



The Armidale Waldorf School and Boongaiai Preschool

FOR RUDOLF STEINER EDUCATION

Attendance Policy

Attendance Policy

1. The Education Director maintains an electronic register of enrolments and maintains an electronic register of attendance and daily absences and has in place procedures to monitor daily absences and attendances of students and the enrolment of new students.
2. The register of enrolments is maintained for at least 5 years before archiving and the register of attendances for a student is retained for at least 7 years after the last entry was made in respect of the student.
3. The Education Director has in place procedures for exercising the minister's delegation under section 25 of the *Education Act 1990*.

Procedures

Register of Enrolments

The Education Director delegates to the Administration Staff the responsibility of maintaining the register of enrolments. The electronic register Schoolpro will include the following information;

- Name, Age and Address
- Name and contact telephone number of Parents/Guardian(s)
- Date of Enrolment and where appropriate the date of leaving the school and the student's destination
- For students older than 6 years; previous school or pre-enrolment information

This information is accessed in Schoolpro via the report 'Admissions Register'.

If the student is withdrawn, the destination of the student is unknown and the student is below 17 years of age, the administration staff will alert the Education Director (ED). The ED will attempt to contact parents or students, via phone, email and send a letter via registered post. If all of this fails the ED will notify the Department of Education Officer attendance@det.nsw.edu.au, providing the students full name, date of birth, last known address, last day of attendance, parents names and contact details and indication of possible destination, other information that may assist officers to locate the student and any known work, health and safety risks associated with contacting the parents or student.

Register of Attendance

The Education Director delegates to the Administration Staff the responsibility of maintaining the register of attendance. This will be in Schoolpro, an electronic register. The following procedures will be carried out to determine absences and attendance each day.

1. At approximately 9.30am each day the absences are collected by the administration staff from each class and taken to the school office. The absentee records are transferred by the administration staff to the electronic program of School Pro each day.
2. Unexplained absences from classes are followed up by a phone call, text or email to the parent or carer on the relevant day by the Administration Staff. This is then recorded under daily attendance in Schoolpro.
3. For part day absences where a student is picked up during the day or if a student is late to school, parents must sign the student in and out of the *Student Sign In/Out Book* in the Reception. A student is considered late after 9.00am for primary students and 8.45am for high school. This information will then be transferred by the Administration Staff to the electronic attendance register in School Pro.
4. Student absences from classes are recorded in a consistent manner by the Administration Staff for the roll class using the code approved by the Minister for Education (see Attachment A). Reasons for absence comments includes a summary of reason for absence from parents. Copies of emails are filed under an *Attendance* File in Outlook on the reception computer. Written notes are filed in the student file.
5. For sick leave greater than 3 consecutive days parents/carers are required to obtain a medical certificate. On the 4th day of absence and there after parents are requested to provide a medical certificate.
6. For non-sick leave greater than 1 week that is known about in advance, an Application for Leave Form (Attachment B) must be completed and given to the Education Director for approval.
7. The Attendance register is automatically backed up daily.
8. The Administration Staff prints a monthly attendance report and distributes to the Education Director. Administration staff will also alert the Education Director where there are concerns of poor attendance at school by a student. This is defined as 25% absence (unapproved leave) from school in a month or consecutive absent days with no communication with parents. The Education Director will review the student's attendance and determine the appropriate strategies for improving poor attendance including but not limited to.
 - will phone the parents/carers of the student to discuss poor attendance.
 - will interview the student
 - arrange a meeting with the parents/carers and the student and the school's Wellbeing Co-ordinator.
 - If attendance doesn't improve after several discussions with student/parents/carers, then a meeting will be arranged to develop an Attendance Improvement Plan which will be monitored by the Education Director
 - request a conference with a trained consultant from the AIS, the parent/carers and the student
 - If this does not improve the situation, then Department of Family and Community Services are to be contacted.

All of the above procedures and actions will be recorded in the comments section of school pro and also on the student's file by the Education Director.
9. Term 1 for Kindergarten children is seen as a transition time into school. Students are able to have a regular *at home transition day* (L) if they discuss this with the teacher and agree and sign an attendance plan. A note from the parent/carer is required to alert the administration staff. These days should be set days and adhered to.
10. Where a student is absent for 30 consecutive days, the Education Director should access the mandatory reporters section of the Keep Them Safe website www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au to determine whether a report is required and if required must follow through with the reporting and file this report on the students file in the secure file room.

Exercising the Ministers Delegation

Application for Extended Leave

1. Parents/carers are required to fill in an *Application for Extended Leave* (See Attachment B) form located in reception if they wish to apply for extended leave at least 4 weeks prior to the leave being taken. The Education Director will consider all applications in regards to the student's best educational interests and the Department of Education guidelines. Once the application is received the Education Director will approve it if appropriate and if it is under 100 days in a 12 month period.
2. The Education Director will then notify the parents verbally and in writing if the application has been approved or not approved.
3. The Administration Staff will issue the parents/carer with a *Certificate of Extended leave* (Attachment C) and the parent must retain this at all times whilst on leave. Teachers may provide appropriate school work to be completed whilst student is on leave.
4. A copy of the certificate, and the application is placed on the students file that is stored in the secure file room and a comment placed on the student's file in School Pro that there has been a certificate issued and is filed in the student's physical file in the secure room.
5. A copy will also be placed on file along with the Ministers Delegation page in the 'Attendance' folder in the Education Director's office.
6. If the application is for over 100 days in a 12 month period the request will be sent to the Division Head Education Regulations and Programmes and Programme Implementation from the AIS for approval from the minister.

Application for Exemption from Attendance

1. Parents/carers are required to request in writing an *Application for Exemption from Attendance at School* (Attachment D). The Education Director will consider all applications in regard to the student's best educational interests. Once the application is received the Education Director will approve it if appropriate and if it is under 100 days in a 12 month period.
2. The Education Director will then notify the parents verbally and in writing if the application has been approved or not approved.
3. The Administration Staff will issue the parents/carer with a *Certificate of Exemption from Attendance* (Attachment E) and the parent/carer must retain this at all times whilst on leave.
4. A copy of the certificate is placed on the students file that is stored in the secure file room and a comment placed on the student's file in School Pro that there has been a certificate issued and is filed in the student's physical file in the secure room.
5. A copy will also be placed in the file 'Extended Leave Applications/Exemption from Attendance' in the Education Director's office.
6. If the application is for over 100 days in a 12 month period the request will be sent to the Chief Compliance Officer from the AIS for approval from the minister.

Application for Exemption from Enrolment

See AIS Guidelines - Exemption from Attendance and Enrolment.

Attendance Register Codes – Explanation of student absence

The following attendance register codes are to be used to record the explanation of student absence and **are counted** for statistical purposes.

Symbols to be used for explanation of student absence		
Symbol	Meaning	Notes
A	The student's absence is unexplained or unjustified. This symbol must be used if no explanation has been provided by parents within seven days of the occurrence of an absence or the explanation is not accepted by the principal It is at the principal's discretion to accept or not accept the explanation provided.	To be also used if the principal does not accept that an absence (e.g. for extended leave/travel during school term) is in the student's best interests and that the reason is unjustified.
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. 	Note that this code is to be used if the reason for the absence (e.g. extended leave/travel) is accepted by the principal. The principal may consider an Application for Extended Leave/Travel from parents, and provide a Certificate for Extended Leave/Travel, if approved.
E	The student was suspended from school	

Attendance Register Codes – Variation in attendance

Only the following attendance register codes must be used to record a variation in attendance – they are **not** counted as an absence for statistical purposes. In addition to recording the reason for a variation in attendance, the duration of the variation must be recorded.

Symbols to be used for explanation of student absence		
Symbol	Meaning	Notes
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 	The “F” code is no longer only for senior students participating in a flexible timetable. The code should also be used in independent schools for students attending external tutorial centres and other programs that are school authorised.
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 (representative events) - school excursions - student exchange 	The ‘B’ code is used for sport when the student has been selected to represent the school at an event. If the student is participating at an elite level (state or national squads), consideration may be given to an Exemption from Attendance (Elite Sports/Arts)
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 	In most cases this code will only be used by government schools, with the exception of students from non-government schools attending hospital schools. The “F” code, not the “H” code is to be used by independent schools for students attending external tutorial centres and programs that are school authorised.

School Attendance Register Codes

The Minister for Education has approved changes to the use of the Attendance Register codes for 2015. The changes implement the ACARA National Standards for Student Attendance Data Reporting. ACARA developed the National Standards to establish nationally consistent parameters for the collection and reporting of student attendance data.

Holidays

As part of the implementation of the National Standards, holidays taken by students outside of school vacation periods will now be included as absences. A Certificate of Exemption can no longer be granted for this purpose. Families are encouraged to holiday or travel during school vacations. If travel during school term is necessary the following considerations apply:

- If the principal accepts the reason for the absence, the absence will be marked as "L"
- If the principal does not believe the absence is in the student's best interests and does not accept the reason, the absence is unjustified and will be recorded as "A"
- If the period of absence is in excess of 50 days, the student may be eligible to enrol in Distance Education. For that period the student's enrolment transfers to the distance education school.

Note: A student cannot be enrolled in more than one school concurrently (including Distance Education)

Leave

The revised use of the "L" code relating to holidays means the 15 day limit on its use has been removed. Schools can request the completion of an Application for Leave Form for holidays within the school term. The Armidale Waldorf School has application forms for Application for extended leave/ vacation forms and if the ED approves the parents will be issued with a certificate of Extended leave/vacation.

Other codes

The recent changes to the Attendance Register Codes include the redefinition of some codes:

- The "F" code is no longer only for senior students participating in a flexible timetable. The code now includes students participating in programs and assessments such as: HSC Pathways Programs, Kindergarten entry assessments (e.g. Best Start), trial or HSC exams or VET courses.
- The "B" code includes student exchange and allows for some additional flexibility around its use.
- The "H" code is used when a student is enrolled in a school and is required or approved to attend an alternative educational setting on a sessional or full time basis.

Accepting explanations

- The "A" code is to be used if no explanation has been provided by parents within seven days of the occurrence of an absence or the explanation is not accepted by the Principal. It is at the principal's discretion to accept or reject the explanation provided.
- If a student's absence is due to sickness the "S" code is used. The principal may request a medical certificate in addition to an explanation if the explanation is doubted or the student has a history of unsatisfactory attendance.

Record keeping

NESA requires that student records should be kept for six years after the student has turned 18 years of age.
Attachment B



Application for Extended Leave – Vacation/ Travel

NOTE: PART A is to be completed by the student’s parent and returned to their student’s school principal.

PART A: STUDENT DETAILS

Please complete table below with details of all students associated with the period of travel:

FAMILY NAME	GIVEN NAME	DOB	AGE	YEAR
Address:				
Dates of Exemption applied for: / / to: / /			Number of school days:	
Reason for travel:				

NOTE: Relevant travel documentation such as an e-ticket or itinerary (in the case of non-flight bound travel within Australia only) must be attached to this application.

PART A: Details of prior exemptions/ extended leave – vacation travel (if applicable)

Dates of prior exemption/ extended leave from : / / to: / / Number of school days:

Copy of Certificate of Exemption/ Extended leave – travel attached (please tick) Yes No

Parent Details

Family Name: Given Names:

Address:

Contact Number: Relationship to student:

As the parent and applicant, I hereby apply for a *Certificate of Extended Leave-Vacation/ Travel* and understand my child will be granted a period of extended leave upon acceptance by the principal of the reason provided.

I understand that if the application is accepted:

- I am responsible for his/her supervision during the period of extended leave
- The provided period of extended leave is limited to the period indicated
 - The provided period of extended leave is subject to the conditions listed on the *Certificate of Extended Leave- Vacation/ Travel*
- The period of extended leave will count towards my child's absences from school

I declare the information provided in this application is to the best of my knowledge and belief; accurate and complete. I recognise that should statements in this application later prove to be false or misleading any decision made as a result of this application may be reversed. I further recognise that a failure to comply with any condition set out in the *Application for Extended Leave- Vacation/ Travel* may result in the provided period of extended leave being cancelled.

Signature of applicant/s:	Date: / /
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PART B: To be completed by the Principal

I recommend that this application for extended leave- vacation/ travel (Please tick one box):

Yes No

Please provide more detail here (if required):

Principal's Name(Please print) :	Principal's Signature:
Contact number:	Date: / /

Note: Please complete the Certificate of Extended Leave – Vacation/ Travel if requested leave is to be approved.



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Certificate for Extended Leave – Vacation/ Travel

The student/s whose details appear below has been provided a period of extended leave from school for the purpose of travel.

Note: Where an application is made by a parent with more than one child a separate copy of this Certificate should be placed in each student’s file.

STUDENT DETAILS

Please complete table below with details of all students associated with the period of travel:

FAMILY NAME	GIVEN NAME	DOB	AGE	YEAR
Address:				
Dates of Extended leave applied for: / / to: / /			Number of school days:	
Reason for providing the period of extended leave – vacation/ travel:				
Conditions applicable to providing the period of extended leave – vacation/ travel:				
It has been explained to the parent of the above mentioned student/s that they are responsible for his/ her supervision during the period of extended leave. The parent acknowledges that the period of extended leave is limited to the period indicated and acknowledges that the provided period of extended leave is subject to the conditions listed.				
Principal name:			Date: / /	
Principal signature:			School Stamp:	

This certificate has been issued without alteration and must be produced when requested by police or other authorised attendance officers.



Application for Exemption from Attendance at School

To be completed by the student's parents

Student Details	
Surname:	Given Names:
D.O.B.:	Gender : Female <input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/>
Address:	
Dates of Exemption applied for: / / to: / /	Number of school days:
Reason for Exemption (please tick and provide details)	
Exceptional domestic circumstances <input type="radio"/>	
Other Exceptional Circumstance <input type="radio"/>	
Direction under Section 42D of the <i>Public Health Act 1991</i> <input type="radio"/>	
Employment in entertainment industry/participation in elite sporting event for short periods of time i.e. for one or two days, and at short notice <input type="radio"/>	

NOTE: Where the reason for application for exemption includes long term travel arrangements of more than 20 school days, copies of travel documentation should be included with the application.

Details of prior/ current exemptions (if applicable)	
Dates of prior/ current exemption applied for: / / to: / /	Number of school days:
Copy of Certificate of Exemption attached (please tick) Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>	
Parent Details	
Family Name:	Given Names:
Address:	



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Certificate for Exemption from Attendance

The student/s whose details appear below have been provided a period of exemption from Attendance.

FAMILY NAME	GIVEN NAME	DOB	AGE	YEAR
Address:				
Dates of Exemption from Attendance applied for: / / to: / /		Number of school days:		
Reason for providing the exemption;				
Conditions of the exemption (note: for a part day exemption the hours of program participation must be specified, including the plan to have the student attend school full time).				
As the parent/carer of the above mentioned student, I am responsible for his/her supervision during the period of exemption. I understand that this exemption is limited to the period indicated. I understand that this exemption is subject to the conditions listed and that the exemption may be cancelled at any time.				
Parent/Carer Name:		Education Director Name:		
Parent/Carer Signature:		Education Director Signature:		
Date;		Date;		

This certificate has been issued without alteration and must be produced when requested by police or other authorised attendance officers.