

A message from the Home School Liaison Officer:

Dear parents/caregivers,

Please find information below regarding some of the areas around attendance I have frequent questions about. If you would like further information, or require clarification, please call me on 69258613.

Stephanie Williams, Home School Liaison Officer

If my child is away from school

Parents or caregivers are required by law to provide an explanation to the principal to say why their child was absent from school. A note of explanation should contain:

- Date that the note was written
- Child's name
- Days/dates the child was absent from school
- The reason the child was absent
- The signature of the parent or caregiver

A note should be brought to school on the first day the student returns to school after an absence. The school is required to investigate all unexplained absences (where a child has been absent and no explanation has been received) within two days. If your child has problems remembering to hand in the note to his/her teacher, you can call the school on 69226443 and provide the information listed above verbally.

Leaving school early or arriving late

Schools are regularly audited by the Home School Liaison Officer around school attendance. One area of scrutiny is reasons provided for why children are late or leave early. The reasons provide staff with information to put accurate codes on the rolls. Please do not only write 'appointment' – please provide further information eg speech therapist, OT, dentist, counsellor etc. Medical and paramedical appointments are classed as 'sick' leave. If 'appointment' only is used, it is an unjustified absence.

Holidays

As part of the implementation of the National Standards, holidays taken by students outside of school vacation periods will now be included as absences. A Certificate of Exemption can no longer be granted for this purpose. Families are encouraged to holiday or travel during school vacations. If travel outside of school vacation periods is necessary, the following considerations apply:

- If the principal accepts the reason for the absence, the absence will be marked as "L" and a Certificate of Extended Leave – Holiday issued. This must be done prior to going on the holiday.
- If the principal does not believe the absence is in the student's best interests and does not accept the reason or if the parents have not approached the principal, the absence will be recorded as "A". A Certificate of Extended Leave – Holiday will not be issued.
- If the period of absence is in excess of 50 days, the student may be eligible to enrol in Distance Education *See: Distance Education – Revised Enrolment Procedures 2015* for that period the student's enrolment transfers to the distance education school.

Accepting explanations

- The "A" code is to be used if no explanation has been provided by parents within seven days of the occurrence of an absence or the explanation is not accepted by the Principal. It is at the principal's discretion to accept the explanation provided. This code is used for whole day and part day absences.
- If a student's absence is due to sickness the "S" code is used. The principal may request a medical certificate in addition to an explanation if the explanation provided is doubted or the student has a history of unsatisfactory attendance.