

Paddington Public School Attendance Procedures



Update February 2025

Review February 2026

Introduction

'School Attendance Matters'

Education for your child is important and regular attendance at school is essential for your child to achieve their educational best and increase their career and life opportunities. NSW Public Schools work in partnership with parents to encourage and support regular attendance of children and young people. "When your child attends school every day, learning becomes easier and your child will build and maintain friendships with other children". (Compulsory School Attendance – Information for Parents Document)

This document supports the School Attendance Policy (2015) and applies to all NSW Government Schools – excluding preschools.

At Paddington Public School we strive to have all our students attend school every day. Rolls are marked each day by the classroom teacher. When students are absent from school, they are required by law to produce communication from their parents with a suitable reason for their absence. If communication is not received within 7 days, then the absence is declared 'unjustified' and a note, 'letter 1' is generated by the School Administration Team requesting an explanation. If no explanation is forthcoming, the School Administration Team will again contact the parent and issue 'letter 2'.

If a student has an unexplained absence of 3 consecutive days the School Administration Team contact the student's family as a welfare check and a verbal explanation for the absence.

At Paddington Public School, regular attendance is regarded as an important component in the achievement of student learning outcomes. Measures to establish acceptable attendance patterns include:

- Acknowledging and encouraging good attendance
- Early detection of poor attendance
- Prompt positive intervention measures

Paddington Public School recognises and values the benefits of positive home /school relationships and seeks to involve parents in developing and maintaining the strategies that support the development of positive patterns of attendance for all students.

Communication regarding attendance will be retained by the school for 12 months. The school will inform parents of attendance policies and procedures at the beginning of each new school year and include periodic reminders in the newsletter.

At Paddington Public School we:

- Seek to engage all students in their learning to encourage full participation.
- Believe that regular school attendance is fundamental to improving educational outcomes.
- Will ensure that any unsatisfactory participation or unexplained absence is unpacked as soon as possible.
- Analyse all data available related to attendance.
- Work supportively with families where there are attendance concerns that are impacting on the student's full participation.
- Promote positive attendance initiatives.
- Use school and external resources where necessary, e.g. School Counsellor, HSLO, outside agencies.

Parent Responsibilities:

- To support children in attending school all day every day unless there is an unavoidable reason for not attending.
- Make appointments e.g. doctor outside school hours if possible.
- Support children in being punctual – when arriving late or leaving early parent must go through office and advise of reason.
- To advise the school when child is absent and explain the reason.
- Respond to the SMS message informing parents that their child is absent.
- Apply through the office for school exemption when the child is absent for longer than 5 days.

Teacher Responsibilities:

- Mark roll by 9:15am
- Mark absence with appropriate code
- Ensure all early or late arrivals enter or exit via the school office.
- Communicate concerns related to attendance to their stage supervisor.
- Keep any notes related to attendance.
- Record information on School bytes provided to them verbally.

School Office Responsibilities:


- Monitor SMS messaging returns and school email notification and update in School Bytes
- Update rolls for late arrivals and early leavers.
- Update School Bytes with absence explanations.
- Contact home when patterns of attendance occur or when student has been absent for 3 consecutive days without explanation.
- Ensure all rolls are marked by 9:15am
- Run weekly roll audit and notify executive team when attendance is of concern.

Executive Responsibilities:

- Discuss attendance at stage meetings.
- Support teachers in family contact.
- Communicate with the family when there is a concern and document all communications.
- AP Wellbeing to lead support for families experiencing student attendance concerns.
- Principal to communicate the importance of 'Attendance Matters' to parent community on a regular basis.
- Weekly monitoring and collation of data with SAM for patterns of unexplained absence, frequent absences and lateness
- Work with the teacher and family in a supportive way to improve attendance and punctuality.
- Must ensure that school staff are provided with information on attendance requirements and their obligations to monitor and promote regular attendance at school.
- Make all required reports to Community Services Child Protection Hotline or Child Wellbeing Unit as required by Mandatory Reported Guide

NSW Department of Education

Why attendance matters





When your child misses school they miss important opportunities to:


- Learn
- Make friends
- Build skills through fun

Days missed = years lost

A day here and there doesn't seem like much, but...

When your child misses just...	they miss weeks per year	and years over their school life
1 day per fortnight 	4 weeks	Over 1 year missed
1 day per week 	8 weeks	Over 2.5 years missed

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Attendance Procedures

Section 24 of the Education Act (1990) requires principals to maintain an attendance register (roll) in a form approved by the Minister. Attendance registers must be available for inspection during school hours by a Board Inspector or by any authorised person.

1. Class Roll

- Class rolls will be maintained by the class teacher and the school administration team.
- The roll will be marked electronically using the School Bytes Attendance package daily within the first hour of the teaching day.
- Opportunities will be provided to staff to mark their rolls regardless of school events scheduled.
- At times, a paper roll may be the option chosen to mark the roll.
- If a casual teacher is on the class, a paper roll will be used and data transported into School Bytes by the administration team.
- All rolls will be marked using approved DoE attendance codes.
https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/policy-library/public/related-documents/reg_codes.pdf
- Rolls will be kept within the school records for the designated period.
- Rolls will be available for inspection and use by Departmental officers in accordance with regulations.
- As this document is a legal document, its compilation should be professional and accurate.
- School Bytes messaging will be utilised by the school to send text messages to parents/carers on a daily basis if their child is not at school, parents can respond with a reason using the reply SMS system.
- Reasons for absences offered by parents or carers should be provided in writing and will also be accepted via email.
- All notes/emails explaining absences must be kept for one year from the date of receipt.

2. Change of Attendance Records

- Removals/additions/corrections will be carried out by the class teacher or administration team. Names of students who leave the school to attend another school will be removed from the roll only when confirmation of enrolment at the new school has been received.
- The Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO) is to be contacted if a student has received a transfer certificate and they have had previous intervention for attendance.

3. Early Leavers

- Students will not leave school grounds without prior permission of the principal or delegate.

- Students who leave before normal completion time must be collected from the school by a parent/carer or by a responsible adult who has written permission from the parent/carer to collect the child. (If a person is unknown to the administration staff an additional phone call to the parent/carer may be required and an ID clarification may be requested.)
- The person responsible for collecting the student must call at the front office and provide a reason for early leave, which will be retained as per other attendance notes.

4. Excursions/Sporting and Other Visits

- Students attending off site Departmental activities/programs are to be marked as present, 'School Business'.
- At School Carnivals, rolls are marked in the usual way.

5. Illness

- Students who are ill and need to be sent home (with the permission of the principal or delegate) will have the time that they leave and the reason for early leave recorded in the roll.

6. Lateness

Students who arrive late after the bell must report to the office and follow the procedures set out below:

- Collect a late slip that is issued by the School Administration Officer (SAO).
- Promptly proceed to class and present the late slip form to the class teacher.
- Details of all late arrivals should be noted in Schol Bytes system by the SAO and checked by the classroom teacher before 11:00am each day.
- Parent/carer of persistent latecomers will be contacted by the School Administration Team and/or Executive member.
- Verbal reports of student absence from the parent / carer must be recorded in the School Bytes system and coded by the School Administration Team.

7. Special Circumstances

- School refusers and students returning to school from extended absences need support. The classroom teacher may arrange a case conference through the Learning and Support Team, this may also include the HSLO.
- Part day exemption may be granted through an application to the Director of School Education to support students returning to school. Teachers are required to mark rolls with code P/M.
- Strike / Industrial Action Disputes - Students who are absent from school will be classed as on 'leave', a special circumstance register is to be completed. For half day action if student is away for the whole day an explanation will be requested as students are to attend school after the action is complete. Students who do not return will be marked as a part-day absence.

School Attendance Register Codes

Only the following attendance register codes are to be used to record the explanation of student absence and/or the variation in student attendance.

Attendance Register Codes Symbols to be used for explanation of student absence	
Symbol	Meaning
A	The student was exempted from attending school and a Certificate of Exemption has been issued by a delegated officer.
S	The student's absence is due to sickness or as the result of a medical or paramedical appointment. In these cases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a medical certificate is provided or - the absence was due to sickness and the principal accepts this explanation. Principals may request a medical certificate in addition to explanations if the explanation is doubted, or the student has a history of unsatisfactory attendance
L	An explanation of the absence is provided which has been accepted by the principal. This may be due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - misadventure or unforeseen event - participation in special events not related to the school - domestic necessity such as serious illness of an immediate family member - attendance at funerals - travel in Australia and overseas - recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions.
E	The student was suspended from school
M	The student was exempted from attending school and a Certificate of Exemption has been issued by a delegated officer
F	The student is participating in a flexible timetable and not present because they are not required to be at school. This could include participation in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HSC Pathways Program - Best Start Assessments - Trial or HSC examinations - VET courses
B	The student is absent from the school on official school business. This symbol is recorded where the principal approves the student leaving the school site to undertake, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - work experience - school sport (regional and state carnivals) - school excursions - student exchange
H	The student is enrolled in a school and is required or approved to be attending an alternative educational setting on a sessional or full-time basis. The symbol is recorded where a student accesses education settings separate to their mainstream school such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - tutorial centre and programs - behaviour schools - juvenile justice - hospital schools - distance education



Daily		Weekly	Weeks 3/6/9	Annual
<p>Class Teacher</p> <p>Submit roll on School Bytes by 9:15am</p>	<p>Casual Teacher</p> <p>Submit paper roll to office by 9:15am</p> <p>SAO update School Bytes roll</p>	<p>SAM monitors explanation response. If no response is received in 7 days an email / letter 1 is generated through School Bytes requesting an explanation</p>	<p>SAM runs report for unjustified / unexplained and for students < 90% attendance.</p>	<p>Class Teacher</p> <p>Updates attendance expectations at 'Meet the Teacher' night.</p>
<p>Late Arrivals Report to office for late notice.</p> <p>SAO update School Bytes</p>		<p>SAM if no explanation received roll is marked A unjustified. All correspondence is auto saved in School Bytes - Letter 2 issued. Roll updated if response received.</p>	<p>SAM / Principal and LST meet to discuss spreadsheet results.</p>	<p>Class Teacher</p> <p>Stage 2 / 3 Display posters in classroom regarding lost school time.</p>
<p>SAM / SAO – 9:30am checks school email for any absence notifications. SAO updates School Bytes roll using DET attendance codes.</p>		<p>SAM tracks attendance, monitoring for improvement / decline.</p>	<p>LST referral</p> <p>Strategies implemented as per PPS 'Attendance Tiers' and documented in LST minutes.</p>	<p>Executive</p> <p>Engage and communicate school attendance expectations at Kindergarten Orientation</p>
<p>Class Teachers - 11am check School Bytes roll is correct and update if required</p>				<p>SAM / Executive</p> <p>Place attendance items in newsletter.</p>
<p>Student Absent</p> <p>↓</p>				
<p>SMS 11:00am automatically sent to families requesting explanation, rolls auto updated.</p>		<p><u>Leave of 5 days or longer</u></p> <p>Parents must complete 'Extended Leave' form and have it approved by principal.</p>	<p><u>Leave of 5 days or longer</u></p> <p>Monitored on spreadsheet for excessive leave requests. Reason for leave, along with academic / social progress of student are all considered before leave approved</p>	<p>SAM / Executive</p> <p>PL – 'Attendance Matters' and codes</p>
<p>SAO contacts family for wellbeing check if student has not returned after 3 days without explanation.</p>				
<p>SAM monitors explanation response. If no response is received in 7 days an email is generated through School Bytes requesting an explanation</p>				



Attendance Tiers

95 – 100%

- Positive reinforcement - letter home
- School Attendance Policy and Attendance Flow Chart detail strategies and procedures for attendance monitoring

85 – 95%

- Unjustified absence – SMS, emails , letters 1 and 2, phone calls
- Reminders to parents in Newsletter encouraging good attendance practices each term
- SAM monitors 90% report, tabled at LST meeting, executive meeting
- SAM / LST Executive monitor attendance data for improvement or decline

75-85%

- Phone call home, letter, email from LST / SAM / principal
- Interview Student – Class Teacher
- Letter home detailing possible interview with parent and information regarding the impact large absences have on educational progress
- Attendance monitoring for decline or improvement
- Request for 'Extended Leave' may be impacted based on low attendance rates
- Meeting between Class Teacher and LST to identify any behaviour or learning needs
- Advise HSLO (if required)

Below 75%

- Principal / AP / LST meet with parents and student to address issues and create a School Attendance Improvement Plan
- Advise HSLO and follow plan
- Advise Child Wellbeing Unit if whereabouts of child is unknown or for any other areas of concern
- Request Police Welfare Check if student has not been sighted for some time. (Timing depends on age of student)
- Refer to counsellor, outside agency, alternate program etc
- Submit HSLO referral if required

Attendance Letter 1



PADDINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOL

Date

Student name

Absence Date(s)

ABSENTEE NOTICE (1)

Dear (recipient name),

We have marked your child absent from school on the dates shown above and we have not received an explanation.

Please assist us by indicating a **reason for your child's absence** in the [parent portal](#), or alternatively you can email the school with the reason for the absence.

Your sincerely,

Alison Siddall
(School name)
(School email)

Attendance Letter 2



PADDINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOL

Date

Student name

Absence Date(s)

ABSENTEE NOTICE (2)

Dear (recipient name),

Your child was absent from school on the dates shown above and no satisfactory explanation has been received. The Education Act 1990 (Education Act 1990) requires your child to attend school each day that instruction is provided unless prevented from doing so by sickness or other good reason. The Act requires you to explain your child's absences within seven days of their occurrence. Failure to do so will result in an unjustified absence being recorded.

Please assist us by indicating a **reason for child's absence** in the [parent portal](#), or alternatively you can email the school with the reason for the absence, or to discuss your child's attendance.

If you need an interpreter to assist you to contact the school, please call the Telephone Interpreter Service on 131 450 and ask for an interpreter in your language. The interpreter will call the school and stay on the line to assist with your conversation. You will not be charged for this service.

Yours sincerely

Lisa Larkin
Principal

(School name)
(school email)

Part Day A



PADDINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOL

Date

Student name

Absence Date(s)

Part Day Attendance

Dear (recipient name),

RE: Late arrivals to school

The purpose of this letter is to bring to your attention our growing concern regarding your child who is persistently arriving to school late.

Late arrivals are very disruptive to our teachers and our classrooms. We value punctuality and believe that if we are to build a respectful and orderly learning environment that promotes academic achievement and skills for success in life, then we need to address your child's persistent lateness.

We understand that there are occasionally situations and emergencies that arise with students and their families. We feel that often and unexcused late arrivals are usually unnecessary and unacceptable. Our main concern is that your child is persistently late and this results in loss of learning and disruption to the learning of others. We ask you to support the school in this matter by speaking to your child and emphasizing the need for punctual attendance.

If your child's lateness continues to occur, we will require a meeting to discuss how we will work together to address the problem. Please note, that this may involve the Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO).

Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the school to set up a meeting. Alternatively, you may wish to contact the school by telephone to discuss your child's attendance on 9361 6730.

Yours sincerely

Lisa Larkin
Principal

(School name)
(school email)

e: paddington-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au w: <https://paddington-p.schools.nsw.gov.au/> a:399-435 Oxford St Paddington 2021 t: 9361 6730

Learning and Support Attendance Referral



Paddington Public School

LST Referral Attendance

Date _____

Student Name _____ Class _____

Referring Teacher _____ Supervisor _____

Concerns:

Habitual justified, including frequent absences explained as being due to illness

Repeated unjustified Absence

Repeated Partial Absences

Patterns of non-attendance

Attendance _____ %

Details and Comments:

Strategies already implemented:

LST Recommendations

	School letter to parents
	Interview with parents
	Interview with student
	Establish a positive attendance program
	Address social & emotional skills

	Adjust Curriculum
	Refer to counsellor
	Individual attendance plan
	Refer to HSLO
	Persistent late arrival letter to parents

School Attendance Support Plan

Paddington Public School

School Attendance Support Plan

School: Paddington Public School

Student: _____

DOB: ____/____/____

Date: ____/____/____

Regular attendance helps students to: develop a sense of belonging, maintain and develop friendships, progress with learning and be more engaged at school.

Barriers/Blockers	Strategies	Responsibilities

Plan start date: ____/____/____

Plan end date: ____/____/____

This plan was created by: _____

In consultation with: _____

The strategies above are designed to re-engage and promote attendance of your child. If these are unsuccessful the school may look to the Department's Regional Attendance Team for further support.

School Attendance Support Plan

Example strategies

School based

- Referral to Learning and Support team
- Check in check out system with teacher mentor
- Rewards chart and/or use of school based merit system
- Referral to school counsellor
- Peer mentor or buddy system
- Communicate with parent any academic or wellbeing concerns as soon as possible
- Follow up on any unexplained absences
- Build student-teacher relationship

Family based

- Promote benefits of attendance at home.
- Ensure child arrives on time and is ready to participate.
- Set routine. Bed and wake up time consistent each day. Pack school bag and prepare for school the previous night.
- Turn off electronic devices an hour before bed
- Rewards. Short term and long term
- Follow up with GP or other medical professional
- Plan any necessary appointments outside of school hours where possible
- Communicate any absences to the school (within 7 days of the first day of absence). This may include providing a note from GP where appropriate

Student based

- Follow routine. Bed and wake up time consistent each day. Pack school bag and prepare for school the previous night.
- Discuss with teacher/ school any issues that may arise regarding school. Ask for help.
- Eat breakfast
- Attempt to take part in classroom activities
- Join extracurricular activities. Join a school group or team.
- Tell parent 3 good things that occurred at school each day.

For further attendance strategies and resources schools are encouraged to visit the Departments [Attendance Matters – Resource for Schools](#) page.

These strategies are general suggestions. Strategies put in place should be specific to the individual child and address the identified barriers to attendance.

Home School Liaison Program Application

Please note that incomplete applications will not be accepted – you must fill in all applicable fields on this form. If you need assistance please contact your local HSLO/ASLO or School Services staff.

Please forward completed applications to the HSLP Manager supporting your school.

- Home School Liaison Officer or Aboriginal Student Liaison Officer case referrals can only proceed when a range of school-based interventions have been implemented.
- This application must be signed by the principal.
- Please attach a copy of letter /email sent to parents/carer informing them of this application.
- Please attach a print out of the student's yearly attendance to date (e.g. on EBS the student yearly absence report).

Case type (Select one only)	School details
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-attendance <input type="checkbox"/> Non-enrolment <input type="checkbox"/> Enrolment destination unknown	School name: _____ Referral date: _____ Shared enrolment? If yes provide census school: _____

Student details	
First name: _____	Surname: _____
SRN: _____	Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy): _____	Current school year: _____
Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Out of home care: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Disability confirmation: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Known chronic health issue: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Last known address: _____	
Mother/1st carer name: _____	
Phone, home: _____	mobile: _____ work: _____
Father/2nd carer name: _____	
Phone, home: _____	mobile: _____ work: _____
Family and/or Court Orders <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

Absences and referral history						
Is this a re-referral for this student within the same school year? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No						
Current yearly attendance rate at time of referral as overall % _____ <small>(% = number of days attended / number of day school open x 100)</small>						
20 school days attendance prior to referral (whole numbers out of 20)	Overall days attended	Sick	Leave	Unexplained	Exemption	Suspension
Whole days (out of 20)						
Partial days (out of 20)						

Last date student attended a full day of school (dd/mm/yyyy): _____

If a student has had or is on a part day exemption this year, please indicate and include an approved copy of the application document: Yes No

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Home School Liaison Program (HSLP)

Strategies Used To Support This Students Attendance (mark all applicable)	
Student attendance discussed at LST/wellbeing meeting	
Phone calls to parent/carer re attendance concerns	
School based face to face meeting with parent/carer	
School based face to face meeting with student	
School has implemented its own attendance support plan (please attach a copy)	
School has implemented HSLO/ASLO LAMP sheet	
School has organised check in check out system for student arrival at school	
School has engaged parent/carer with external services such as the Family Referral Service	
Student has had support from the school counsellor/psychologist	
School organised breakfast club	
School is engaging student by providing adjusted curriculum	
Phone call HSLO/ASLO	
Other (provide details police welfare check, CWU notification etc.)	

Strategies Used To Support Your Whole Schools Attendance (mark all applicable)	School initiative	HSLO/ASLO initiative
School organised breakfast club		
Whole school assembly re attendance		
School staff meeting (e.g. staff PL) regarding responsibilities		
School develops attendance rewards as part of whole school behaviour approach		
School based phone intervention (Phone Intervention Program)		
School has developed attendance processes		
School has developed whole school attendance improvement plan		
School interviews parents/carers re attendance		
School interviews students re attendance		
Schools interview students re attendance (Non Attendance Interview Program)		
Situational analysis and recommended improvement such as rolls marked regularly		
Roll check/attendance report review (e.g. students below X%) and identified students supported		
School based attendance team meeting		
Other (provide details)		

Known risk factors (please attach a copy of risk assessment)

- Does the student have a history of violence? Yes No
- Has an inclosed lands act ban been issued to prevent the student's parents or other people living with the student from entering the school? Yes No
- Has the student had a long suspension for violence? Yes No
- Have the student's parents/carers or other people living with the student behaved aggressively towards the school? Yes No
- Other: _____ (please attach supporting documentation)

Principals signature

Date:

HSLP manager please complete and validate

Case referral details entered onto HART and case accepted or declined.
 Decision communicated to principal with reasons. Yes Date: _____
 Please ensure risk assessments are conducted and implemented as appropriate, and all further details regarding this case to be entered into HART database.
 HSLP Manager Sign: _____ Date: _____



