



SOUTHERN CROSS
— GRAMMAR —

ATTENDANCE MONITORING POLICY

MARCH 2011

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INTRODUCTION

All students who are enrolled at Southern Cross Grammar, regardless of their age, are expected to attend that school whenever instruction is provided. Regular attendance at school is essential to assist students to maximise their potential. Schools, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. At Southern Cross Grammar, attendance and participation are addressed in the context of a supportive school community.

PURPOSE

This policy outlines what Southern Cross Grammar's expectations are for attendance.

SCOPE

Attendance at school refers to presence at a school-endorsed and supervised activity by enrolled students. Students may be regarded as 'attending' when they are being provided with educational instruction through excursions and Sports Days as well as through classroom-based activities.

RESPONSIBILITIES

SOUTHERN CROSS GRAMMAR BOARD

The Board will:

- provide direction, including guidelines, to Southern Cross Grammar to assist in the implementation of this policy
- develop, implement, monitor and review strategies, targets and timelines for excellent attendance at Southern Cross Grammar
- support schools to maintain accurate records of student attendance and implement practices promoting the regular attendance of students at school
- ensure an effective electronic platform for recording student attendance is available.

PRINCIPAL

The Principal will:

- ensure a set of school processes to manage attendance issues is developed, implemented, monitored and reviewed
- maintain an accurate record of student attendance (roll). Attendance registers must be available to authorised officers at all times
- provide clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance
- advise parents promptly when their children are absent from school without explanation
- ensure that all cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences from school are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented
- ensure that school personnel are provided with information on attendance requirements and their obligation to monitor and promote regular attendance at school
- provide processes for regular parent/carer notification of individual students' attendance records

- monitor the effectiveness of this policy and report to the Board.

TEACHERS

Teachers will:

- monitor attendance at least twice per day and record all student absences
- ensure constancy and consistency in checking and following up student absences

PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

Parents and caregivers are responsible for:

- demonstrating to the child the importance they place on school attendance
- ensuring that their children who are enrolled at Southern Cross Grammar attend school each day as a matter of priority
- promptly notifying and explaining their child's absences from school
- providing written notice when leaving the school or when enrolling the child in another school.

PRINCIPLES

Southern Cross Grammar adopts a supportive school community approach to students' attendance at school. The school promotes practices that are most likely to impact positively on attendance. Southern Cross Grammar addresses the following areas:

- Curriculum which is inclusive and relevant
- Learning and teaching practices which are intentional and embedded in purposeful and meaningful experiences
- Approaches which foster the health, well-being, safety and development of resilience in students
- Development of a learning culture in which good relationships are modelled at all levels
- Professional learning which responds to changing educational and social contexts
- The early identification and targeting of specific groups of 'at risk' students with provision of the necessary support to maintain attendance and participation. Particular target groups will include:
 - Students with special needs
 - English as a Second Language (ESL) students

ATTENDANCE MONITORING PROCEDURE

- Students should be at school five minutes before the scheduled starting time so that they can be organised in time for the beginning of class.
- Teachers will record attendance at the beginning of the school day. By 9.30 a.m. they will submit a return, including nil returns. The times of late arrivals should be noted. Details about a student's absence must be recorded.

- Teacher will record attendance after the Lunch Break and subsequently submit a return, including nil returns. Details about a student's absence must be recorded.
- Teachers must keep on file any notes they receive from parents/caregivers about a student's absence. Administrative staff will advise teachers of any notification they have received from parents/caregivers regarding a student's absence. This may be done via telephone message or via note in a teacher's pigeon hole.
- Administrative staff will compile absentee reports each day.
- Where possible, parents/caregivers are requested to advise the school of their child's absence before the school day commences. A 24-hour attendance phone line will be available. If this cannot be done, a written explanation must be provided upon the student's return to school.
- Where an absence is likely to be extended beyond a single day, parents are requested to notify the school as early as possible.
- After the third day of absence without explanation, parents/caregivers will be contacted by the school requesting the reason for the student's absence.
- Students who arrive at school late must be signed in by their parents at the Administration Office.
- In circumstances where it is necessary for a student to leave school during the day, they must be signed out by a parent/caregiver. If the student returns to school that day, they must be signed back in by a parent/caregiver.
- The school does not encourage excused and/or extended absences, but does understand that there will sometimes be accidents, illnesses or other special circumstances such as compassionate grounds, sport representation or off campus activities organised by the school, e.g. music camp.
- In instances where particular students show a consistent pattern of unexplained non-attendance and/or lateness, Southern Cross Grammar will:
 - ensure that these students are provided with appropriate counselling and support
 - establish and maintain communication with parents/caregivers
 - engage the support of Support personnel and support agencies as appropriate
 - monitor the non-attendance and/or lateness patterns for these students on a daily basis and take action as appropriate
 - ensure that all staff who have responsibility for these students are kept informed of matters related to their non-attendance and/or lateness
 - explore the possibility of different curriculum models where appropriate.
- Information about unsatisfactory attendance of students must be transferred to and substantiated by entries in individual student files. The information must include:
 - actual dates of absences and/or lateness

- details of any excused and/or extended absence
- whether or not an absence and/or lateness was explained by the student's parent/caregiver
- noting any consistent patterns of absences and/or lateness
- details of any communication with parents/caregivers regarding a student's non-attendance and/or lateness
- details of any action taken in relation to a student's absence and/or lateness
- details of any counselling or support given to the student and/or parent/caregiver.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed as part of Southern Cross Grammar's cycle of review for all policy.

APPENDIX 1

LETTER REQUESTING REASON FOR A STUDENT'S ABSENCE



SOUTHERN CROSS
GRAMMAR

<Parent Name>

<Address>

Dear <Parent>

I am writing to you about <son's/daughter's> attendance. Our records show that <child's name> has been absent from school for three consecutive days without satisfactory explanation.

We have been unable to contact you by telephone to determine the reason for the absence. I therefore request that you contact me to discuss this matter.

Under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, you are required to ensure that your child attends school every day unless there are genuine reasons for absences, such as illness. Absences affect both the individual's learning and the learning of others in the class group and it is important for children to attend school regularly.

If you are worried about your child's attendance, or if you are having problems getting <child's name> to attend school please do not hesitate to phone the school and ask to speak with me directly so that we can work together to solve the problem.

Yours sincerely

PRINCIPAL

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APPENDIX 2

**LETTER REQUESTING A MEETING WITH PARENT TO DISCUSS
UNEXPLAINED STUDENT ABSENCE**



SOUTHERN CROSS
GRAMMAR

<Parent Name>

<Address>

Dear <Parent>

I am writing to you about <son's/daughter's> attendance. Our records show that <child's name> has been absent from school for more than ten days this term without satisfactory explanation.

Under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, you are required to ensure that your child attends school every day unless there are genuine reasons for absences, such as illness. Absences affect both the individual's learning and the learning of others in the class group and it is important for children to attend school regularly.

I therefore request that you telephone the school and ask to speak with me directly or make an appointment to see me so that we can discuss the reason for the absences.

Yours sincerely

PRINCIPAL