential.

Aims

It is important that students, staff and parents/cares have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school.

East Wanneroo Primary School's Student Attendance Policy is committed to

- promoting the key message of the Department of Education 'Every day matters';
- prioritising the early identification of non-attendance and irregular school attendance;
- providing a committed approach to monitoring school attendance to improve student learning outcomes and contribute to the development of the whole child;
- providing clear guidelines and process when working in partnership with parents, the Department of Education and other agencies to ensure regular school attendance for all of our students;
- maximising learning opportunities by promoting all student attendance is above 90%.

School Procedures

Accurate entry of attendance in Compass 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 9am for the morning session and by 12.30pm for the afternoon session. This is the responsibility of the teacher in charge of the classroom between 8.30-9.00am and 11.55am-12.30pm.

Absences

- Parents/carers are required to advise the classroom teacher or the front office reasons for an absence as soon as practical. This can be written or verbal.
- If a student is away for more than 3 consecutive days of unexplained absences, the teacher will contact the parent/carer.
- For prolonged absences that are due to sickness or injury the school will require a medical certificate.
- If advised directly, classroom teachers will enter the reason for the absences on Compass ensuring the note states reason and teacher initials.
- Our aim is to have no unexplained absences in our attendance data.

Students 'at risk' Attendance below 80%

- Students with attendance below 80% are deemed 'at risk'. Teachers will be in contact with parent/carers of students in this category.
- If attendance falls below 80% the student may be placed on an EWPS Attendance Plan.
- If unsuccessful in contacting the parent/carer of students 'at risk' or non-attendance does not improve after class level intervention and support, the student will be referred to the Attendance Team.

Late Students

- Students arriving after 8.40am will attend front office for a late pass and front office staff will enter time of arrival and reason on Compass.
- For students arriving late regularly, the classroom teacher is to follow up with contact with parents/carers.
- Students who are consistently late may be placed on an EWPS Attendance Plan.

Planned Leave

- Requests for planned extended leave are to be submitted to the Principal for consideration and the appropriate code entered on Compass.
- Families taking vacation leave during school terms is discouraged and will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.
- Teachers are not obliged to provide work for students on unauthorised leave.
- All authorised leave will need to be pre-approved by the Principal, and the appropriate code will be entered on Compass.

Illness/Health Conditions

- Where a student has a mental or physical illness and/or health needs which may impact on their ability to attend the usual school site, the parent should request a meeting with the Principal to negotiate access to a relevant program.

Responsibilities

Admin responsibilities:

- promote student attendance through clear statements of expectations and procedures, including through school communications channels;
- develop and implement rigorous and effective systems to record and monitor attendance;
- ensure that student attendance is recorded in every class;
- maintain accurate attendance records in both Compass and Student Attendance reporting (SAR);
- maintain badged attendance officers for relevant staff and conduct home visits as necessary;
- promptly process student transfers;
- monitor and analyse school attendance records each month in SAR;
- respond to parent requests for planned, extended absences, including vacation during the school term;
- generate and distribute letters for all students with unexplained absences in Weeks 4 and 9 of each term;

- generate letters to parents whose children are in the 'moderate' and 'severe' categories in Week 5 and 10 each term;
- provide ongoing monitoring and support for students in the 'moderate' and 'severe' categories, as well as support for their teachers and parents/carers (See Appendices 1-4);
- ensure Attendance Plans are developed as required, in consultation with teachers;
- liaise with school staff (teachers, AIEO, school psychologist, chaplain) to restore regular attendance;
- develop Responsible Parenting Agreements in conjunction with parents/carers as required;
- consult with Regional Office and relevant external agencies when student attendance concerns continue; and
- provide resources and templates to assist teachers to complete their attendance responsibilities;
- case manage students in severe categories;
- manage record keeping of follow ups on Compass for students in moderate-severe categories.

Teacher responsibilities:

- promote and encourage regular attendance;
- monitor and record each student's attendance in Compass with 100% accuracy, twice daily (see Appendix 1);
- follow up unexplained absences with parent/carer in person, via email or telephone call and update Compass when a reason has been provided;
- contact the parent/carer if a student is absent for more than three days without a reason;
- seek advice from administration if unsure about absence code to use;
- record 'notes' against all absences in Compass – notes to include name of the person who notified the teacher of the absence, the reason for the absence, the student's expected date of return to school, the teacher's initials and the date the notification was received;
- store hard copy notes and retain for archiving at the end of the school year;
- notify administration when students have been absent for 5 consecutive days and the reason is not known;
- when necessary, work with Administration to develop and monitor Attendance Plans;
- refer parents/carers to administration to discuss requests for vacations during school term or other external agencies.

Student responsibilities:

- attend school at all times when school is open for instruction;
- arrive at school and attend all classes on time;
- remain on the school premises during school time unless they have the permission from both the parent/carer and the school administration to leave;
- complete any work that is missed due to absences if requested by the teacher; and
- work cooperatively with the school and be actively involved in improving their attendance.

Parent/Carer responsibilities:

- always ensure their child attends school when the school is open for instruction (see School Education Act 1999);
- promote and provide organisational support to their child to allow them to attend school and participate on all designated school days;
- ensure their child is on time for school each day;
- notify the school for the reason for their child's absence;
- notify the school in advance if an absence is planned, including vacation during school term;
- support their child's learning during continued or prolonged absences through completion of educational activities;
- work cooperatively and collaboratively with the school to develop and implement improvement strategies when their child's attendance has been inconsistent or when returning to school after prolonged absences;
- ensure the school has correct and up to date contact details;
- seek support from the school if their child displays school refusal behaviours or there are concerns impacting their child's ability to regularly attend school.