

Attendance Policy

1. Scope and Definition

- 1.1. This policy sets out the requirements for student attendance at the German International School Sydney (GISS).

2. Attendance

- 2.1. Parents are obliged to **report the absence of their child because of illness** on the **first morning of the child's absence**. This should be done by phone to the school office or by e-mail to the class teacher.
- 2.2. At the very latest, the student has to produce a **written explanation** by the parents for the absence of their child on the return of the student to class.
- a. Should the student be **sick for more than 2 days, a medical certificate needs to be provided**.
- b. If such notice is not supplied within 7 days, the absence will be marked as unexplained.
- 2.3. **Unexcused periods of absence are recorded in the student file and also on the half-yearly and end of year reports**. Also any correspondence in regards to unsatisfactory attendance is kept in the student file.
- 2.4. The absence of students from lessons, for **reasons other than illness**, for **single days** has to be requested by the parents in writing to the Principal **before the envisaged date**. The **student is only excused when a written approval has been given by the Principal**. Reasons for this type of absence may include:
- a. Misadventure or unforeseen events;
- b. Participation in special events not related to the school;
- c. Domestic necessity such as a serious illness of an immediate family member;
- d. Attendance at funerals;
- e. Recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions.
- 2.5. Exemption from Attendance
- a. Students of compulsory school age who are enrolled at GISS require Certificate of Exemption from Attendance for absences not related to illness. Any application for exemption from school attendance must be applied for in advance. Exemptions cannot be granted retrospectively.
- b. Under Section 25 of the Education Act 1990, the Minister may grant a Certificate of Exemption. This power is delegated, subject to this policy, to the

- Principal for granting of exemption from school attendance for periods totalling up to 100 days in a 12 month period for any one student.
- c. An exemption from attendance may be granted due to:
 - exceptional domestic circumstances, including but not limited to participation in family holidays during school term subject to being satisfied that this is in the best educational interest of the child;
 - other exceptional circumstances such as health of the student where sick leave or alternative enrolment is not appropriate;
 - the child being prevented from attending school because of a direction under section 42D of the Public Health Act 1991;
 - employment in the entertainment industry or participation in elite sporting events for short periods of time, i.e. for one or two days, and at short notice.
 - d. Prior to an application of exemption being declined, the parents have a right to understand the reasons and to respond to any concerns which cause the application to be declined.
 - e. If an exemption is granted, a Certificate of Exemption is issued by the school. The original is handed to the parents and a copy is stored in the student's file.
 - f. The Certificate of Exemption includes specific conditions that apply to the exemption.
 - g. The Principal can cancel the Certificate of Exemption where they identify circumstances that they believe warrant this action. For example, where the conditions attached to the exemption are not being met.

3. Attendance Management

3.1. Checks of attendance

- a. Years K to 10: Every morning at the start of the lesson the class teacher checks the attendance of the students in their class. If a student is absent without approval of absence by the principal or without notification by the parents the class teacher has to inform the school office. The administration staff will then immediately contact the parents to enquire about the unexcused absence of the student.
- b. Years 11 and 12: Students sign in at reception each morning when they arrive and sign out at reception when they leave for the day. (They also need to sign out and sign back in when they leave the campus during the day.) Attendance is recorded in the course book for each course. Absences without approval or notification of illness are followed up with the parents immediately after becoming aware of the absence.
- c. Documentation of absences Years K to 10: The class teacher enters the absence periods daily in the class roll using the codes in Appendix A and also in PC School.
- d. Years 11 and 12: Absences are entered in PC School by the Receptionist.
- e. All attendance records are kept for a minimum of 7 years in the school archives. Back-ups of all electronic records are stored by the schools off-site.

- 3.2. On leaving the school all students must supply the school with the name and contact details of their new school, including the country. If these details have not been provided a registered letter will be sent to the home address requesting the information. If there is no response within 7 days the principal will inform the regional home school liaison officer at the Department of Education.

4. Special additional provisions for all overseas students

- 4.1. Overseas students must achieve satisfactory attendance, which under the ESOS Act is defined as a minimum of 80% attendance rate.
- 4.2. If an overseas student has accumulated more than 5 days of absence within a term the class teacher must inform the student and their parents about the requirement of the minimum attendance rate, that the student may fail to satisfy the attendance requirement, and the potential impact on the student's visa. The class teacher provides counselling to the student and their parents to identify issues, ways to ensure that the minimum attendance rate is met and ways how the student can successfully continue the class despite their absence. Further absences will be monitored by the class teacher. The class teacher will inform the overseas student counsellor about the absences and ongoing monitoring.
- 4.3. If an overseas student has accumulated 20% of absences in a term, the class teacher will inform the Principal who will inform the student and their parents in writing that the School is intending to report the student for not achieving satisfactory attendance. The notice must include information for the student about the availability of the grievance procedure and that the student has 20 working days to lodge an appeal. If the student does not access the appeals process within the timeframe the School will report the student via PRISMS for not achieving satisfactory attendance.
- 4.4. For IB students only: The School may decide to not report the student for unsatisfactory attendance if the student has an attendance rate of more than 70% and has demonstrated satisfactory academic progress.
- 4.5. For non-IB students only: The School may decide to not report the student for unsatisfactory attendance if the student has an attendance rate of more than 70% and the student produces documentary evidence clearly demonstrating compassionate or compelling circumstances for their absences.

Appendix A: NSW Attendance Register Codes

x	to mark a student's first and last day of attendance for each term
a	to mark a student's absence on a day
Pa	to mark a student's absence for part of a day (time of arrival and departure must be recorded)
A	to mark a student's absence as unexplained or unjustified; this symbol must be used if no notice has been provided by the parents within seven days of the occurrence of the absence
B	to mark a student's absence on official school business (student is leaving the school site to undertake activities such as work experience, school sports, school excursion / camp)
E	to mark a student's absence during suspension
F	for Year 11 and 12 only: student participating in flexible timetable and not present because they are not required to be at school (e.g. study week)
H	to mark a student's absence where the student attends another education setting for a period of time (e.g. specialist education)
L	to mark a student's absence due to reasons approved by the Principal (up to 15 days per school year); this may be due to misadventure or unforeseen events, participation in special events not related to the school, domestic necessity such as a serious illness of an immediate family member, attendance at funerals, recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions.
M	to mark a student's absence where the student was issued a Certificate of Exemption
S	to mark a student's absence due to sickness or as the result of a medical appointment

Document Management

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