

# Attendance & Engagement Plan

# Background





Research indicates that regular school attendance is linked to student achievement and positive engagement at school. Establishing regular attendance patterns from Kindergarten helps children develop foundation skills that prepare them for their journey throughout primary and secondary school.

Students who have regular school attendance are those who attend school 90% or more of the time. The table below shows how the Department of Education categorises student attendance.

Regular	Indicated	Moderate	Severe
≥90% attendance	80 – 89% attendance	60 – 79% attendance	<60% attendance

While engagement with school and learning is multifaceted, regular absences are a marker of disengagement. High rates of absenteeism are related to lower levels of academic achievement and are linked to outcomes such as unemployment and riskier health behaviours in adulthood.

At Hyden Primary School, we understand that students are most likely to thrive and attend school when the following factors are met:

 Student factors	 Family factors	 Community factors	 Service factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- school readiness and early childhood development</li> <li>- mental and physical health</li> <li>- feeling safe and a sense of belonging</li> <li>- positive social connections</li> <li>- academic achievement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- education is valued and prioritised</li> <li>- connected to culture and community</li> <li>- resilience and self determination</li> <li>- financial security</li> <li>- stable housing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sound play areas</li> <li>- further education, training and employment opportunities</li> <li>- safe environments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ability to engage students with diverse needs</li> <li>- positive relationships with students and families</li> <li>- monitor student attendance and provide early intervention support</li> <li>- consistent and clear policies.</li> </ul>

Reference: Department of Education, Every-Day Matters: 10 Point Plan to Improve Attendance (2020)

While a day here and there doesn't seem like much, each day a child misses school can contribute to a significant portion of missed learning over time.

1 or 2 days a week doesn't seem much but .....				
If your child misses...	That equals ...	Which is ...	And over 13 years of schooling that's...	Which means the best your child might perform is...
1 Day per fortnight	20 Days per year	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1.5 years	Equals to finishing in grade 11
1 Day per week	40 Days per year	8 weeks per year	Over 2.5 years	Equals to finishing in grade 10
2 Days per week	80 Days per year	16 weeks per year	Over 5 years	Equals to finishing in grade 7
3 Days per week	120 Days per year	24 weeks per year	Over 8 years	Equals to finishing in grade 4

# Our Approach

The Hyden Primary School Attendance and Engagement Plan is underpinned by the following principles student needs at the centre.



Our approach to attendance and engagement at Hyden Primary School is aligned to the Department of Education's Student Attendance in Public Schools Policy & Procedures.

- **Promotion approaches** that focus on building student, family, school and community resilience and the promotion of protective factors.
- **Prevention approaches** that are designed to prevent poor attendance for those students most at risk.
- **Response approaches** that provide support or interventions for those student who are not attending.

## Cultural Responsiveness

At Hyden Primary School we are committed to reflecting the aspirations, needs and priorities of the Aboriginal school community in order for them to feel a strong connection and sense of belonging in their school. By doing so, we aim to build and maintain respectful collaborative relationships between staff, Aboriginal students, their parents and families, and communities to support student engagement and foster academic success.



# Strategies to support regular attendance

**Promotion approaches** that focus on building student, family, school and community resilience, and the promotion of protective factors.

Strategy	Who	When
Embed the Circle of Courage needs-based social and emotional learning philosophy across the school	All	Ongoing
Build positive relationships with students, parents and the Hyden community	Staff	Ongoing
Communicate the importance of regular school attendance in school newsletters	Principal	Twice per term
Share attendance data and promote the importance of regular school attendance at school board meetings	Principal	Each meeting
Support their child to attend school every day and reinforce the belief that 'everyday matters'	Parents	Ongoing
Communicate reasons for their child's absences to the front office and their child's teacher	Parents	Ongoing
Reconsider planning vacations during school term time	Parents	Ongoing

**Prevention approaches** that are designed to prevent poor attendance for those students most at risk.

Strategy	Who	When
Automated SMS sent to parents by 10.30am if an unexplained absence is recorded at school and again after eight days if reason is still not provided	Front office	Every day (automated)
Follow-up unexplained absences per the Unexplained Absence Procedure	Front office	Various
Check Student Attendance Reporting (SAR) and follow up with families of students for whom have increasing unauthorised absences or attendance is below 90% for unauthorised reasons	Principal	Fortnightly
Support parents to enter into a Section 24 arrangement when their child can temporarily undertake a program provided by another school when away from Hyden	Principal	As required
Work collaboratively with the school to develop and implement improvement strategies when their child's attendance is below 90% for reasons marked as unacceptable per Department guidelines	Parents	Ongoing

**Response approaches** that provide support or interventions for those students who are not attending.

Strategy	Who	When
Develop, implement and document attendance improvement plans to address persistent student absence (generally when a student's attendance is below 90% or identified as a problem) in partnership with parents	Principal and staff	As required
Consult with Wheatbelt Regional Office to determine further actions if persistent absence continues after meeting with the student's parents and taking all reasonable steps to work with them to improve the student's attendance	Principal	As required
Apply for Students Whereabouts Unknown for students with more than 15 consecutive unexplained absences who cannot be located with attempts documented	Principal	As required

# Classifying Lesson Attendance

## Attendance Codes

Teaching staff are responsible for marking the roll by 9.30am each day by entering the correct attendance code in 'Integris' (student information system). The reason for the absence must also be entered (if known).

Front office staff are responsible for updating attendance codes and reason if parents have notified the school by phone, email or SMS that their child is absent.

The table below explains which codes are used to indicate if a student is present or absent.

/	Present	Student is on school grounds
U	Unexplained Absence	Cause not established and no explanation has yet to be provided. Follow up is required.
R	Reasonable Cause	Family issues, accident, appointment, meeting
E	Educational Activity	Approved educational program such as PEAC or transition visits
C	Cultural / Religious	Approved absences for events of a cultural or religious significance to the family, such as funerals, sorry days and religious observances
N	Notified as Sick	Parent or caregiver has notified the school of sickness
M	Medical/Sick Bay	Student is still on school grounds in the medical room. This is not classified as an absence
V	Vacation	The absence has been negotiated in advance and the principal is satisfied that reasonable grounds for authorising the absence apply
K	Unauthorised Vacation	The student has been taken on a vacation and the principal has not authorised the absence
X	Unacceptable Reason	Reason for absence has not been approved by the principal
L	Late	If the student arrives at school after 9am

Unexplained absences, unauthorised vacation and unacceptable reasons are all classified as unauthorised absences.

## Applying for In-Term Leave

Given the negative impact of extended periods of absence from school on student learning, families are discouraged from withdrawing their child from school during the term. If contemplating frequent and/or extended absences parents must consider the impact on their child's progress and achievement.

Parents must notify the principal in writing for approval if they intend to apply for leave using the "Parent Request for In-Term Absence" form (Appendix 1)

Following an application for in-term leave, the principal will advise parents if their request is approved (authorised vacation) or not approved (unauthorised vacation). Approval is dependent on the reason for the request, length of time, frequency of leave requests and the perceived impact on students' academic and other learning progress.

# Unexplained Absence Procedure

Parents/guardians are required to notify the school via phone call or email to both the teacher and school email address when their child is absent. In the instance that parents have not notified the school of their child's absence, the following procedure is followed:

01

Day of absence:

If U code recorded in Integris, parent will receive an automated text message notification via Outreach+ requesting a reason be given for the unexplained absence. Front office staff to update Integris with correct code when parent replies.

02

Second consecutive day of unexplained absence:

If a student reaches a second day with an unexplained absence, a phone call home by front office staff is made.

03

Third consecutive day of unexplained absence:

If a family cannot be contacted for three consecutive days or concern is raised for the wellbeing of the student, a home visit will be conducted by the Principal and another staff member (e.g. AIEO) following risk assessment.

04

Every Friday:

If reasons for any unexplained absences occurring that week are not provided by Friday afternoon of each week, the front office staff will call home to obtain a reason for the absence. If unable to contact the parent, an 'unexplained absence reminder letter' will be sent home (Appendix 2).

05

Eighth day of unexplained absence:

If a U code is still marked in Integris eight days after the absence, a reminder text message will automatically be sent to the parent asking them to notify the school of the reason for the absence. Front office staff to update Integris when message is received.

# HYDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

**Address:** 36 Naughton St, Hyden WA 6359

**Phone:** (08) 9684 0800

**Email:** Hyden.PS@education.wa.edu.au

**Website:** www.hydenps.wa.edu.au



## Parent request for in-term absence

Dear Principal

This is to advise that \_\_\_\_\_ will be absent  
from \_\_\_\_\_ until \_\_\_\_\_ due to

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I am aware that it is the school's preferred position that parents do not organise leave during the school term, and this leave may affect my child's progress and achievement. I am aware that examples of in-term absences that the school will approve include bereavement, serious illness of a family member or sporting representation at a state or national level. By proceeding with other forms of leave, I acknowledge that my child's curriculum and assessment program may not be able to be completed, and there is no requirement for teachers to provide work packages for students.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to student: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Office Use:

Approved       Not Approved

Reason:

Principal Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 2**

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**Address:** 36 Naughton St, Hyden WA 6359    **Phone:** (08) 9684 0800  
**Email:** Hyden.PS@education.wa.edu.au    **Website:** www.hydenps.wa.edu.au



## Hyden Primary School Attendance Policy: Unexplained Absence Reminder

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

According to school attendance records \_\_\_\_\_ was absent from school on the below dates and I have not received an explanation for his/her absence. It is a requirement of the Education Act that all absences are explained by the child's parent or legal guardian. You can notify the school in person, with a written note, or phone call. Alternatively, the slip below can be completed and returned. Your prompt attention to this matter is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Date/s absent without explanation:  
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My child _____  was absent on the following date/s _____  due to: _____  _____  _____  Signed (parent/guardian): _____ Date: _____
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## Individual Attendance Plan

<b>Student Name</b>		<b>Date of Birth</b>	
<b>Class teacher</b>		<b>Year Group</b>	
<b>Student strengths</b>			
<b>Student Interests</b>			
<b>Factors Impacting Attendance</b>			
<b>Improvement Target</b>			
By the end of _____, _____'s attendance will increase from _____% to _____% so that _____.			
<b>Strategies</b>			
<b>School</b>		<b>Home</b>	
<b>Resources</b>			
<b>Monitoring</b>			
<b>Week</b>	<b>% attendance</b>	<b>Notes</b>	
Week 1			
Week 2			
Week 3			
Week 4			
<b>Agreement</b>			
Parent Name:	Teacher Name:	Principal Name:	
Signature:	Signature:	Signature:	
Date:	Date:	Date:	