STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Tamworth High School is an inclusive centre of innovation, creativity and excellence.
INTRODUCTION
Tamworth High School is a comprehensive public school that serves its local community. It recognises that attendance is central to all academic and wellbeing issues. The responsibility for encouraging and monitoring high standards of attendance and punctuality is shared amongst the whole school community including staff, students and parents/carers.

The legal basis for compulsory school attendance is located specifically within the principles established in the Education Act 1990, which states that all children between the ages of 6 and 17 must attend school each day that school is open, unless specific exemptions apply. The Act also applies principles in terms of attendance registers that are to be marked accurately on a daily basis.

There are two other issues relating to school attendance. The first is that schools have a duty of care to their students. The maintenance, monitoring and communication of attendance information to the relevant persons form part of that duty. The second is that good attendance links directly to good learning.

This policy also needs to be read in conjunction with the Department of Education and Training document – School Attendance Policy and Student Attendance in Government Schools – Procedures (2010).

RATIONALE
• The attendance policy is mandatory and is a part of the school’s Student Wellbeing Policy.
• This policy recognises that maximum attendance supports the achievement of our whole school goals by all students. That is, that all students will become:
  • participating community members
  • self-sufficient individuals
  • ready for life and work
  • effective communicators
  • lifelong learners and
  • environmentally aware
• Tamworth High School has a responsibility for improving student attendance rates in terms of both full day and fractional attendance.

OBJECTIVES
• To improve student attendance rates
• To decrease the incidence of fractional truancy
• To minimize the number of students arriving late
• To develop proactive approaches to attending school in order to maximize learning opportunities for our students
• To maximise student achievement of whole school goals through full attendance.

IMPLEMENTATION
Teacher responsibilities:
• Communicate high expectations for, and acknowledge, good attendance
• Respond to lateness and truancy for their own classes
• Maintain a positive and attractive classroom environment
• Accurately mark and maintain school, class, and sport rolls
• Support the Student Wellbeing Team in attendance initiatives
• Consistently implement Tamworth High School’s Student Attendance Policy
• Provide accurate lists to Student Administration Office (SAO) when an excursion is organised.
• Mark class rolls in each and every lesson (to be retained until the end of the school year)
• Document on Sentral and generate appropriate attendance letters for individual students in classes
Student Responsibilities:
- Attend school punctually on each day that instruction is provided
- Attend all lessons punctually
- Remain in class at all times unless given permission to leave
- Bring notes from Parents/Carers to explain absences
- Co-operate with Tamworth High School’s Student Attendance Policy

Parents/Carers Responsibilities:
*Parents/Carers are "legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children."
- Send students to school on every day instruction is provided
- Promote a positive attitude towards school attendance
- Provide written or verbal explanations for each absence from school within seven (7) days
- Co-operate with Tamworth High School’s Student Attendance Policy
- Take measures to resolve attendance issue involving their child/children

Student Data Officer Responsibilities (SASS Staff):
- Provide a weekly print out of student attendance for Head Teacher Student Wellbeing/Deputy Principals
- Generate 2 day absence letters to be sent home to Parents/Carers
- Liaise with Deputy Principals, Year Advisers and Head Teacher Student Wellbeing regarding attendance issues as they occur

Year Advisers’ Responsibilities:
- Assist Attendance Monitoring Team with student attendance patterns and take appropriate action
- Maintain effective communication with members of the school community
- Assist with implement strategies to correct absenteeism and truancy
- Liaise with the Student Wellbeing Team to develop individual attendance remediation programs (as needed)
- Provide recognition for outstanding attendance

Head Teachers’ Wellbeing Responsibilities:
- Member of the Attendance Monitoring Team with Deputy Principals
- Promote and clarify Tamworth High School’s expectations for attendance
- Maintain effective communication with members of the school community
- Refer persistent absentees to the Home School Liaison Team
- Implement strategies to correct absenteeism and truancy
- Liaise with the Student Wellbeing Team to develop individual attendance remediation programs

Deputy Principal Responsibilities:
- Member of the Attendance Monitoring Team with Head Teacher Student Wellbeing
- Supervise accurate roll marking for roll call and attendance variations
- Promote and clarify Tamworth High School’s expectations for attendance to students
- Supervise attendance monitoring procedures on a weekly basis with Head Teacher Student Wellbeing
- Implement strategies to correct absenteeism and truancy

Principal Responsibilities
- Ensure there is a policy for school attendance as part of the school Student Wellbeing Policy
- Establish procedures and structures to support teachers dealing with attendance problems and to promote and recognise good attendance
- Authorise school interventions when attendance has been unsatisfactory
- Ensure attendance records are accessible
- Supervise implementation of strategies to correct absenteeism and truancy
STRATEGIES TO ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT ATTENDANCE

- Counsel students with poor attendance by Head Teacher, Student Wellbeing or Administration, Student Wellbeing Team, HSLO, School Counsellor, and outside agencies where appropriate
- Raise the profile of attendance through teachers marking class rolls in a public way, acknowledgement of good/improved attendance, verbal encouragement by all school personnel and correction of absenteeism and truancy
- Revise expectations on a regular basis through articles in the Buzz, messages on assembly and via the daily bulletin
- Acknowledge good attendance through a recognition certificate system and special certificates each semester for students with outstanding attendance
- Correct absenteeism and truancy through:
  - Accurate roll marking and consistent follow-up
  - Regular spot attendance checks of students of concern
  - Random checks of whole year groups on a regular basis
  - Follow-up of lateness and truancy at classroom level
  - Counsel poor attenders and refer to Student Wellbeing Team or HSLO
  - Parent/Carer phone calls/interviews
  - Writing of Personal Learning Programs
  - A school-based attendance improvement plan

EVALUATION

The attendance policy will be evaluated in terms of agreed indicators on the School Plan and Attendance Plan.
PROCEDURES FOR RECORDING ATTENDANCE

Attendance procedures work most effectively when students are aware that we care, we will monitor their attendance and we will follow up on absences.

Procedures need to ensure that we:

- make our expectation of maximum attendance in all lessons very clear
- have procedures for acknowledging good attendance
- have strategies for correcting truancy and unnecessary absence

Daily Roll Call using Sentral

- Roll call is held each day at 9.00am in timetabled rooms.
- Staff collect printed roll folder from SAO (for use as backup/note collection).
- All staff are to mark roll call electronically using Sentral in the morning (refer to Appendix A for detailed instructions).
- Replacement staff should use iPad/Laptop to access Sentral where possible.
- A student is marked absent if not physically present when the roll is marked.
- Notes from Parents/Carers received during roll call must be initialled and dated by the teacher marking the roll and placed into roll folder.
- Late students go straight to roll call and have late time recorded. (No late students to SAO during roll call).
- Enter lateness to nearest 5 minute block. Complete the roll marking by pressing the SUBMIT button.
- Assess and mark uniform without communication to student.
- Late students must go to SAO after roll call time has ended.
- Completed roll folder is returned to SAO at the end of roll call.

Daily Roll Call Backup System (When network fails)

- Staff to collect printed rolls from SAO (these will be printed end of each week for the following week).
- Completed roll is returned to SAO at the end of roll call.

Class Rolls

- Class teachers mark rolls electronically using Sentral (period by period) each lesson. This should be completed in the first 10 minutes of the lesson and submitted.
- Students arriving late will require re-submission of electronic roll by class teachers to record reason and time of lateness.
- Sentral will:
  - Identify students absent/late/attending incursions or excursions etc.
  - Reveal attendance discrepancies. All class teachers are responsible for initial follow-up of attendance discrepancies (i.e. truancy, unexplained lateness, failure to attend roll call etc.)
- ‘Missing’ students should be tagged on Sentral and referred to appropriate supervisor (Head Teacher or Deputy Principal for urgent cases).
- Students identified with class attendance discrepancies need to be dealt with by Teacher/Head Teacher using appropriate responses/consequences. These include:
  - Detention
  - Placement on monitoring card and Parent/Carer contact
- Teachers should notify SAO to call home if the student has left school grounds.
- Short term casual staff will need class rolls printed by faculty/teacher to facilitate class roll marking. This is the responsibility of the class teacher / faculty Head Teacher. These rolls should be entered on Sentral at the end of each day by the Head Teacher, or the absent staff member upon return to school.
- Casuals with network access or replacement staff can use Sentral to mark class rolls. Once a casual staff member has a login and is shown how to do this they can do it from then on.
- Students arriving late with an explanatory note from a teacher, should have reason recorded on Sentral to ensure no further action is taken (i.e. for lateness, truancy).
- Repeat offenders can be referred to year Head Teacher for further follow up. Year HT to check Sentral for main offenders each day. Reports can be generated within 30 seconds.
- All rolls must be submitted every lesson.
PROCEDURES FOR MONITORING ATTENDANCE

Attendance patterns are monitored by Student Attendance team.

- Head Teacher Student Wellbeing
- Deputy Principals
- Student Data Officer

A weekly printout is generated for students averaging less than 90% attendance. This is checked by Student Attendance team who then act on information by:

- Generating letters to be posted to Parents/Carers
- Making phone call to Parents/Carers
- Requesting interviews with students and/or Parents/Carers
- Keeping a record of all contacts on individual students of concern
- Referring students to the Student Wellbeing Team and Head Teacher Student Wellbeing
- Students under 17 years of age may be referred to the HSLO/ASLO.
- Students over 17 years of age can be may be:
  - interviewed and counselled
  - Parents/Carers contacted
  - dealt with using post compulsory education strategies

Late arrivals

- Students who are late to school after roll call must report to SAO
- A note (or phone call) needs to be provided from their Parent/Carer indicating the reason for their partial absence
- Students who arrive late will be issued with a late slip after swiping in
- Students must hand that late slip to their class teacher

LEAVING SCHOOL DURING THE DAY:

Students are required to –

- Take a signed note, from the student’s parent/carer, providing the reason for a leave pass to the Student Administration Office between 8.30am and 9.00am and place the note in the Early Leave Box. The note must indicate the date and time the student is requesting to leave, if the student is returning, the student’s year group and a parent/carer contact number.
- Student Administration Office staff give the parent/carer note to a Deputy Principal to be authorised, if approved a leave pass will be issued.
- Students collect their Leave Pass from Student Administration Office at Recess 1. This note is used to allow the student to come out of class at the allotted time, the student then attends the Student Administration Office to swipe out.

Senior Students

Senior students are offered the privilege of flexible leave arrangements at the beginning or end of the school day as outlined in the Senior Learning Policy.

Senior students are required to –

- Submit a Senior Leave Application form to SAO at the beginning of each term – these forms are available from SAO and will be checked against student academic and behaviour records.
- Swipe in at SAO if arriving late and /or swipe out at SAO if leaving early, after relevant form has been completed and given to SAO and approved by relevant cohort Deputy Principal.

Partial Attendance of Select Students

Students who are participating in an approved behaviour program involving part-time attendance must swipe in and swipe out as they arrive and leave. The periods of absence each day are to be recorded as partial leave.
HOME SCHOOLING
When a Parent/Carer notifies the school that their child will be Home Schooled, the school is to contact the HSLO team to verify that registration for Home Schooling has been applied for and granted. The student’s name may then be removed from the attendance register.

TRANSFERRING STUDENTS
When the school has been informed that a student is transferring to another school but no Request for Records has been received within ten (10) days, the senior executive or SAO staff are to contact the new school to ascertain if there has been an application to enrol and a request for records sent. An application for HSLO support should be lodged if there has been no application to enrol.

DISTANCE EDUCATION
If the school has not received a Request for Records from the Distance Education Centre within four (4) weeks of being informed of a student’s intended transfer to Distance Education, the school is to call the Distance Education Centre to ascertain the status of the application. If the application has been refused and the student has not returned to school the HSLO must be contacted.

a) School Carnivals
All students are required to attend the annual Swimming Carnival, Cross Country and Athletics Carnival. Normal roll marking, late arrive and early departure procedures apply.

Staff organising work experience through the Support Department or through Vocational Education courses should provide SAO with a list of names and dates of the work placement. Year 10 Work Experience should also be recorded at SAO.

c) Exemption from Schooling
There are two types of Exemption from Schooling: full-time and part-time.
Full-time – The pro-forma is available from SAO or from the Deputy Principals. It should be completed and signed by a member of the Senior Executive. It must be recoded on the attendance system and placed in the student file.
Part-time – This must be completed and faxed to the District Office with relevant attachments. The details should be written on the back of the daily announcements so staff are aware of the details and recorded on the electronic rolls. The original should be filed in the student file.

d) Sport Organisation:
Attendance at sport is a mandatory requirement for the awarding of any certificate by the Board of Studies. The attendance records for sport will be maintained in Sentral including what sport the student has chosen and any unauthorised absences.

The Sports Organiser(s) and the SASS staff will liaise closely to ensure that the Sentral information is accurate and up to date.
Roll Marking Procedures

**Primary System**
SENTRAL Attendance / iPad

**Backup System**
Paper-based Roll
(Only if SENTRAL unavailable)

- Rolls are marked at beginning of each day
  ROLL CALL – 9.00am – 9.10am

- Late students (before 9:10am) report directly to ROLL CALL
  Late arrival time recorded on SENTRAL

- Teacher collects absence notes from students and adjusts records in SENTRAL for appropriate date

- Students arriving after the roll is marked, must be added to the bottom of the roll sheet
  (Paper Backup System Only)

- Roll Folder and Notes returned to SAO by the Roll Teacher

- Late students AFTER ROLL CALL (9:10am)
  Report to SAO 'Late Slip' via SENTRAL before moving to class with note

**IMPORTANT NOTES**

- Only students actually present in the room must be marked present

- SENTRAL will update Records Rolls with Late details

- Students without Late Slip / SENTRAL update to be referred to DP for corrective action

- All notes handed to Roll Call teacher need to be signed, dated and absence code written on note prior to returning to SAO.

- Senior Students with current Senior Leave Provisions will appear on SENTRAL

- Attendance discrepancies MUST be communicated to office staff to update

**DEC Attendance Codes**
A - Absent
S - Sick
P - Partial day
L - Leave
B - School Business
E - Suspension
M - Exemption
H - Shared Schooling
Class Roll Marking Procedures

Primary System
SENTRAL Attendance / iPad

Class Roll marked at beginning of lesson

Late students should have a 'Late Slip' from SAO to enter class

Late students marked present and time noted for unexplained lateness

Student attendance discrepancies identified by Teacher
• Student absent from class – present at roll call
• Student present in class – absent from roll call/previous lesson

Late students report to SAO for a Late Slip
SENTRAL will update roll with arrival time
Student moves to roll call or class with note.

Backup System
Paper-based Class Rolls
(Only if SENTRAL unavailable)

Only students actually present in the room must be marked present

Students without Late Slip / SENTRAL update to be dealt with by Teacher and/or Head Teacher

SENTRAL will update Class Rolls with Late details if the student has reported to SAO

Attendance discrepancies MUST be followed up and communicated to SAO

Attendance discrepancies flagged on SENTRAL for follow-up
• Teacher remains responsible for follow-up.
• Unexplained absences referred to HT
• HTSW/DPs monitor flagged discrepancies daily

Senior Students with current Senior Leave Provisions will appear on SENTRAL

Students with explained absences or on excursions will appear on SENTRAL

IMPORTANT NOTES

DEC Attendance Codes
A - Absent
S - Sick
P - Partial day
L - Leave
B - School Business
E - Suspension
M - Exemption
H - Shared Schooling
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary System</th>
<th>Backup System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SENTRAL Attendance / iPad</td>
<td>Paper-based Roll (Only if SENTRAL unavailable)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Attendance Follow-up Procedures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rolls are marked at beginning of each day</th>
<th>SASS Student Data Officer (SDO) monitors roll mark completion via SENTRAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ROLL CALL – 9.00am – 9.10am</td>
<td>Discrepancies reported to DP ASAP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Late Arrivals / Early Leavers managed by SAO on SENTRAL</th>
<th>DP ensures each Roll Call class has a teacher assigned each day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Printed Slip provided at appropriate time</td>
<td>Casual staff provided with iPad or Paper-based roll</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Late students monitored by HT Late Arrivals each day</th>
<th>Late Slip issued immediately</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early Leave Slips collected by student at Recess</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Roll marked at beginning of lesson</th>
<th>Each DP responsible for monitoring attendance or relevant year groups (odds/evens).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discrepancies followed up with:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Class teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Excursion manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Head Teacher Faculty/Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Direct intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Parent/Carer contact</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senior Students must have an active Senior Leave Application (SLA)</th>
<th>Student Data Officer (SAO) generates:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All active leave arrangements logged in SENTRAL</td>
<td>Attendance Rates &lt;90% list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Late Rate above 10% list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weekly for Head Teacher Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wellbeing / DPs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senior students with active SLA</th>
<th>Student Data Officer (SAO) generates Unexplained Absence letters after 2 days unexplained absence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• ‘swipe in’ upon arrival and</td>
<td>SAO staff prepare Unexplained Absence letters for mailing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ‘swipe out’ before leaving</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weekly Attendance Monitoring</th>
<th>Student Data Officer (SAO) generates:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Students identified as regularly absent</td>
<td>Attendance Rates &lt;90% list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Students identified as regularly late</td>
<td>Late Rate above 10% list</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Attendance Referral Checklist commenced.</th>
<th>HT Student Wellbeing and DPs review weekly data printouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strategies include:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Identification/resolution of discrepancy issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Direct intervention – Student Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Disciplinary Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Parent Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Referral to Student Wellbeing Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Home Visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Child Wellbeing Unit Referral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Principal Letter + HSLO referral</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Truancy Procedures for Teaching Staff

Mark Class Roll (Early in lesson)

- Student present but shown as absent earlier
  - Ask the student about absence earlier in the day and inform the teacher that earlier marked the student absent.

- Student is absent and is absent all day
  - No action required.

- Student is present and is present all day
  - No action required.

- Student is absent but was at Roll Call or an earlier lesson
  - If the next class is in 1-2 days, ask the student in the next lesson about the absence.
  - If the next class is more than 1-2 days seek the student out earlier and ask about the absence.

If the student is truanting:
- make an entry on SENTRAL
- if necessary give the student a detention
- if needed seek help from your Head Teacher