



South East Network, Youth+ Student Attendance Policy

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Drafted by	Network Principal	Approved by	NP/HoC
Responsible person	Network Principal	Scheduled review date	January 2018

Introduction

South East Network, Youth+ has a commitment to supporting regular school attendance by all enrolled young people.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to support young people to participate fully at a Flexible Learning Centre (FLC) through regular attendance, while ensuring that the school’s duty of care to young people and other legislative obligations are met.

All schools hold a number of responsibilities in relation to student attendance. These include:

- that a Principal must ensure that a register is kept recording the daily attendance or absence of each school-aged child.
- that a young person is excused from attendance if he or she is prevented from attending because of a reasonable cause approved by the Principal, and the parent has given notification.
- that the Principal may require a student to not attend a school on any day on which the student has an infection or is suffering from an infectious disease.

Policy

Regular participation in meaningful education is critical for young people’s academic, vocational, social and emotional development. Given the specialist nature of the Flexible Learning Centres we recognise that many young people face significant challenges to regular school attendance. Factors such as mental illness, substance addiction, ongoing family conflict and previous negative experiences at school can make it very difficult for young people to attend school every day. FLC’s undertakes a range of processes and supportive mechanisms to ensure that young people work towards consistent attendance and that all absences are justified.

AUTHORISATION

Ivan Mahoney
Network Principal, Youth+
February 2018

Responsibilities

It shall be the responsibility of the **Network Principal** (or a delegated authority) to implement this policy and to monitor its performance.

It is the responsibility of **the Head of Campus** to ensure that:

- They are familiar with the student attendance policies and procedures, and that they follow them accordingly;

It is the responsibility of the **Network Principal** to ensure that:

- **All Heads of Campus** are aware of their responsibilities in regard to student attendance;
- **Heads of Campus** are given continuous support and guidance to support student placement.

Practical Guidelines

The South East Network, Youth+ has implemented the following systems and procedures across sites in order to monitor the daily attendance of students and seek justification for any absences from school.

Adjustments to promote attendance

All FLC's provide a number of adjustments to support all young people to attend on a regular basis, these include:

- transport support to travel to and from school
- provision of meals and clothing as necessary
- development of Personal Learning Plans for every young person to ensure that the learning program is personally meaningful and engaging
- development of Individual Education Plans/ Re-engagement Plans for any young person who is working towards fulltime attendance onsite at an FLC.

Monitoring daily attendance

Each young person is supported by a staffing partnership (comprised of a teacher and support staff member). The staffing partnership has delegated responsibility to monitor the daily attendance of young people enrolled in their class. The staffing partnership completes a hard copy attendance roll during the school day, which is transferred to an electronic data base at the end of each day. Both hard copy and electronic attendance rolls are filed securely for the period as specified in relevant legislation.

A register is also kept in the school's administration area for any young person who arrives or leaves the school during the course of the school day. The young person is required to sign themselves in or out of the school using the register. Where a late arrival or early departure has not been arranged in advance with a parent or guardian, and the young person is under 18 years of age, the school will contact the young person's parent or guardian to advise them that the young person has arrived on, or chosen to leave, the supervised school site.

In the case of an emergency or evacuation, classroom partnerships will take a copy of the day's roll to the emergency evacuation point. The administration worker will also take the sign in- sign out register to the evacuation point in order to ensure that all young people are accounted for.

Monitoring absences

Parents or legal guardians are responsible for ensuring that they notify the school to explain the absence of their young person on any particular school day. Notification may be provided to the school face-to-face, or via email, phone call or text message.

If the young person is expected to attend school on a given day and does not arrive by the commencement of the school day, or does not access transport support as arranged, the young person's classroom staff members will contact the young person and their carer as soon as is practical in order to seek an explanation for the absence.

If the staffing partnership is not able to reach a young person on their carers in relation to an absence, they will speak with the Campus Principal to determine what further action should be taken. Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that the young person is safe. This may include contacting alternate carers or services (where consent has been previously given to do so). Follow up may also include contacting the Department of Health and Human Services or the Police where the Campus Principal deems that the young person may be at risk of harm.

The absence will be recorded as 'unexplained' until otherwise justified, at which time attendance record will be updated to show that the absence was explained.

All communication with young people and carers regarding school absences is documented electronically and filed securely, as specified in relevant legislation.

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