

# ATTENDANCE POLICY & PROCEDURE

<b>Relevant to:</b>	<b>All staff, all students, all parents</b>
<b>Developed by:</b>	<b>Management Team</b>
<b>Date of Introduction:</b>	<b>February 2017</b>
<b>Date of Most Recent Review:</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>Date for Review:</b>	<b>2027</b>
<b>Approved:</b>	
<b>Related Documents:</b>	<b>Attendance Policy &amp; Procedure, Child Protection Policy, Infectious Disease Policy</b>

## Background

It is the policy of Tamar Valley Steiner School to ensure that children of school-age attend school each day as required by the Education Act 1994 and that a register is kept to record the daily attendance or absence of each school-age child enrolled at the School.

Regular attendance is very important for the academic and social life of the child. Teachers at Tamar Valley Steiner School encourage parents to help their children understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality. The school regards non-compliance with this policy very seriously and any departure from it is to be referred to the Principal for presentation to School Board.

## Procedure

1. Attendance is completed via our online system TASS, which is accessible by administration and the teachers.
2. Parents are required to notify the school of any absences in writing (email or SMS) by 9:15am on each day of absence.
3. The teacher will complete attendance at 8.50am each day.
4. All unexplained absences must be followed up on the day of absence. A member of the administration staff will contact the parents of absent students by SMS or phone call. If parents do not respond, then emergency contacts may be contacted. Administrative staff will continue to try to make contact by SMS, phone call or email with the parents and if necessary, emergency contacts, until a response is received. Parents will be asked to explain why their child is absent. If no explanation is given, this will be reported to the Principal that day in an email from administration. The exact procedure is as follows:
  - a. 9.15am Call Parent 1, and if no answer text 'Hi XXX, Just checking on XXXs absence today?'
  - b. If no response, at 9.45am Call Parent 2 or if no 2<sup>nd</sup> Parent contact that day then Emergency Contact 1, and if no answer text as above
  - c. If no response, at 10am Call Emergency Contact 1 or Emergency Contact 2
  - d. Continue to follow up until a response is received
5. Sick children should not be at school and should remain at home. A parent will be called if a child develops a fever or is too unwell to participate in class.
6. Parents are to advise the office of an infectious or transmittable illness immediately upon confirmation from a health care professional.

### **Advance notification of absence**

Where absence from school is known in advance, parents are required to –

- Provide written notification to the administration and class teacher for absences of up to one week.
- Provide written notification to the class teacher and the Office for absences of one to five weeks.
- Provide written notification to the teacher and the Principal for absences of more than five weeks

### **Absenteeism**

If a child will not be attending school, the parent must phone, message or email the school before 9.15am on the day. A message on the school answering machine is adequate advice. This will be noted in the roll in TASS which shows the date, the child's name, the class and the reason for the absence.

Each morning class teacher/s will record the date, class, names of absent child/ren, if they have been notified and the reason for absence if known. This will then be communicated by the teacher to the office to be checked against the TASS Roll. If a child is absent and the office or class teacher has not been notified, then the parent of that child must be contacted to ensure the child is at home (ie has not gone missing) and to find the reason for the absence; however, it is the parents responsibility to contact the school to advise of their child's absence.

If a child is absent from school it is a legal requirement for the parent/guardian to provide written confirmation (email or SMS), including giving a reason for the absence. This information must be kept by the school for the designated period for school records (currently a moratorium until 2029).

### **Ongoing absenteeism**

Attendance will be monitored by administrative staff.

### **Extended number of days absent**

As per above, the Principal will be notified if a child is absent without an adequate explanation to either admin or the Class Teacher. If this occurs multiple times in a row, and the teacher is not aware of the reason, the Principal will call the parents to try to ascertain the explanation. If necessary, the Principal will invite the parent to a meeting with the teacher to discuss the absences and develop a plan to improve attendance to at least 90% unless a formal application for part-time attendance has been approved by the OER (Office of the Education Registrar).

### **Monthly review of absentee rates**

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month, administration will provide the following to the Principal:

- absentee reports for the previous month

Where attendance is lower than 90%:

- Explanations provided by parents, e.g. written notice of extended family holiday
- Explanations by teacher (requested by email from admin to the Class teacher)

### **Follow up of unexplained low attendance rates**

If there is no reasonable explanation at this point this will be followed up with an email sent by administration to request an explanation from the parents.

If there is no acceptable explanation provided in the response to the email or the parent does not reply to the email within 48 hours, a meeting will be arranged with the parent/s and Principal, and the teacher will be invited.

At this meeting, a plan will be collaboratively developed to ensure the child attends school regularly (aiming for attendance of at least 90% unless a formal application for part-time attendance has been approved by the OER (Office of the Education Registrar)).

### **Follow up of plan**

If the plan is implemented and there is no significant improvement in attendance, the Principal may refer to a third party or specialist for intervention. If no other avenue is successful in improving attendance, a referral will be made to the Office of the Education Registrar for a Compulsory Conciliation Conference.

### **Non-attendance due to withdrawal of enrolment without adequate notification**

As per the Enrolment policy, a terms' written notice is required for withdrawal of enrolment. If the child has not been attending school and the school has been informally notified (e.g. verbal or notified by another party) that the enrolment has been withdrawn, the school will request notification in writing. If no notification in writing is received by the end of the current term, a letter will be sent confirming the cancellation of enrolment and that this will occur prior to the commencement of the following term unless the parent advises the child is continuing and the child does attend in the following term.

Where enrolment is withdrawn, notification of the cessation of enrolment will be sent to the Office of the Education Registrar as per subdivision 3, Education Act Tasmania 2016.

### **Applying for part-time attendance**

In circumstances where it is determined that the child will have difficulty attending full-time due to additional needs, it may be determined that it is in the best interests of the child to attend part-time. In this instance, an application for part-time attendance may be made to the Office of the Education Registrar.

As per our enrolment policy, the school does not take part-time enrolments.

**END**