ATTENDANCE POLICY & PROCEDURE

Relevant to:	**All staff, all students, all parents**
Developed by:	**Management Team**
Date of Introduction:	**February 2017**
Date of Most Recent Review:	**Jun-2026**
Date for Review:	**Jun-2028**
Approved:	**NTSA Board Jun-2026**
Related Documents:	**Attendance Policy & Procedure, Child Protection Policy, Infectious Disease Policy**

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. Appropriate to their age and stage of development, students are expected to take responsibility for attending school punctually and participating fully in their educational program. 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 (phone, voicemail, email or SMS) by 9:15am on each day of absence.
3. The teacher will complete attendance at 8.50am each day, and in each lesson thereafter whenever a different teacher has the class.
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 2nd 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 student 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.

Late arrivals
When students arrive at the school office at or after 8.50am the student or their parent must sign them in at the office. Parents are advised that if students are walking in independently after being dropped in the carpark at 8.45am, they should remind their child to go directly to the office to sign in. This is to ensure that their attendance is recorded and that the absence procedure is not triggered.

Early departure
When a student is to leave school before the end of the school day, their parent must notify the school in writing in advance. The early departure must be signed out. For older students, where the student is leaving independently with prior permission from parents, they must sign themselves out at the School Office before leaving.

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 or class guardian for absences of up to one week, and for absences from one to five weeks.
- Provide written notification to the teacher and the Principal for absences of more than five weeks

Repeated lateness
Repeated late arrival will be monitored and when there are frequent or regular patterns of latterns, parents will be notified and a meeting requested with parents and student if the student can reasonably be expected to manage their own arrival time. The meeting will include development of an attendance improvement plan.

Absenteeism
If a student 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 student's name, the class and the reason for the absence.

Each morning the class teacher or class guardian/s will record the date, class, names of absent student, 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 student is absent and the office or class teacher or class guardian has not been notified, then the parent of that student must be contacted to ensure the student 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 student's absence.

Students are expected to take responsibility appropriate to their age for attending school punctually and participating fully in their educational program.

If a student 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 student is absent without an adequate explanation to either admin or the Class teacher or class guardian. 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 1st 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 or class guardian)

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 or Class guardian will be invited.
At this meeting, a plan will be collaboratively developed to ensure the student 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 student 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 student is continuing and the student 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 student will have difficulty attending full-time due to additional needs, it may be determined that it is in the best interests of the student 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.

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