

ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

At Forbes Primary School we provide a safe, success oriented and caring environment. We know that students who attend school actively participate and gain maximum benefit from schooling. They are organised, ready to learn and have access to the teaching and learning continuum for all areas. Regular school attendance enables children to access a full education and to reach their full potential. School staff set an example for students and encourage and emphasise attendance and punctuality.

Our aim is to ensure that all students can access equitable education outcomes. Monitoring school attendance enables identification of students at risk and allows for early intervention strategies. The early detection and assessment of the causes of non-attendance and the provision of organisational structures, which are responsive to the needs of students, are vital.

All members of the school community are expected to meet the legal requirements of attendance and work to the best of their ability and skills as best as possible.

Every child who is 6 years but not yet 17 years is of compulsory school age, irrespective of distance from the school or whether the student has a disability or not. These students are required to be enrolled at a registered school and must attend school on every day instruction is provided unless the Minister has provided an exemption from school attendance.

The primary responsibility for meeting this legal requirement rests with the parent/guardian.

The responsibility for enforcing school attendance rests with the Department for Education and Child Development (DECD). DECD employees therefore have a legal responsibility to record and monitor attendance and take appropriate action to rectify problems of non-attendance.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Parent/ carer responsibilities

- Parents/ caregivers are responsible for their child's travel to and from school.
- Children must arrive at school between 8.30 and 8.45 am (except on Breakfast Club mornings when they may be at school between 8.00 and 8.30am if they are attending Breakfast Club).
- Children must attend school every day, for the entire time instruction is offered, unless the school receives a valid reason from the parent/caregiver for the child being absent or late (e.g. illness, medical appointments).
- For each absence the parent/caregiver must provide the school with an appropriate explanation for a student's non-attendance. Usually this comprises a letter or telephone call from the parent/carer or a medical certificate or written explanation for absences three days or longer.
- When a student is late for school it is **an expectation** that the parent/carer explains the reason for the lateness in person or in writing. Student explanations are not acceptable. This information is recorded at the front office and a "late note" is given to the student to take to their teacher.
- Parents/Caregivers must let the school know if an extended absence is likely, and if the school needs to arrange work for the child at home.

Permission must be sought from the Principal if the student is going on an extended family holiday.

Teacher responsibilities

- Accurately record each absence with reasons for the absences and ensure absences are provided to the front office each day as early as possible.
- Attempt to contact the parents/caregivers via phone on the third consecutive unexplained day of absence and record this. Record date and time of attempted calls and record reason if one given. Request doctor's certificate if appropriate.
- Monitor attendance and alert the leadership team if concerns persist, with ongoing and/or irregular attendance.
- Discuss with leadership team if further action is required.

Coordinate the collection of work for students who are unable to attend school for acceptable reasons and for whom work is requested.

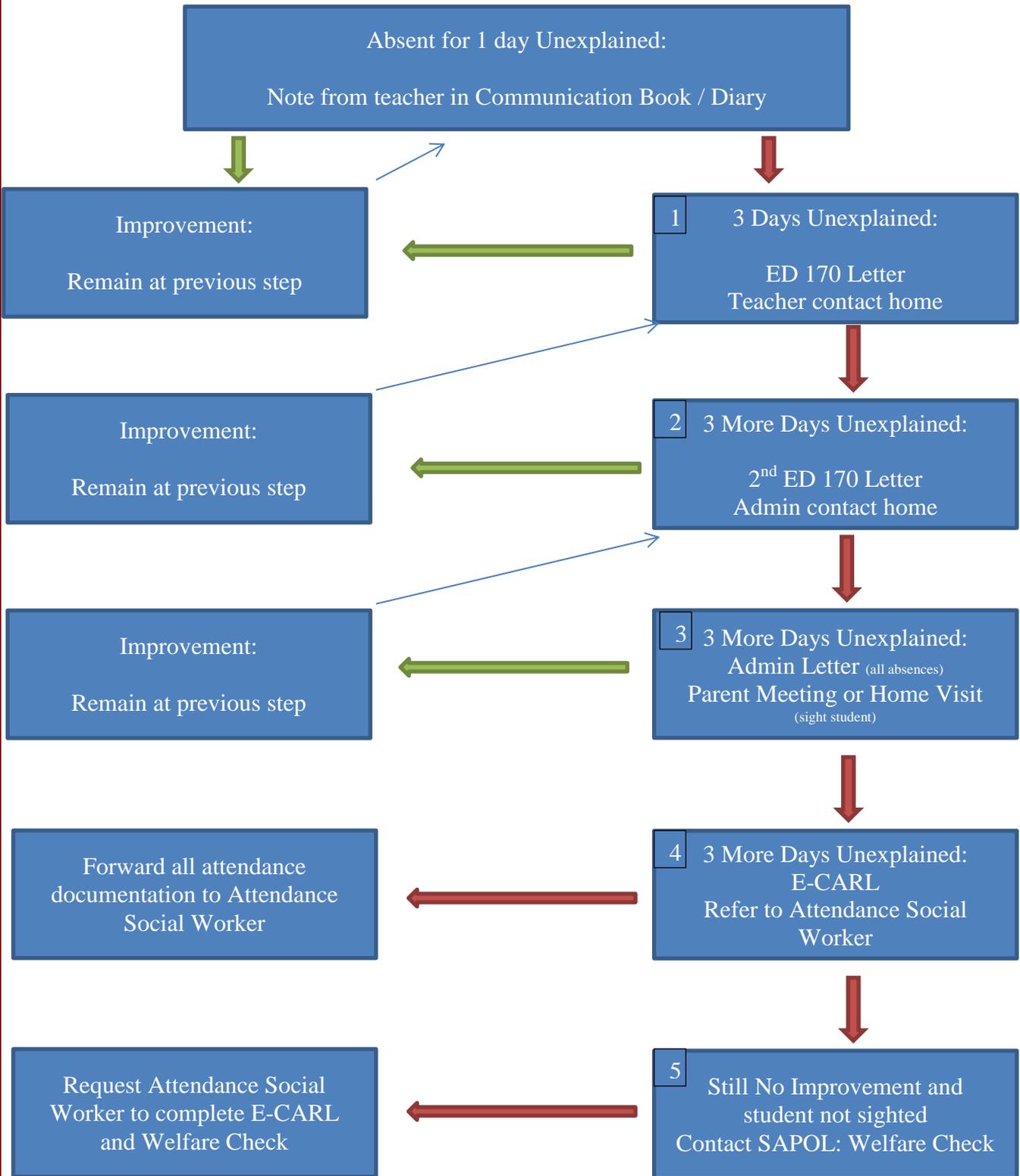
Leadership Team's responsibilities

- Ensure that the EDSAS roll is accurately completed.
- Complete the letter regarding the absence of a student and send it home to the parent/caregiver (via post).
- Office staff will attempt to make contact with parents/caregivers when students have been absent for six consecutive days unexplained.
- Document intervention strategies such as home visits, telephone calls, meetings etc. and include these in the student file.
- Have a pre-referral conversation/email with the Attendance Social Worker prior to making a referral.
- Make a referral to the ASW through EDSAS.

Authorisation and Exemptions

- The principal has the delegated authority from the Minister to approve an exemption from school for periods up to one calendar month. Parents/caregivers should apply in writing to the principal for this approval. The principal should advise the parents/caregivers in writing of approval or non-approval and a copy should be filed in the school files.
- Applications for exemptions exceeding one calendar month are to be completed on Form ED 175 and forwarded to the Manager, Regional Support Services.

Absence Follow up Flowchart



Unexplained Absences	Action	Responsibility
1	Teacher to make contact with parent through communication book / diary if parent has not provided reason for absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher
3	Teacher to attempt to make contact with parent by phone and request (note in roll) an ED 170 sent by office staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher to make contact Office staff send ED 170 and file copy in student file
6	Teacher requests another ED 170 to be sent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher requests ED 170 Office staff send ED 170 and file copy in student file
9	Teacher notifies office staff through roll book of absences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher requests ED 170 Office staff attempt to make contact Office staff arrange for a home visit to be conducted
Student(s) still not sighted after making home visit	Office staff refer student absences to Attendance Social Worker and ask for support in following up attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office staff make attendance referral
Student(s) still not sighted by Attendance Social Worker	School requests a SAPOL Welfare Check be conducted to sight the student(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office staff consult with Attendance Social Worker and request Welfare Check
Student(s) still not sighted by SAPOL	School consults with Attendance Social Worker and follows process of officially recording student as Whereabouts Unknown in EDSAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office staff consult with Attendance Social Worker

Please note: repeated explained absences should also be considered for referral to the Attendance Social Worker.

Office staff (Leadership) will monitor attendance of all students – students whose attendance is less than 80% should be considered for referral. The Leadership Team, in consultation with front office staff and teachers, will determine if explained absences which see students' below 80% attendance should be referred.