



GOVERNOR
STIRLING
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Publish Date	October 2021	
Review Date	October 2022	
Changes made	Complete change	

Vision



IMAGINE CREATE ACHIEVE

Every Student | Every Classroom | Every Day



HIGH EXPECTATIONS

We cultivate high expectation relationships with each other, students and the wider community to drive school improvements.



CONNECTEDNESS

Systems are in place to ensure every student is linked to at least one staff member.



STUDENT-CENTERED

We identify and prioritise student needs, and respond appropriately with additional time and support.



EXCELLENT TEACHING

There is an agreed understanding of what constitutes excellent teaching supported by clear classroom observation processes, professional learning and coaching.



QUALITY CURRICULUM

Staff are collectively responsible for delivering a guaranteed and viable curriculum.



EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

We utilise an evidence-based improvement cycle to strengthen student outcomes.



EFFECTIVE CHANGE MANAGEMENT

We utilise effective change management processes based on trust and mutual respect to bring about sustainable whole-school improvement.



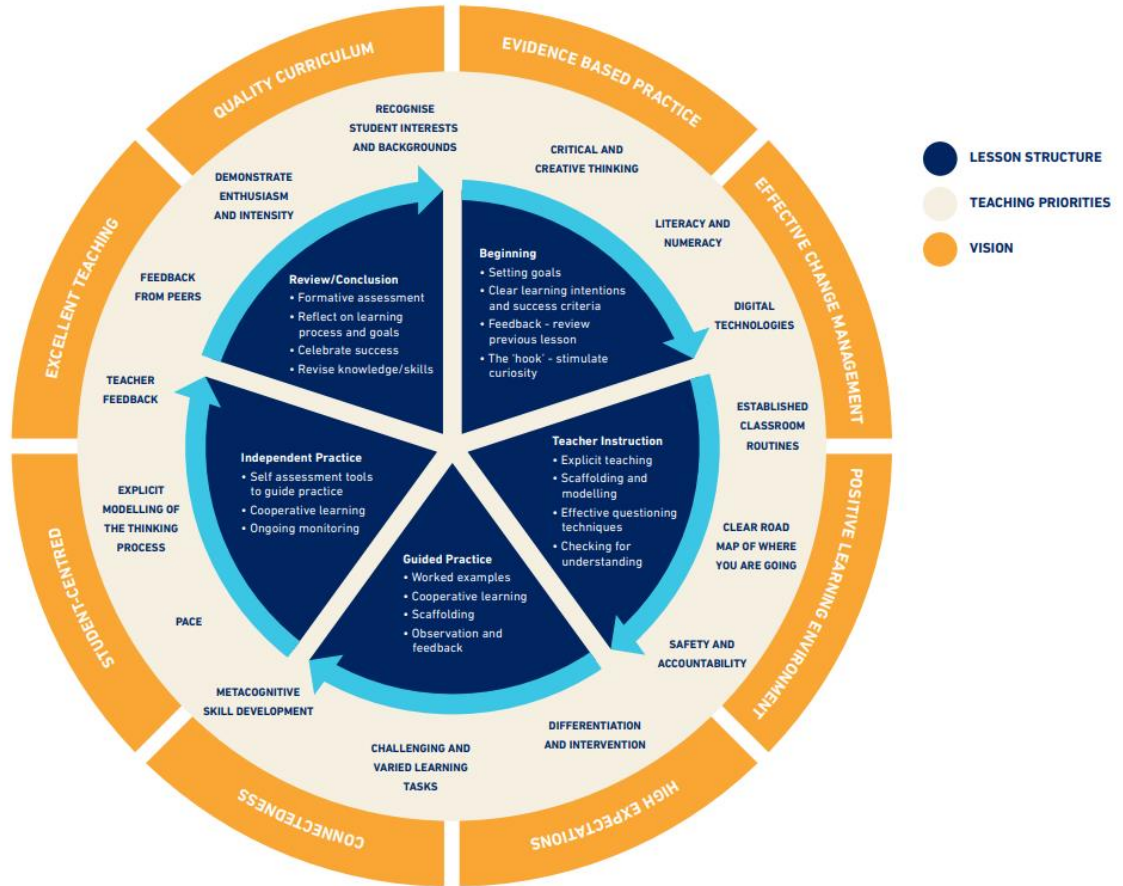
POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

We take collective responsibility in providing a safe and orderly learning environment, underpinned by the school values and code of conduct.

Values



Instructional Framework



Rationale

The likelihood of success in learning is strongly linked to regular attendance and appropriate participation in educational programs. It is crucial that students develop habits of regular attendance at an early age, even from the time they are enrolled in a preschool setting. Children who have poor patterns of attendance are at risk of not achieving their educational, social or psychological potential and are disadvantaged in the quality of choices they are able to make in later life. There is no 'safe' threshold for non-attendance, but more significant effects are likely to occur if students are absent for substantial periods:

- Overall, the learning outcomes for students from highly disadvantaged backgrounds decline more rapidly with any absence from school, particularly in the early years.
- Students with higher rates of achievement are not immune to the potential impacts of absence. These students often experience larger drops in academic achievement through absence.
- While a majority of students who miss school do so for legitimate reasons, such as illness, it is concerning that about a third of all student absences are unexplained. This type of absence is most strongly associated with lower achievement outcomes.

Research also shows that lower rates of school attendance and disengagement from school can be linked to unemployment, lower income, riskier health behaviour and contact with justice authorities. Not completing school can restrict a student's future opportunities, including their ability to fully participate in social, civic and economic life. In almost every aspect, this is amplified for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Once learners have begun to absent themselves from school, and the initial cause of this remains undetected or unexplored, it is likely that the pattern of absence will continue and escalate through the student's subsequent school career. Late arrival at school is often related to non-attendance during school.

Research has shown:

- missing half a day of school each week equates to one month of missed learning each year.
- the attendance habits set by children when they first start school continue throughout their school life.
- if children miss half a day of school each week between Pre-primary and Year 10, they will miss almost one full year of learning.
- learning is cumulative – if children miss a day, it is harder for them to catch up.

Dept. of Edu., WA 2021

The causes of student absence are multi-dimensional, complex and numerous. They are often considered in isolation when, in reality, students may face a range of compounding issues.

At Governor Stirling SHS, we have measures in place to support and build student and family engagement. We are all responsible for monitoring and improving student attendance to ensure better outcomes for all. We recognise that there are many factors that impede regular attendance at school, and we work with our students and their families to understand those factors and to actively support engagement with the school. We work with students and their families on localized and context-specific solutions. This includes having a culturally responsive approach to Aboriginal student attendance and resolution. We have procedures in place to identify students at risk, communicate clearly and effectively with parents/guardians, and to encourage and acknowledge any improvements made. We

respond to truancy in a timely and educative fashion, recognising that there are many reasons why students avoid classes.

We monitor the attendance of all students and implement appropriate strategies to maintain or restore attendance according to the following categories:

- students with attendance between **90% - 100%** are considered to have **regular** attendance;
- students with attendance between **80% - 89%** are considered to be at **indicated** risk;
- students with attendance between **60%–79%** are considered to be at **moderate** risk; closely monitored, intervention when required.
- students with attendance **below 59%** are considered to be at **severe** risk. Case management is necessary.

Roles and Responsibilities

Parents/ guardians:

- Support and encourage students to attend school every day.
- Advise school of illness/unavoidable absence as soon as possible.
- Advise school of any need for early departure or appointments during school time.
- Minimise the disruption to the learning program by not planning holidays during term time.
- Reply to SMS messages from school relating to non-attendance to classes/school.
- Support punctuality to school by 8.50am.
- If a student is late, inform school. Remind and encourage students to sign in at Student Services.
- Ensure that there is clear communication with Year Coordinators if there are circumstances that will affect student attendance at school.
- Work with school to improve attendance where necessary.

Students:

- Attend school every day.
- Be punctual to school (8.50am) and all other classes.
- Remain on school premises at all times of the school day, unless parent/carer has notified Student Services of reasonable cause.
- If there is a need to leave school at any time, obtain an early leaving pass from Student Services.
- Advise school of illness/unavoidable absence as soon as possible.
- Sign in at Student Services if late to school and get to class as soon as possible.
- Show your late pass to the teacher.
- If there is a Relief teacher, support the teacher by ensuring that you have been marked present.

All staff:

- Provide a safe and orderly learning environment, underpinned by our school values and code of conduct.
- Promote to students and parents/guardians the importance of regular attendance for their child's successful educational outcomes.
- Communicate to parents and the community that we see them as partners in the education of their children.
- Acknowledge and celebrate high rates of attendance as well as improvements in attendance.

- Course changes to be communicated in a timely manner to avoid inaccuracies in attendance.
- Communicate any student absence from class due to external agencies, traineeships, excursions, meetings, etc.

House teachers:

- House teachers to positively address attendance for all students in their House group.
- Office Attendance staff to send out regular House groups attendance bar chart summaries from SIS. These are to be kept in House rooms as a visible reminder and incentive to students.
- Conversations to be held with those students in the House group who have **80-90% attendance** in a positive manner to encourage more regular attendance.
- Any information gathered on reasons for lack of attendance to be communicated to Year Coordinators.

Teachers:

- Engage all students with a viable, challenging and high-quality curriculum.
- Welcome every student into class every day, regardless of attendance rate.
- Record attendance accurately on SEQTA within the first 10 minutes for every class
- Record late to class or leaving class (both with and without permission) on SEQTA
- Ensure that a student has a late note from Student Services.
- Communicate and record any concerns about missed classes to the appropriate Year Coordinator.
- Relief staff to record attendance accurately (where possible, using student photo identity).
- Remind students that an absence explanation (written or verbal) is required from parent/guardian.
- Document any contact/attempted contact re attendance in SEQTA, alerting Year Coordinators.
- Contact parents/guardians if a student is continuously late to class (and document in SEQTA).
- All Risk Management Plan students' attendance to be alerted as soon as possible to Student Services.
- Maali staff to record Student attendance at Maali Centre via SEQTA or by emailing Student Services if the student has not already been marked as present by the classroom teacher (prior arrangement).

Heads of Learning Areas:

- Support teachers in addressing student lateness to class and truancy from class (referred by Student Services or teacher)
- Support teachers to accurately record attendance in a timely manner; follow up reports from School Officer

School Officer Attendance:

- Support staff and students to record their attendance correctly. Provide email prompts where needed.
- Sign students in and out (early leave pass) of school via Student Services.
- Act on parent messages and change details on SEQTA accordingly.
- Record in SEQTA any communication re student illness/unavoidable absence as soon as possible.
- Daily text messages to be sent at 10.30am and 2.30pm.
- Flag any rolls that have not been marked and query anomalies re attendance of specific students.
- Ensure the data is accurately completed by confirming teachers are using the correct absence coding.
- Weeks 4 and 9 Attendance checklists to go to Year Coordinators for checking prior to Attendance Letters being sent out.
- Week 5 and 10 Attendance letters sent out, with meetings to follow where appropriate.

- House teachers to be sent regular bar chart summaries for their House attendance, with specific emphasis on 80-90% attendees.
- Update SAR year-group attendance spreadsheets with latest percentage attendance and any information gathered from contact with parents/carers.
- Send improvers/decliners chart to year coordinators to follow up each fortnight.

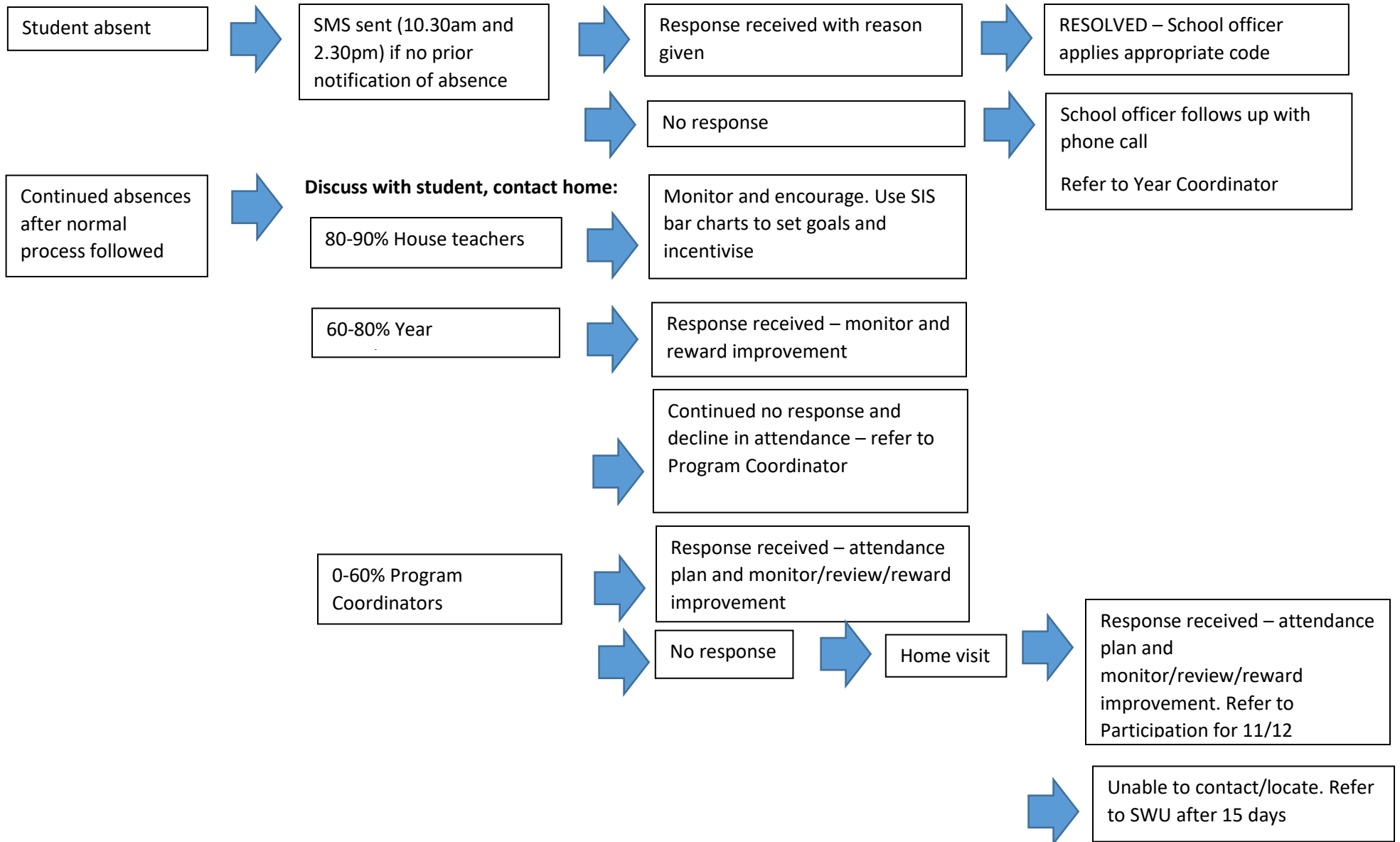
Year Coordinators

- Have an overview of the year group's attendance, taking particular note of those whose attendance is between 60-80%.
- Identify and act upon student attendance discrepancies. (eg. Marked absent from class when student was elsewhere on school grounds). Communicate with staff as well as home and record information in SEQTA.
- Record any known periods of truancy – change code in SEQTA.
- Follow up improvers/decliners as notified by school officer. SEQTA commendations to be sent home for improvers, contact with student and/or parents/carers as appropriate for decliners.
- More significant rewards to be acknowledged at the end of term and semester (eg. 95%+ and 100% attendees).
- Check attendance letters list prior to sending out in weeks 5 and 10. Ensure contact home has been made, and follow up with Letter 1 (Appendix C).
- Initiate meetings to support and restore the student's attendance, where required.

Program Coordinators

- Target those with below 60% attendance with a planned approach that includes a home visit (Badged Attendance Officer must attend) and working with the broader community where appropriate, and identifying attendance improvement strategies in a documented plan specific to the student.
- School Psychologist to assist with planning, consultation, and resolving issues relating to non/low attendance.
- Meet with the family and external providers to support the student. (Work with the Maali Centre for Indigenous students). Implement a Responsible Parenting Agreement if appropriate.
- Support alternative education choices if appropriate.
- Report students with 15+ consecutive days' absence, where communication has failed with home, as Students Whereabouts Unknown for lower school students, and refer to Participation for upper school students.

ATTENDANCE FLOWCHART



Appendix A:



GOVERNOR
STIRLING

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL
25 Third Avenue

Woodbridge, WA 6056

Phone +61 8 6274 0300

Fax +61 8 6274 0395

GovernorStirling.SHS@education.wa.edu.au

«ParSalutation1»

«ParAdd1L1»

«ParAdd1L2»

«ParAdd1Town» «ParAdd1State» «ParAdd2PostCode»

Dear «ParSalutation1»

We wish to advise you that «FirstName»'s attendance is below 80%.

At Governor Stirling Senior High School, we are committed to ensuring and supporting 100% attendance at school. We recognise that the likelihood of success in learning is strongly linked to regular attendance and appropriate participation in educational programs. Children who have poor patterns of attendance are at risk of not achieving their educational, social or psychological potential and are disadvantaged in the quality of choices they are able to make in later life.

The *School Education Act 1999* requires parents to send their child/children every day the school is open for instruction unless there is a good reason for them not to attend. Parents are required to contact the school each time their child/children is/are absent with a suitable reason.

Please contact your child's Year Coordinator to discuss the factors that are inhibiting your child's regular school attendance so that we can work with you to plan for improvement.

Regards

Year/Program Coordinator

29 November 2021



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SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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«ParSalutation1»
«ParAdd1L1»
«ParAdd1L2»
«ParAdd1Town» «ParAdd1State» «ParAdd2PostCode»

Dear «ParSalutation1»

This letter is a follow up to our previous correspondence regarding «FirstName»'s attendance.

As part of our Whole School Attendance Strategy we are working with students and their families to improve or maintain a high standard of attendance.

The *School Education Act 1999* requires parents to send their child/children every day the school is open for instruction unless there is a good reason for them not to attend.

Improving student attendance makes a significant difference to each child's achievement while at school and ultimately for the choices they can make when they leave school. In addition to achievement and outcomes, attendance is an essential measure for employers and is a vital workplace skill. Students attending school regularly do better in part time and full time employment, have greater success in getting and completing a traineeship, a TAFE qualification and a University degree.

Currently your child has not shown an improvement in their attendance so a meeting with the Year Coordinator is now required.

Please contact Student Services on 6274 0331 to organise a meeting.

Regards

Year/Program Coordinator

29 November 2021

Student Attendance Plan

Student Name _____ Year _____ Date _____

Barrier	Family/Student Responsibilities	School Responsibilities	Strategies

Agreement:

Student _____ Parent/carer _____ Program Coordinator _____

Review Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Plan is to be extended: Yes No

Recommendations:

If attendance does not improve, in accordance with Department of Education Policy, a Responsible Parenting Agreement may be created.

