



Attendance Policy and Procedures

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Related documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe and Supportive Environment Policy • Parent Handbook • Section 25 Education Act 1990 • Exemptions From Attendance and Enrolment for Independent Schools • Guide to School Attendance Requirements and Attendance Improvement Planning

Version Control

Version	Date Revised	Changes
ORIGINAL		Initial Release
2024		Change 'Education Director' and 'ED' to 'Principal'
2025		Update procedures to reflect change of School Management System from SchoolPro to School Management System. Update Keep them Safe website to DCJ
2026	17/03/2026	Review Procedures Update Introduction Add to Related Documents Add Application and Certificate for Exemption from School Change days required for a leave application from 'a week' to 'equal to or greater than 4 consecutive days'

Introduction

The principal of The Armidale Waldorf School maintains a register, in a form approved by the Minister, of the enrolments and daily attendances of all children at the school, which includes information for each student as required by section B7 Enrolment and attendance of the NESAs NSW Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools Manual.

Student absence and variation to attendance will be recorded using the Minister's codes.



The Armidale Waldorf School will monitor student attendance data and implement intervention strategies to improve unsatisfactory attendance of students.

Where the parents of a student of compulsory school age seeks an exemption from attendance at school or an exemption from enrolment, the principal will process the parent's application in accordance with the guidelines from NSW Department of Education.

The principal may exercise the Minister's delegation under Section 25 of the Education Act in relation to granting and cancelling a certificate of exemption from being enrolled and attending school in certain prescribed circumstances.

Procedures

Register of Enrolments

The Principal delegates to the Administration Staff the responsibility of maintaining the register of enrolments, the electronic register, and the School Management System, updating the following information;

- Name, Age and Home Address of Students
- Name and contact telephone number of Parents/carers
- 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 the School Management System through a customised data export based on the criteria outlined above.

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 Principal or their delegate. The Principal or their delegate will attempt to contact parents/carers or students, via phone, email or send a letter. If all of this fails the Principal will notify the Department of Education Attendance Officer at attendance@det.nsw.edu.au, providing the students full name, date of birth, last known address, last day of attendance, parents/carers' 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 Principal delegates to the Administration Staff the responsibility of maintaining the register of attendance. This will be in the School Management System, an electronic register. The following procedures will be carried out to determine absences and attendance each day.

1. Each day at approximately 9:15am, administration staff collect absence information from each Primary School class and deliver it to the school office. These records are then entered into the School Management System by the administration team. High



School teachers mark attendance directly in The School Management System where possible. If by 9:30am the High School attendance has not been marked electronically an administration staff member will go and collect absence information to enter manually into the School Management System.

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 Absence notes (parents/carers) with the status set to 'Unapproved' in the School Management System and resolved. If the parent contacts the school within 7 days of the unexplained absence with an explanation, Administration staff are to amend the absence with the updated status, explanation and parent who notified.
3. For part day absences where a student is picked up during the day or if a student is late to school, parents/carers of primary aged students or students themselves if attending high school must sign the student in and out of the Student Sign In/Out Book in 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 the School Management System.
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 1). Reasons for absence comments includes a summary of reason for absence from parents/carers. Copies of emails are filed under an Attendance File in Outlook on the reception computer.
5. From the third consecutive day of absence onwards, Administration staff will contact parents or carers by text message, email, or phone to request a medical certificate, unless the student is already on an attendance plan (such as extended leave, exemption from attending, or an attendance improvement plan) established by the Principal or their delegates, and the student's absence has prior approval.
6. For non-sick leave equal to or greater than 4 consecutive school days that is known about in advance, an Application for Leave Form (Attachment 2) must be completed and given to the Principal for approval.
7. The Administration Staff generates a monthly attendance report and distributes to the Principal and their delegates. Administration staff will also alert the Principal or their delegate 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/carers, or patterns of absence including habitual late arrivals and departures. The principal or delegate will review the student's attendance and determine the appropriate strategies for improving poor attendance including but not limited to:
 - a. will phone the parents/carers of the student to discuss poor attendance.
 - b. will interview the student.
 - c. arrange a meeting with the parents/carers and the student and the school's Wellbeing Facilitator.
 - d. If attendance doesn't improve after several discussions with student/parents/carers, then a meeting will be arranged to develop an Attendance Improvement Plan (Attachment 8), in consultation with appropriate external mental health professionals



if the issue is related to a known or emerging mental health concern. This plan will be monitored by the Principal, or their delegate.

- e. Request a conference with a trained consultant from ISNSW, the parent/carers and the student.
- f. 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 a document and uploaded to the document section of the School Management System in the student's file by the Principal or delegate.

8. 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 Principal or their delegates is required to alert the administration staff. These days should be set days and adhered to.
9. Where a student is absent for 30 consecutive days, the Principal should access the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) website [DCJ](#) to determine whether a report is required and if required must follow through with the reporting using the Mandatory Reporters Guide - [MRG](#) and filing this report on the students file in the secure M:Management drive. \

Application for Extended Leave Procedure

1. Parents/carers are required to fill in an Application for Extended Leave (See Attachment 2) form located in reception if they wish to apply for extended leave at least 4 weeks prior to the leave being taken. The Principal or their delegate will consider all applications in regard to the student's best educational interests and the Department of Education guidelines. Once the application is received the Principal or their delegate will approve it if appropriate and if it is under 100 days in a 12-month period.
2. The Principal or their delegate will then notify the parents 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 3) and the parent must retain this at all times whilst on leave. Teachers may provide appropriate schoolwork to be completed whilst student is on leave.
4. A copy of the certificate, and the application is uploaded in the student documents section and noted in the comment section that there has been a certificate issued and is filed in the student's digital file in The School Management System
5. 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 IS for approval from the minister.

Application for Exemption from Attendance/Enrolment



See IS Guidelines - Exemption from Attendance and Enrolment (SharePoint/Documents/Policies). (See Attachment 4 ,5, 6, and 7)

Attachment 1

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 from 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 Principal 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 2

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.				
Details of prior extended leave – vacation/travel (if applicable)				
Dates of Prior Extended Leave from: / / to: / /			Number of school days:	
Copy of Certificate of Extended leave travel/vacation attached (please tick)		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>
PART B: PARENT DETAILS				
Family Name:		Given Names:		
Address:				



Contact Number:	Relationship to Student:
<p>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.</p> <p>I understand that if the application is accepted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 <i>Certificate of Extended Leave-Vacation/ Travel</i> - <i>The parent must always keep a copy of the Certificate for Extended leave – vacation/travel to produce when requested by police or other authorised attendance officers.</i> <p>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 <i>Application for Extended Leave- Vacation/ Travel</i> may result in the provided period of extended leave being cancelled.</p>	
Signature of Applicant/s:	Date:

PART C: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PRINCIPAL

I accept this application for extended leave-vacation/ travel (please tick)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Please provide more detail here (if required):		
Principal's Name:	Principal's Signature:	
Contact Number:	Date:	

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



Attachment 3

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.

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 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’s Name:			Principal’s Signature:	
Contact Number:			Date:	

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



Attachment 4

Application for Exemption from Attendance at School

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

PART A: STUDENT DETAILS	
Surname:	Given Names:
DOB:	Gender: Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/>
Address:	
Dates of Exemption applied for: / / to: / /	Number of school days:
Reason for Exemption (please tick and provide details)	
Exceptional Domestic Circumstances <input type="checkbox"/>	
Other Exceptional Circumstances <input type="checkbox"/>	
Direction under Section 42D of the <i>Public Health Act 1991</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	
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="checkbox"/>	
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 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 <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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PART B: PARENT DETAILS

Family Name:	Given Names:
Address:	
Contact Number:	Relationship to Student:
<p>As the parent of the above-mentioned student, I hereby apply for a Certificate of Exemption from attendance at school, under the <i>Education Act 1990</i>.</p> <p>I understand that if the exemption is granted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I am responsible for his/her supervision during the period of exemption - the exemption is limited to the period indicated - the exemption is subject to the conditions listed on the Certificate of Exemption - the exemption may be cancelled at any time. <p>I declare the information provided in this application for a certificate of exemption 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 exemption may result in the exemption being revoked.</p>	
Signature of Applicant/s:	Date:

PART C: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PRINCIPAL

Prior to forwarding this application for exemption from attendance at school to the delegate responsible for issuing the Certificate of Exemption (See page 4, *Guidelines for Exemption from School*), the principal should complete the following advice for the delegate.

I recommend that this application from attendance at school is (please tick)	Granted <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Granted <input type="checkbox"/>
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Please provide more detail here (if required):

Principal's Name:	Principal's Signature:
Contact Number:	Date:



Note: Please complete the Certificate of Exemption from Attendance at School if exemption is granted

Attachment 5

Certificate for Exemption from Attendance at School

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:			Number of school days:	
/ / to: / /				
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's Name:			Principal's Name:	
Parent/ Carer's Signature:			Principal's Signature:	
Date:			Date:	

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

Attachment 6.



Application: Exemption From Enrolment

PART A: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE STUDENT'S PARENT/CARER

STUDENT DETAILS

Family name: _____

Given name(s): _____

Year/Grade: _____ Age: _____ Date of birth: ____ (dd) / ____ (mm) / ____ (year)

Address:

_____ Postcode:

School name:

REASON FOR APPLICATION FOR EXEMPTION

- a. Age, where a child turns 6 on or after 1 October in a school year and:
- is engaged in full time preschool education at an accredited preschool for the remainder of that school year.

OR

- is engaged in a full or part-time accredited preschool program for students with disabilities for the remainder of that school year.

OR

- b. The health, learning or social needs or disability of a child:
- where the child would benefit from continuation of an individual program supported by medical specialists due to health, learning or social needs, or disability for no longer than six months after a child's sixth birthday.

Please provide more detail about the reason for the application for exemption here:



SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Please attach any additional evidence to support your application. For all exemptions from enrolment, the child must have a transition to school plan that the school will provide included as part of this application. Other supporting documentation may be required, such as documentation of an individual program(s) that support the child’s needs, medical professional documentation or evidence of continuing engagement in an accredited preschool.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED Yes No

List:

PARENT / CARER DETAILS

Family name: _____

Given name(s) _____

Address:

 Postcode: _____

Telephone number: _____



Relationship to student: _____

As the parent/carer of the above mentioned student, I hereby apply for a Certificate of Exemption from enrolment at school, under the *Education Act 1990*. I understand that if the exemption is granted:

SIGNATURE OF PARENT/CARER:

DATE: ____ / ____ / ____

PART B: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE MINISTER'S DELEGATE

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AS THE MINISTER'S DELEGATE

Following consideration of this application for exemption from enrolment, I am/am not (delete whichever does not apply) satisfied that conditions exist that make it necessary and/or desirable for _____ (name of student) be exempt from enrolment at school.

I recommend that a Certificate of Exemption be (please tick):

GRANTED

NOT GRANTED

NAME AND POSITION OF DELEGATE:

DELEGATE'S SIGNATURE:

DATE: ____ / ____ / ____

NOTIFICATION OF APPLICANT: ____ / ____ / ____

Note: The delegate is requested to provide a Certificate of Exemption if exemption is granted.

- the exemption is subject to the conditions listed on the Certificate of Exemption
- the exemption may be cancelled at any time.



I declare the information provided in this application for a certificate of exemption 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 exemption may result in the exemption being revoked.

Attachment 7

CERTIFICATE: EXEMPTION FROM ENROLMENT

UNDER SECTION 25 OF THE EDUCATION ACT 1990

The student whose details appear below has been granted an exemption from enrolment for the period indicated.

STUDENT DETAILS

Family name: _____ Given name(s):

Year/Grade: _____ Age: _____ Date of birth: ____ (dd) / ____ (mm) / ____ (year)

Address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

School name: _____

DATE OF EXEMPTION FROM: ____ / ____ / ____ to: ____ / ____ / ____

REASON FOR THE EXEMPTION FROM ENROLMENT

AGE

HEALTH, LEARNING, SOCIAL NEEDS OR DISABILITY

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

CONDITIONS OF THE EXEMPTION (e.g.: transition to school program).



NAME AND POSITION OF DELEGATE: _____

SIGNATURE OF DELEGATE: _____ DATE: ___ / ___ / ___

As the parent/carer of the above student, I am responsible for their 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.

NAME OF PARENT/CARER: _____

SIGNATURE OF PARENT/CARER: _____ DATE: ___ / ___ / ___

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



Student has meaningfully engaged with the plan: _____

Plan is to be extended: _____

Recommendations: _____

Agreement:

Principal

Parent 1

Parent 2

Student

Date: __/__/__

Student Attendance Improvement Plan

Review date should be ideally fortnightly or at least monthly.

If attendance issues are regarding known mental health concern or emerging mental health concerns, please collect permission from the parent/guardian to consult with the student's mental health professional for guidance on attendance expectations and support strategies as part of the planning process.