



Ku-ring-gai High School

Harmony in Diversity

Student Attendance Policy

Regular school attendance is one of the keys to successful learning. To foster this, Ku-ring-gai High School's attendance procedures reflect both the requirements of the Department of Education and the school's strong focus on encouraging good attendance and undertaking positive intervention in cases of poor attendance. Our school has an expectation of high student attendance rates which reflects our school community's support for the educational opportunities we offer students.

Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school. As noted in the NSW Government Procedures, if a student is absent and no explanation has been provided, parents/carers will be contacted on the same day by the office via SMS text message. Staff may also contact parents/carers via phone or email to request a reason for the absence.

Attendance procedures

Roll call

Years 7 to 12 have roll call at 9am – 9:10am in and designated classroom for each roll group.

Year 11 & 12 students must also attend school for roll call and remain at school until the end of the day (unless prior approval from the Deputy Principal). Senior students are not permitted to leave the school grounds between scheduled lessons.

Student responsibilities and attendance requirements

Our students are expected to attend all lessons or activities organised by the school as part of their educational program for the day unless they are unable to do so because of sickness or another acceptable reason.

If a student is absent, parents/carers are required to provide the school with an explanation as to the reason for the absence "within 7 days of the first day of absence"

(<https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2005-0259-02>)

Parents/carers may also reply to the SMS (for that day), by phone, by email or School Bytes.

Period by period attendance

Attendance is also marked each period by the classroom teacher. If there is no justified reason for a student to be absent from class, a truancy notification will be sent to parent/carer to inform them of the truancy.

Unauthorised absence by a student during part of the day is considered fractional truancy and is also a breach of the school's attendance requirements. A partial truancy notification email will be sent to parents/carers.



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Lateness

All Year 7 to 12 students who arrive after the 9:10am roll call bell or who are late, must report to the Tagore administration office and follow the procedures below:

- Sign in using their student ID card.
- Present a note explaining reason for lateness.
- If they have no note or no previous explanation supplied by parent/carer, they collect a late pass/reason for lateness note to be signed by parent/carer which can be returned to the office the next day or within 7 days.
- Collect last pass, promptly proceed to class and hand late pass to class teacher.
- Any student who misses roll call and does not sign into office, will be marked absent for the whole day and be required to prove their attendance. Parent/carer will be sent an absence SMS for the day.

Persistent lateness which is either unexplained or for unacceptable reasons e.g. slept-in, missed bus, is considered a discipline matter by the school and will be recorded as unjustified. Year Advisers will monitor student lateness and attendance.

'Explained' vs 'Justified' absences

Parents are required to explain absences within seven (7) days of the initial absence. At Ku-ring-gai High School this can be done via School Bytes, calling the school, replying to the SMS (for that day), or emailing the school.

The NSW Education Act requires all absences that have not been explained within seven (7) calendar days to be permanently recorded as 'unjustified'.

There are a limited number of reasons which justifies an absence from school. In some circumstances, even though a reason has been provided, the absence will still be recorded as 'unjustified' because the reason does not count as a valid reason as per the Department of Education policy.

What are valid reasons?

The two most common justified reasons for student absences are 'Sick' and 'Leave'.

S- Sick: The student's absence is due to sickness or as the result of a medical appointment. The school requires a **medical certificate** for absences related to sickness for more than **three days (i.e. four or more days)**. The principal/teachers may request a medical certificate on each occasion in addition to explanations, if the explanation is doubted or the student has a history of unsatisfactory attendance.



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L- Approved leave: The student's absence is due to an incident such as a serious illness of an immediate family member or attendance at a funeral, and the explanation has been accepted by the Principal.

A- Unexplained absence: The student's absence is unexplained or explained but unacceptable (e.g. going shopping, weather conditions, tired, needed a day off etc.).

Reason for Absence	Attendance Register Codes	Justified Code
Medical – Illness Includes: Sickness, medical and dental treatment	S	Yes
Medical – Appointment The student's absence is due to a medical or paramedical appointment. If the student has a regular weekly appointment that creates a recurring absence, additional documentation may be required.	A/L	To be determined*
Parent Choice Parent explained, with a reason that is not covered by other approval codes	A/L	To be determined*
Bereavement Includes funeral, death in the family, and absence due to the death.	L	Yes
Holiday (Extended Leave – Travel) Student does not attend school due to student/family holiday.	A/L	To be determined*
Transport Issues Transport issue, including traffic or missed bus.	A/L	To be determined*
<p>*To be determined - A determination will be made if the reason was justified or not. For example, a late arrival due to a broken-down bus is unavoidable (L), however sleeping in and missing your bus is avoidable (A). Holiday/Extended Leave must be approved by the Principal to be considered justified.</p> <p>NOTE that after 7 days, if an absence remains unexplained (i.e. without a parent note with approved reason), it will automatically be designated as 'A' to indicate unexplained.</p>		



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Students leaving scheduled lessons early

Students may only leave the school grounds before the normal completion of the school day with prior permission of the Principal or Deputy Principal. These students must:

- Have permission from parent/carer, communicated via note, email or phone call.
- Present the permission note at the Tagore administration office before recess for authorisation.
- Collect a leave pass at recess or lunch time from Tagore administration office stating time of departure to be shown to the appropriate class teacher, teacher on duty, to Home School Liaison Officers or Police on request.

Illness during the school day

If a student is unwell through the day, they will need to advise their class teacher and present themselves to sick bay in the administration office. Staff will then determine if a parent/carer will need to be called. Students are not permitted to contact their parent/carer to organise their collection.

Lunchtime

No student may leave the school premises for any reason, to go home or to the local shops during lunchtime unless written permission is obtained from the Deputy Principal.

Approved student leave

Students are granted approved school leave under specific circumstances. This leave will be recorded as School Business. These are school organised events such as:

- Work placement, excursions etc.
- Attendance at classes outside school during school hours e.g. TAFE

Student temporary leaving scheduled lessons

- Any student out of class must have a permission note from their class teacher.
- Any student late for class requires a late note with time and date from their previous teacher.
- A student involved in a school activity that requires they miss scheduled lessons must have prior permission from their scheduled class teacher/s and make arrangements to complete any missed work.

Extended Leave/Family Holidays

Application for Extended Leave forms are required when a student will be absent from school for 5 or more days. This form can be found via School Bytes or on the school website under helpful forms.



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Travel documents must be attached to the digital form, hard copy to school, or sent via email.

Approval for leave may only be granted by the Principal. Where leave is approved, an approval letter will be provided to the parent via an email.

Families are encouraged to travel during the NSW school holidays. If travel outside of NSW school holiday periods is necessary, the Principal must approve beforehand. If the family does not apply for leave, or it is not approved, the absences from school will be unjustified.

Approved absences relating to travel will be marked as justified leave on the roll but will contribute to your child's total absences for the year.

Post-Compulsory Age students

Students who are over 18 years of age and living away from home are considered post-compulsory age students and may be authorised by the school to provide their own notes to explain absences. For this to happen these students need to provide documentation to the school from their parent/carer confirming that they are no longer legally responsible for them.

Other Important Information

My child won't go to school. What should I do?

You should contact the school as soon as possible to discuss the issue and ask for help. Strategies to help improve attendance may include a referral to the school's Learning and Support team or linking your child with appropriate support networks. The school may seek further support from the Home School Liaison Program to develop an Attendance Improvement Plan.

What might happen if my child continues to have unacceptable absences?

It is important to understand that the Department of Education may be required to take further action where children of compulsory school age have recurring numbers of unexplained or unjustified absences from school. Some of the following actions may be undertaken:

You may be asked, along with your child, to attend a Compulsory Schooling Conference. The conference will help to identify the supports your child may need to have in place so they attend school regularly. The school, parents and agencies will work together to develop an agreed plan (known as Undertakings) to support your child's attendance at school.



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Application to the Children's Court - Compulsory Schooling Order. If your child's attendance at school remains unsatisfactory the Department may apply to the Children's Court for a Compulsory Schooling Order. The Children's Court magistrate may order a Compulsory Schooling Conference to be convened.

Prosecution in the Local Court School and Department staff remain committed to working in partnership with you to address the issues which are preventing your child's full participation at school. In circumstances where a breach of compulsory schooling orders occurs further action may be taken against a parent in the Local Court. The result of court action can be the imposition of a community service order or a fine.

Leaving Ku-ring-gai High School to attend another school

School leavers must bring a note from their parents indicating their intention to leave, the reason and, if known, which school they will be attending. This note is to be presented to Reception, at least one week prior to leaving. The student is then required to complete a Leaver's Form. Teachers and Head Teachers will initial opposite their name on this form to indicate the student has returned all the textbooks, library books, laptop (if appropriate), emptied their locker etc., and has paid any outstanding contributions. The completed form should be returned to Reception prior to their last day.

What age can my child leave school?

All New South Wales students must complete Year 10 or its equivalent. After Year 10, and up until they reach 17 years of age, there are a range of flexible options for students to complete their schooling. Working in partnership The Department of Education recognises that working collaboratively with students and their families is the best way to support the regular attendance of students at school. We look forward to working in partnership with you to support your child to fulfil their life opportunities.

For additional information, please refer to the following links:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2005-0259-02>

<https://kuringgai-h.schools.nsw.gov.au/about-our-school/helpful-forms.html>