Southern Grove Primary School Attendance Policy
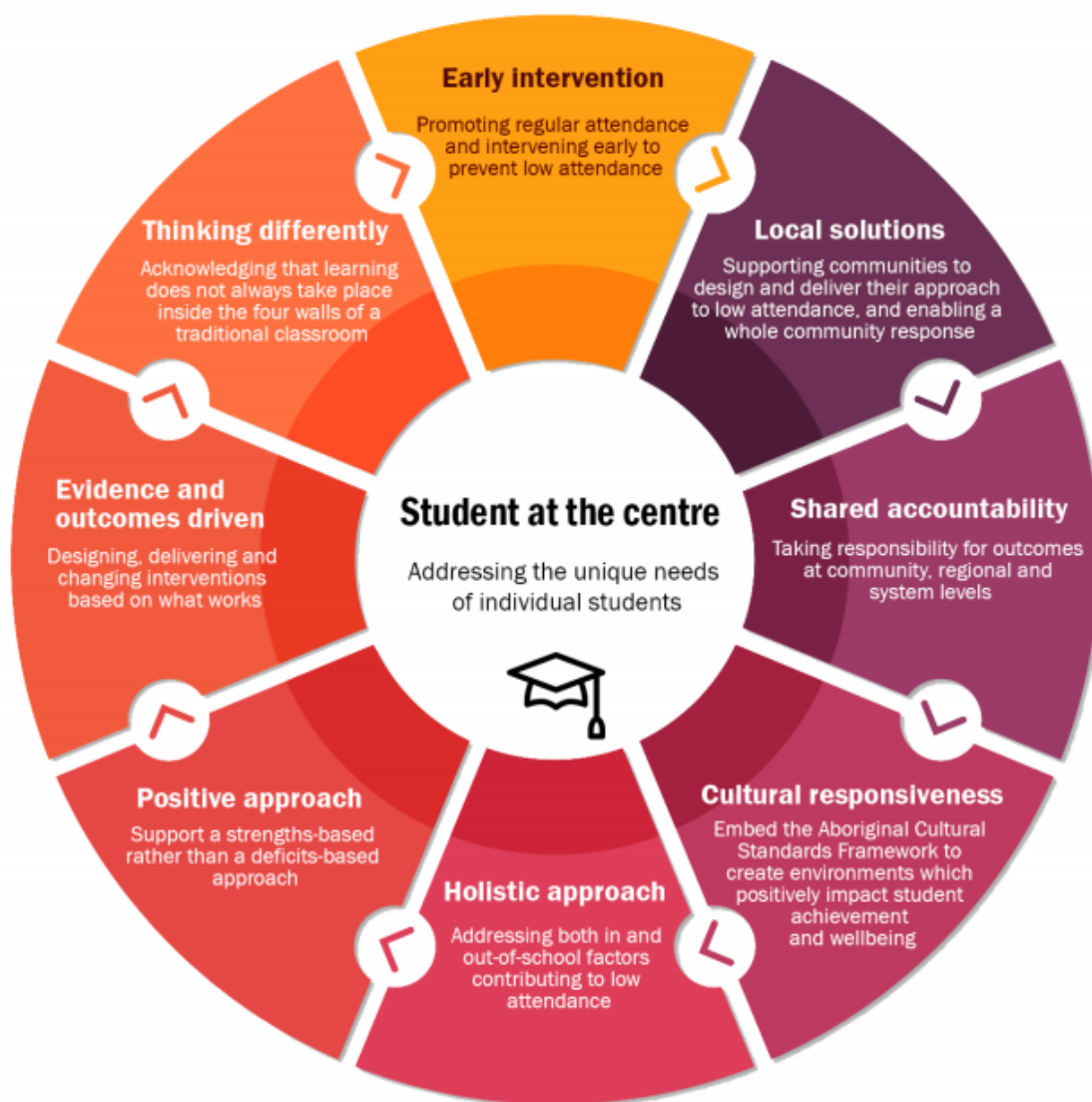
The plan is underpinned by the following principles with the needs of the student at the centre.

Early intervention
Promoting regular attendance and intervening early to prevent low attendance

Local solutions
Supporting communities to design and deliver their approach to low attendance, and enabling a whole community response

Shared accountability
Taking responsibility for outcomes at community, regional and system levels

Cultural responsiveness
Embed the Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework to create environments which positively impact student achievement and wellbeing

Holistic approach
Addressing both in and out-of-school factors contributing to low attendance

Positive approach
Support a strengths-based rather than a deficits-based approach

Evidence and outcomes driven
Designing, delivering and changing interventions based on what works

Thinking differently
Acknowledging that learning does not always take place inside the four walls of a traditional classroom

Student at the centre
Addressing the unique needs of individual students

Importance of attendance

While engagement with school and learning is multifaceted, absence is a marker of disengagement and helps predict poorer school completion and future engagement in work or further study.

A sense of belonging at school is derived through:
- the school environment
- positive and supportive teacher relationships
- peer relationships
- personal characteristics, such as conscientiousness, optimism, and self-esteem.

Western Australian law stipulates that all school-aged children must go to and attend school every day.

Attending school or alternative learning arrangements is a critical foundation for children and young people to gain an education and unlock their full potential.

Factors impacting attendance

Students are most likely to thrive and attend school when the following factors are met:

Student factors	Family factors	Community factors	Service factors
- school readiness and early childhood development - mental and physical health - feeling safe and a sense of belonging - positive social connections - academic achievement.	- education is valued and prioritised - connected to culture and community - resilience and self determination - financial security - stable housing.	- sound play areas - further education, training and employment opportunities - safe environments.	- ability to engage students with diverse needs - positive relationships with students and families - monitor student attendance and provide early intervention support - consistent and clear policies.

Factors underlying student attendance

STUDENT FACTORS	SCHOOL FACTORS	FAMILY FACTORS	COMMUNITY FACTORS
1. Aversion or perceived irrelevance of school	1. Ability to engage diverse needs	1. Aversion or perceived irrelevance of school	1. Cultural obligations
2. Bullying or feeling unsafe	2. Inconsistent or unclear policies	2. Child abuse or neglect	2. Employment obligations
3. Health and mental health issues	3. Monitoring of attendance	3. Competing family priorities	3. Involvement in gang-like activity
4. Lower levels of academic achievement	4. Negative school climate	4. Family instability or violence	4. Lack of transport
5. Rejection of authority	5. Quality of school leaders and teachers	5. Lower levels of literacy and numeracy	5. Low socioeconomic status
6. Social competence and confidence	6. Relationships with peers and teachers	6. Family transience and homelessness	6. Geographic isolation

High expectations for all students

All staff at SGPS play an important role in communication around attendance, maintaining attendance procedures and records, and implementing strategies aimed at improving attendance.

Factors that impact attendance include student engagement in their learning program, behaviour, peer relationships, student-teacher relationships, community involvement in the school etc. Changes to these school-based factors are likely to have an impact on student attendance.

When creating high expectations, we need to be responsive to:

- our students' strengths, culture and context
- how students learn
- each students' prior knowledge and understandings
- effective pedagogical and student support practices
- the shared values of our school and community partnerships.

At SGPS we work together with students and families and with the support of the Department as required to improve the regular attendance of our students.

Attendance approaches

Promotion approaches build student, family, school and community resilience, and the promotion of protective factors.
Prevention approaches prevent poor attendance for those students most at risk.
Response approaches provide support or interventions for those students who are not attending.

Promotion approaches at Southern Grove
- Building relationships with students and families – Threshold, TICK, Compass, events, meetings
- Parent information on importance of attendance – parent meetings, newsletters, social media
- Home practice program - reading, basic facts
- Special events – ERP Expo, Harmony Day, NAIDOC week etc.

Prevention approaches at Southern Grove
- Building relationships with students and families – Threshold, TICK, Compass, events, meetings
- Parent information - parent meetings, newsletters, social media
- Ensuring success for every child – goal setting, differentiated teaching
- Building resilience in children – behaviour education
- Shared responsibility and high expectations by all stakeholders – target setting

Response approaches at Southern Grove
- Recognising the issue and taking action – monitoring attendance regularly
- Empowering the student through personalised attendance plans
- Working in a positive partnership with parents and students
- Regular communication – phone calls, emails, Compass
- Accessing attendance support officer SMERO, if required

Authorised and unauthorised absences

The reason a student is absent from school matters.
- unauthorised absences have about three times more negative impact on student achievement than authorised absences
- most authorised absences are N codes – notified sick
- you cannot prevent students getting ill and unwell students should not attend school.

Authorised absences
(S25 *School Education Act 1999*)
If the student is prevented from attending at school, or from participating in an educational program by –
- **temporary physical or mental incapacity**; or
- any **other reasonable cause**.

(S30 *School Education Act 1999*)
A day, or period of time, that is recognised as having **religious or cultural significance** for the student or the student's parents

Unauthorised absences
Any absence that does not fit into the above 2 categories.

Lesson attendance codes

Group	Code	Title
Student attendance on site	/	present
	M	medical or sick bay
	W	withdrawn
Student attendance off site	E	education activity
Student late at school	L	late
Student with authorised absence	R	reasonable cause
	C	cultural absence
	N	notified as sick
	V	authorised vacation
	Z	suspended
Student with unauthorised absence	U	unexplained absence - cause not yet established
	K	unauthorised vacation
	X	unacceptable reason
	T	truant - off school site
Student not required to attend	Y	school closure
	Q	study leave - Years 11 and 12

Unauthorised absences

At Southern Grove we focus on unauthorised absences:
- U: unexplained absence – cause not yet established
- K: unauthorised vacation
- U: unacceptable reason
- T: truant

Our objective is to establish a cause for all U codes and change the code accordingly. We have an unrelenting focus on reducing unauthorised absences.

Measuring attendance

Regular attendance is a nationally agreed standard that reports the percentage of students attending 90% or more of available half days.
Regular attendance exposes the attendance of individuals that may be masked by the attendance rate. At Southern Grove we set our attendance targets based on regular attendance.

We refer to the following data systems when monitoring student attendance -
- Compass
- Student Attendance Reporting (SAR)
- Online Student Information (OSI)
- Student Achievement Information System (SAIS)
- Schools Online

We look at -
- successes, as well as identify areas for improvement
- the performance of the school over time (trends, exceptions to trends and achievement of targets)
- the pattern of student attendance

We ask -
- What proportion of students attend regularly and what proportion are at educational risk due to absences?
- How many students are above, at, or below the national minimum standard for achievement?
- How do these compare to like schools and the state?

Use data to inform targeted strategies

School plans with explicit targets for improvement support the communication of high expectations to the school community. Targets enable leadership teams, teachers and support staff to focus on areas for improvement, determine required changes to practice, and select relevant strategies.
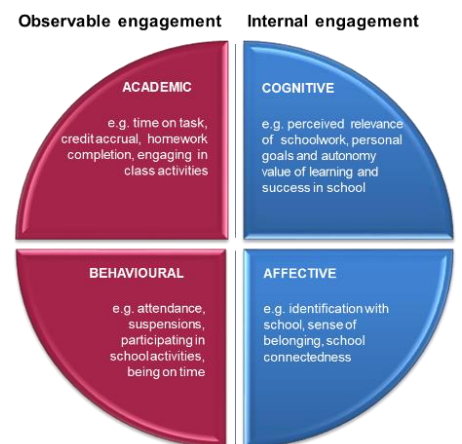
At Southern Grove we set -

Strategic targets
Strategic improvement targets specified in the strategic or business plan typically set medium to long-term targets that will be achieved over a number of years.

Operational targets
Operational targets specify progress towards the strategic target in a given school year.

Classroom targets
Classroom targets identify individual students requiring additional support in order to support achievement of operational and strategic targets.

Personalised targets
Personalised targets are typically short-term, revised regularly and are designed specifically for students involved in case management. They are documented within the student's Personalised Learning and Support Plan.

Addressing persistent student absence

While engagement with school and learning is multifaceted, absence is a marker of disengagement and helps predict school completion and future engagement in work or further study.

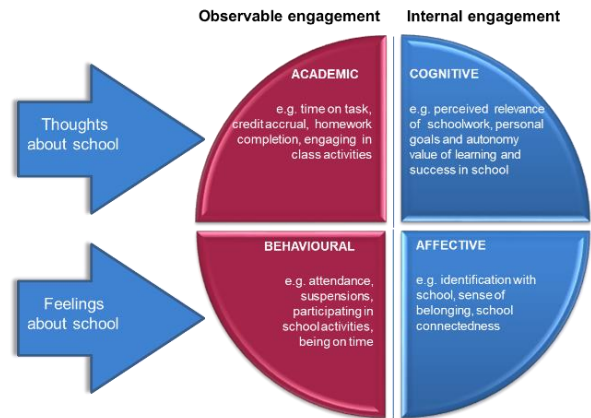Engagement is a complex and interrelated concept which is:
- multidimensional
- malleable
- temporal
- influenced by many factors (internal and external)
- measurable

Observable engagement | Internal engagement

ACADEMIC
e.g. time on task, credit accrual, homework completion, engaging in class activities

COGNITIVE
e.g. perceived relevance of schoolwork, personal goals and autonomy value of learning and success in school

BEHAVIOURAL
e.g. attendance, suspensions, participating in school activities, being on time

AFFECTIVE
e.g. identification with school, sense of belonging, school connectedness

Internal factors influencing student engagement include:
- personal resilience
- needs met
- mental health
- physical health
- disability
- developmental trauma
- learning difficulties

Observable engagement   Internal engagement

ACADEMIC
e.g. time on task, credit accrual, homework completion, engaging in class activities

COGNITIVE
e.g. perceived relevance of schoolwork, personal goals and autonomy value of learning and success in school

BEHAVIOURAL
e.g. attendance, suspensions, participating in school activities, being on time

AFFECTIVE
e.g. identification with school, sense of belonging, school connectedness

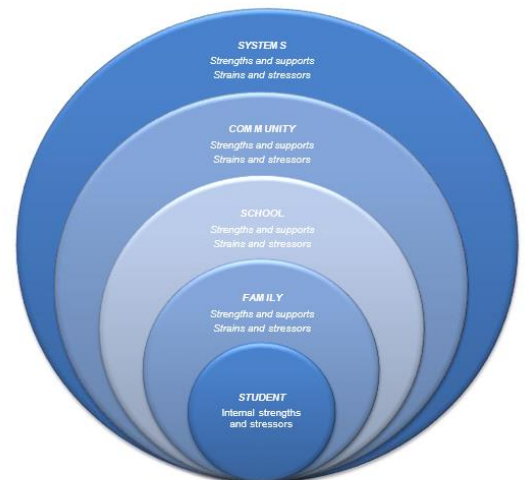Thoughts about school

Feelings about school

When addressing persistent student absences, we need to consider the observable and internal factors when devising strategies to support the student in reducing absences.

Observable - outside student
Behaviour
Attendance
Academic achievement

Internal - inside student
Logic:
Thoughts about re-engaging
Emotions:
Feelings about re-engaging

To be responsive, we must consider the strengths, supports and strains, stressors at each external factor with a place-based lens.
What are the strengths and supports to assist student engagement at each circle?
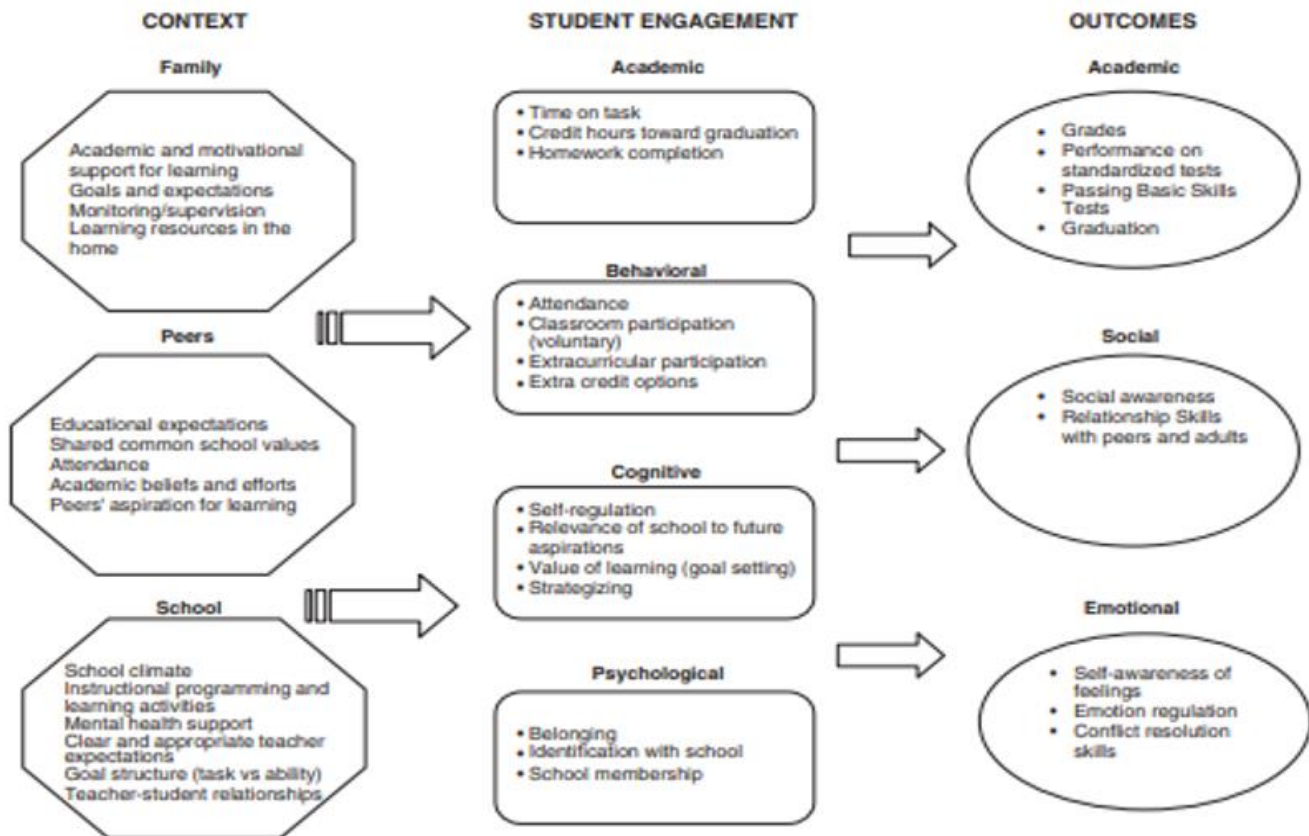What are the strains and stressors challenging student engagement?

SYSTEMS
Strengths and supports
Strains and stressors

COMMUNITY
Strengths and supports
Strains and stressors

SCHOOL
Strengths and supports
Strains and stressors

FAMILY
Strengths and supports
Strains and stressors

STUDENT
Internal strengths and stressors

Reference: Broffenbrenners Ecological Systems Theory

Applying engagement thinking

CONTEXT	STUDENT ENGAGEMENT	OUTCOMES
Family — Academic and motivational support for learning; Goals and expectations; Monitoring/supervision; Learning resources in the home	**Academic** — • Time on task • Credit hours toward graduation • Homework completion	**Academic** — • Grades • Performance on standardized tests • Passing Basic Skills Tests • Graduation
Peers — Educational expectations; Shared common school values; Attendance; Academic beliefs and efforts; Peers' aspiration for learning	**Behavioral** — • Attendance • Classroom participation (voluntary) • Extracurricular participation • Extra credit options	**Social** — • Social awareness • Relationship Skills with peers and adults
School — School climate; Instructional programming and learning activities; Mental health support; Clear and appropriate teacher expectations; Goal structure (task vs ability); Teacher-student relationships	**Cognitive** — • Self-regulation • Relevance of school to future aspirations • Value of learning (goal setting) • Strategizing **Psychological** — • Belonging • Identification with school • School membership	**Emotional** — • Self-awareness of feelings • Emotion regulation • Conflict resolution skills

Engagement and transition

Engagement starts at enrolment. Quality and correct enrolment data support a holistic approach to education. At Southern Grove our enrolment process includes gathering information about the student through –

- enrolment form information
- EAL/D questionnaire, if applicable
- disability or learning difficulty diagnoses or information, if applicable
- phone call to gather information from previous school by phase of learning Deputy Principal
- face to face meeting with parent and child by phase of learning Deputy Principal
- tour of school
- transition program if deemed appropriate

Southern Grove Primary School Attendance Process

Teachers must mark their class roll by 8:45am daily. The afternoon roll will default to reflect the morning roll. All changes to the roll after 8.45am will be **entered by admin staff.** This includes late arrivals and early departures.

LATE ARRIVALS

- Students are considered late to school if they arrive between 8:30 – 10am.
- If students arrive between 10am – 11:30am they are absent for half day.
- Students arriving to school late must come through the administration office and receive a late pass. A reason must be provided. **Admin staff will enter the late arrival into Compass.**
- If a student arrives late to your class without a late pass, this indicates they have not been registered with the office and therefore marked as NP all day. Please send them to the office to be signed in.
- The principal will monitor late arrivals and send a 'late letter' to parents after 5 lates in a term. The teacher will be copied into a Chronicle entry saved on the student's Compass profile detailing the date a letter was sent.
- If a student continues to be late after a letter has been sent, a meeting will be held with the Principal or a Deputy to put a plan in place.

UNEXPLAINED ABSENCES

- **Admin will enter any attendance notes received via telephone or in person in the office.**
- **Admin will approve any attendance notes sent by parents in Compass.**
- All unexplained absences need to be followed up **by the level 1 school officer within a week.**
- If there is a student with extreme attendance concerns the principal will follow up. Teachers will be copied into follow-up communication.
- If the teacher has contacted the parent via phone and/or email and there is no response **a chronicle note must be entered on the student profile in Compass** to explain the dates of attempted communication.

EXTENDED ABSENCES – NON-HEALTH RELATED

- Parent to complete 'Application for a Student to be Absent' form and provide to admin.
- Principal signs application.
- Form is scanned and saved on student file, sent to the teacher and a copy, along with the extended holiday letter, is emailed to the parents.
- **Long absence is entered in Compass by admin**. If the student returns early or late, please advise admin so they can edit the attendance note accordingly.

LATE PICK UPS

- If children are not picked up from school by 2:55pm they are to be taken to the office by the teacher. The office staff will enter this information into Integris.
- School officers will contact the parent to inform them their child has not been picked up and they must come and pick them up.
- If this occurs for the same family more than 3 times, notify the principal and a late pick up letter may be sent home.
- If the student is picked up between 2:45 – 2:55pm frequently we ask you to complete a chronicle note in yellow on Compass.

STUDENT WELFARE

- If a student is absent from school 3 days in a row and there has been no communication from parents, teachers are to phone the parents to 'check in' and record a reason for the absence in Compass.

ADMIN PROCESSES

Attendance will be managed by principal and Level 2 school officer.

Monitoring of regular attendance rate

In week 1 of every term the principal will complete an attendance check to monitor the regular attendance rate.

- Go to Student Attendance Reporting (SAR) on IKON
- Click on Summary
- Click on Attendance Summary Report and identify students who are at risk for absences other than 'K'
- Principal contacts the parents via phone to discuss attendance concerns any support that may be needed to improve attendance
- These students will become the target group of students for case management
- Share case management information and strategies with teachers
- Principal reviews this data fortnightly and shares with teachers
- If there is no improvement in regular attendance over a term a meeting is held with parents and an attendance plan is put in place.

Increasing unauthorised absences data

In Week 5 of each term principal will download this report and identify students at risk.

- Go to Student Attendance Reporting (SAR) on IKON
- Click on Summary
- Click on Increasing Unauthorised Absence Report
- Identify students who are at risk for absences other than 'K'
- Principal looks at reasons for absences and phones parents to discuss increase and any support that may be needed to improve attendance
- Principal to add these students to target group for case management if not already identified
- Principal reviews this data in weeks 5 and 10 and shares with teachers
- If there is no improvement in regular attendance over a term a meeting is held with parents and an attendance plan is put in place.

Longitudinal Attendance data

Principal will look at this data each term and will analyse data according to gender and Aboriginality to report to Board and to identify areas of improvement .

- Go to Student Attendance Reporting (SAR) on IKON
- Click on Summary
- Click on Longitudinal Summary Report
- Choose appropriate categories
- Print reports for analysis and targets set for improvement in regular attendance of specific groups of students

PROCESS TO IMPROVE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Students deemed at severe or moderate risk

This process is to be used for students identified at severe risk.

This process may be used for students identified at moderate risk where absences are for reasons other than 'K'.

1. Principal will contact parent to discuss non-attendance via phone call or email. Letter will be sent home after conversation.
2. Work with the student and parent to develop a course of action to improve the student's attendance
3. Ensure deliverables are achievable and realistic
4. Be clear on timelines, steps to achieve, review times, people's roles.
5. Monitor attendance for 1 term and if plan is not improving attendance, complete Attendance Identification Matrix to develop a more formal attendance plan . (Appendix A)
6. If deemed necessary develop a Responsible Parenting Agreement (Appendix B)
7. Add plan into SAR

School refusal or non-attendance

1. Principal will contact parent to discuss non-attendance via phone call or email.

- If Parental contact is made and a reasonable explanation for non-attendance is provided proceed to ongoing monitoring of student attendance.

2. If no response, or no reasonable explanation provided and there is continued attendance concerns, organise a meeting to identify issues and use the Attendance Identification Matrix to develop an attendance plan. (Appendix A)

3. Attempt to locate the student. If student cannot be located begin the process for placing a student on Students Whereabouts Unknown Report students whose whereabouts are unknown - Ikon - The Department of Education

Attendance Advisory Panel

If repeated attempts to restore attendance have been made, and non-attendance persists contact the regional office to discuss whether an Attendance Panel is appropriate.

Identification of factors in supporting student attendance at school

Southern Grove PRIMARY

Student: Click or tap here to enter text.   **DOB:** Click or tap to enter a date.

Year: Choose an item.

	Information	Current or planned action	By whom, and date
Pattern of absences: ▪ When did the absences start? ▪ Number of absences this year? ▪ Previous school history? ▪ Particular days of the week? ▪ When particular classes are taught? ▪ Absent alone or with others?	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Explanations: ▪ Any notes, phone calls etc? ▪ Ongoing or new medical reasons? ▪ Reasonable explanations?	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

	Information	Current or planned action	By whom, and date
Contact with family: ▪ When? How often? ▪ How? ▪ By whom? ▪ Level of success? Any sibling concerns?	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Student health			
Any known health or physiological considerations: ▪ Hearing? ▪ Vision? ▪ Disability? ▪ Is the student frequently fatigued? ▪ Ongoing illness? ▪ Any known drug or alcohol issues?	Click or tap here to enter text.	*(It may be appropriate to initiate a Health Care plan)* Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

	Information	Current or planned action	By whom, and date
Academic performance			
▪ Does the student have identified learning difficulties? ▪ Any specific or subject related learning difficulties? ▪ How recently have these difficulties emerged? ▪ Any marked deterioration in performance or attitude? ▪ Are there teaching and learning adjustments required? If so, what are they? **School reports, NAPLAN, OLNA data.** Has an IEP been developed? **Case managed by whom?**	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
What are the student's own goals?	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

	Information	Current or planned action	By whom, and date
Behavioural			
Are there concerns with regard to compliance with school rules? ▪ In classroom? ▪ In school grounds? ▪ Any violence?	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Any regular or ongoing conflict with other students? ▪ Serious ▪ Family related ▪ Cultural ▪ Other	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Any behaviour concerns in the community? ☐ Yes ☐ No	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

	Information	Current or planned action	By whom, and date
Behavioural (cont.)			
Have differences occurred between the student and staff over problems such as: ▪ Discipline? ▪ Teaching methods? ▪ Dress codes? ▪ Home/class work?	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Suspensions: ▪ Number? ▪ What category?	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
What actions have occurred to resolve any differences and conflict?	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

	Information	Current or planned action	By whom, and date
Behavioural (cont.)			
Documented plans: ▪ Behaviour? ▪ Risk Management? ▪ IAP (Attendance)? ▪ Health/social *(Sample at end of checklist)*	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Social/emotional			
Does the student have friends? ▪ Peers, younger or older? ▪ Anti-social or marginal group? ▪ At school or outside? ▪ Is the student forming relationships with other students who are feeling disconnected from school?	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Is the student fearful due to: ▪ Bullying? ▪ Being ignored or isolated? ▪ Threats to safety during or after school? ▪ Embarrassment or shame ▪ Image issues ▪ Does the student appear to feel 'put down', constantly scapegoated or not given a fair hearing? ▪ Other?	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

	Information	Current or planned action	By whom, and date
Social/emotional (cont.)			
Has social integration been disturbed by: ▪ Illness? ▪ Frequent or traumatic changes of school? ▪ Suspensions? ▪ Cultural issues?	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
In the opinion of school personnel, does the student appear to be: ▪ Withdrawn? ▪ Overly anxious? ▪ Stressed? ▪ Other?	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Any pointers which might identify: ▪ School phobia? ▪ School refusal? ▪ Panic attacks?	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

	Information	Current or planned action	By whom, and date
Social/emotional (cont.)			
What support is available within the school to assist with social connectedness?	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
When/why does the student attend school sometimes?	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
External factors			
Any recent changes within the family such as: ▪ Births, divorce, death, separations etc? ▪ Changing or unstable accommodation? ▪ Any home responsibilities? ▪ Financial? ▪ Parent employment?	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

	Information	Current or planned action	By whom, and date
External factors (cont.)			
Travel: ▪ How does the student travel to and from school? ▪ Any changes with address or arrangements? ▪ Distance from school?	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
External social: Is the student involved in any: ▪ Sports clubs? ▪ Social clubs? ▪ Other?	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Is the student in any employment? ☐ Yes ☐ No	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

	Information	Current or planned action	By whom, and date
External support			
▪ Medical? ▪ Psychological? ▪ Parent Support? ▪ Govt or Community agencies? ▪ Other?	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Department support			
▪ School Psychologist ▪ Social Worker ▪ PBC/SBC ▪ Aboriginal Education Team ▪ School Attendance Team ▪ Management or Professional Leaders	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

Signatures	
Student:	**Date:** Click or tap to enter a date.
Parent:	**Date:** Click or tap to enter a date.
Teacher:	**Date:** Click or tap to enter a date.
Principal:	**Date:** Click or tap to enter a date.
School Psychologist:	**Date:** Click or tap to enter a date.

To be reviewed on: Click or tap to enter a date.

Responsible Parenting Agreement

This Responsible Parenting Agreement is made under the auspices of the *Children and Community Services Act 2004.*

This Agreement is between:
Name of authorised officer:
Role:
Region:

and
Name of parent 1:
Relationship to the child:
Name of parent 2:
Relationship to the child:

Concerning
Name of child:
Date of birth:
School:

Duration of the Agreement
Commencement date:
Conclusion date:
Outcome:

Contact details and signatures
Authorised officer:
Address:
Telephone:
Signature of authorised officer:

Parent 1:
Address:
Telephone:
Signature of parent 1:

Parent 2:
Address:
Telephone:
Signature of parent 2:

Other:
Address:
Telephone:
Signature

Behaviour/s giving rise to the Agreement

Name of child:	
Behaviour of concern:	
Anti-social:	
Criminal:	
Persistent absence from school	

Aim of the Agreement

Strategies that support the aim

WHAT (Detail the strategies)	Action by Department of Education (Indicate who – e.g. authorised officer, principal, network or regional officer)	Action by parents	Timeframe

Agreement Review

Reviews will consider whether to:

- Continue (in which case existing strategies may need refining or new strategies determined);
- Complete (e.g. the Agreement has worked and the aim has been achieved).

Outcome at first review

Date:	
Signature of authorised officer:	

Outcome at second review

Date:	
Signature of authorised officer:	

Outcome at final review

Date:	
Signature of authorised officer:	

Attendance Improvement Meeting
(Indicated Risk) (Moderate RISK) (Severe RISK)

Student: **Year:**   **Date:**

Present:	Staff Member: Family Members: Others:

Did not attend:	Reason/s supplied - Yes/No	Rescheduled Date

Purpose: Days missed since enrolling at SGPS Days Lates	☐ To discuss reasons for non-attendance ☐ To discuss reasons for regular lates/punctuality ☐ To discuss the impact on learning ☐ To establish a documented plan to improve attendance ☐ To discuss same day as other sibling patterns or certain days away. ☐ To discuss a parent agreement or referral to School Psychologist. ☐ To discuss a referral to Regional Attendance Panel

Attendance TD Term Year	☐ First Time attendance identified as a concern for this child. ☐ Repeated Years of SAER attendance. Year % Year % Year % Year % ☐ Patterns discovered for non-attendance.

Outcome: Target Actions	1. Family to provide medical certificate from doctor if away 2 days in a row. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____	

Case Management Support Offered	*Referral to classroom teacher to manage* *Referral to School Psychologist* *Referral to Regional Support Services DOE* *Referral to Child Protection Services* *Other:*

Next meeting	Date Time	Signature Parent Admin

TABLE SHOWING THE IMPACT OF MISSING SCHOOL				T1	T2	T3	T4
Period of Absence (Years 1-10)	Rate of Attendance	Equivalent School Missed	Level of Educational Risk				
1 Day Per Week	80%	2 Years	Indicated At-Risk				
1.5 Days a week	70%	3 Years	Moderate Risk				
2 Days Per Week	60%	4 Years	Moderate Risk				
3 Days per Week	40%	6 years	Severe Risk				
5 Weeks per term	50%	5 Years	Severe Risk				

Copy given to parent	Copy emailed to parent	Copy to teacher	Additional Comments

Dear _____

Our attendance data indicates that your child's regular attendance rate of …..% is below the Department of Education requirement of 90% attendance or above. Your child is considered by the Department of Education to be at Indicated Educational Risk with 80 - 89% attendance.

While we make every endeavour when …….. is at school, to cater for academic progress and emotional and social well-being, low attendance can have a detrimental effect in all these areas.

We understand that some absences from school are unavoidable, but we request you endeavour to make sure ……………… attends school each day unless they are i

The table below sets out how much equivalent school is missed through non-attendance.

Period of Absence (Years 1-10)	Rate of Attendance	Equivalent School Missed	Educational Risk
Average of 5 Days per term	90% or above	1 Year	
1 Day Per Week	80%	2 Years	Indicated At-Risk
1.5 Days a week	70%	3 Years	Moderate Risk
2 Days Per Week	60%	4 Years	Moderate Risk
3 Days per Week	40%	6 years	Severe Risk
5 Weeks per term	50%	5 Years	Severe Risk

Consistent attendance and participation are essential for your child's social and academic learning.

- Every day at school matters. Students are expected to have a regular attendance rate of 90% or above.
- Children need to attend school regularly so they can take advantage of **ALL** the educational opportunities available.
- School enables children to build on their knowledge and skills each day, each week and each year.
- Consistent poor school attendance and lateness to class can affect children's educational progress.
- Patterns of punctuality and regular school attendance are developed at an early age
- School helps children build confidence in areas such as communication, teamwork, organisation and social skills and children who miss school may find it difficult to keep up friendships in the class.
- Student enrolment and attendance in West Australian Schools is governed by legislation. The School Education Act 1999 requires that compulsory-aged students attend school, or participate in an educational program on the days on which the school program is open for instruction unless written arrangement has been entered into for the student.

We would like to gain your assistance in attaining regular school attendance for your child. We hope that with your support your child can soon achieve an attendance rate target of 90% or above. Please contact me on 9234 7700 or via email at Rebecca.burns@education.wa.edu.au if you require support from the school to help improve your child's attendance rate.

Yours sincerely

Rebecca Burns
Principal
Date

Dear _____

Our attendance data indicates that your child's regular attendance rate of …..% is below the Department of Education requirement of 90% attendance or above. Your child is considered by the Department of Education to be at *Moderate Educational Risk 60 - 79% attendance* and this is having an impact on their learning.

Whilst we make every endeavour when …….. is at school, to cater for academic progress, emotional and social well-being, low attendance can have a detrimental effect in all these areas. We understand that some absences from school are unavoidable, but we request that you make sure ……………… attends school each day unless they are unwell.

The table below sets out how much equivalent school is missed through non-attendance.

Period of Absence (Years 1-10)	Rate of Attendance	Equivalent School Missed	Educational Risk
Average of 5 Days per term	90% or above	1 Year	
1 Day Per Week	80%	2 Years	Indicated At-Risk
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- Children need to attend school regularly so they can take advantage of **ALL** the educational opportunities available.
- School enables children to build on their knowledge and skills each day, each week and each year.
- Consistent poor school attendance and lateness to class can affect children's educational progress.
- Patterns of punctuality and regular school attendance are developed at an early age.
- School helps children build confidence in areas such as communication, teamwork, organisation and social skills and children who miss school may find it difficult to keep up friendships in the class.
- Student enrolment and attendance in West Australian Schools is governed by legislation. The School Education Act 1999 requires that compulsory-aged students attend school or participate in an educational program on the days on which the school program is open for instruction unless written arrangement has been entered into for the student.
-

We would like to gain your assistance in attaining regular school attendance for your child. We hope that with your support your child can soon achieve an attendance rate target of 90% or above. I will monitor your child's attendance rate over the next 5 weeks and if there is no improvement I will organise a meeting so we can put a plan in place to improve their attendance.

Please contact me on 9234 7700 or via email at Rebecca.burns@education.wa.edu.au if you would like any support at present. We look forward to working with you to help improve your child's attendance rate.

Yours sincerely

Rebecca Burns
Principal
Date

Dear _____

_____ regular attendance rate this term is currently % and your child is considered by the Department of Education to be at *Severe* **Educational Risk 0 - 59% attendance** and this is affecting their learning.

While we make every endeavour when …….. is at school, to cater for academic progress, emotional and social well-being, low attendance can have a detrimental effect in all these areas. We understand that some absences from school are unavoidable, but we would request that you endeavour to make sure ……………… attends school each day.

The table below sets out how much equivalent school is missed through non-attendance.

Period of Absence (Years 1-10)	Rate of Attendance	Equivalent School Missed	Educational Risk
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We would like to gain your assistance in attaining regular school attendance for your child. We hope that with your support your child can soon achieve an attendance rate target of 90% or above. I would like to meet with you on

Please contact me on 9234 7700 or via email at Rebecca.burns@education.wa.edu.au to confirm your attendance at this meeting. We look forward to working with you to help improve your child's attendance rate.

Yours sincerely

Rebecca Burns
Principal
Date

Dear

Thank you for informing the school about your upcoming holiday plans. This letter is to acknowledge that you are making a conscious choice about excluding your child from the education program provided by the school for the dates you have nominated as below:

Student: **Year:**   **Teacher:**
Student: **Year:**   **Teacher:**

Dates out of the compulsory program:

At school, many literacy and numeracy concepts are taught in a sequence. Missing school means missing out on learning – which can often make it difficult to catch up later. This is particularly important in the early years when essential foundation skills are being taught.

Going to school every day helps children learn the important life skill of 'showing up' – at school, at work, to sport and other commitments. Research from the Western Australian Telethon Kids Institute shows that every day at school counts towards a student's learning. Students who attend more, generally do better at school and in life.

The table below sets out how much equivalent school is missed through non-attendance.

Period of Absence (Years 1-10)	Rate of Attendance	Equivalent School Missed	Educational Risk
Average of 5 Days per term	90% or above	1 Year	
1 Day Per Week	80%	2 Years	Indicated At-Risk
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3 Days per Week	40%	6 years	Severe Risk
5 Weeks per term	50%	5 Years	Severe Risk

The *School Education Act 1999* does not allow principals to give permission for families to take holidays during the school term. As students are required to attend school every day, time off for holidays is recorded as an unauthorised absence.

As we have regulated holiday times during the course of the academic year, we ask that families consider taking children out of the educational program very carefully. This minimises the risk of children missing out on key elements of the program and falling behind in their academic progress and achievement.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Yours sincerely

Rebecca Burns
Principal
7 September 2023

Dear

NOTIFICATION OF FORMAL MEETING REQUIRED

I am writing to you regarding the attendance of

The *School Education Act 1999* requires parents to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend school on each day unless there is a good reason for them not to attend. If students are absent, a parent or responsible person is required to provide the school with an acceptable explanation within three days of the absence.

Parents who fail to ensure that their children attend school regularly or who fail to provide satisfactory explanations for absences may be committing a serious offence. The maximum penalty is $1000 for each offence.

-------------------------- regular attendance rate is currently   % and your child is considered by the Department of Education to be at Severe Educational Risk 0 - 59% attendance.

I am very concerned that ………………..s attendance is still at an unacceptable level and that we need to work together to resolve this issue. I am now requesting you attend a *formal meeting* to discuss this matter. I would like to meet on

At this meeting it will be important for you to talk about any problems that might be preventing ………….. from regular attendance at school. A plan will be developed with you to improve ……………..attendance and it will be expected you take all reasonable steps to ensure your child attends school.

The school has previously advised you that …………….. attendance is a matter of great concern. We have also consulted the South Metropolitan Region Student Attendance and Engagement officer to provide additional advice and support and develop alternative strategies with us to improve the situation.

It is very important that you attend the formal meeting and work closely with the school to avoid the matter being referred to the Departments Attendance Advisory Panel. Please confirm your attendance at this meeting via email to rebecca.burns@education.wa.edu.au.

I look forward to working with you to improve your child's attendance rate at school.

Yours sincerely

Rebecca Burns

Principal

Date

Dear

I am writing to you in regard to the after school pick up of   . Our school day ends at 2:45pm and parents are expected to pick their children up or have made care arrangements for their children to be picked up from school at this time.

On the following dates:

                has not been picked up from school until well after this time.

If you need support in this area, please contact the school to access our after-school care facility and other relevant information.

If this continues to be an issue we will need to convene a meeting to put a risk management plan into place.

Yours sincerely

Rebecca Burns
Principal
Date

Dear

Southern Grove Primary School is committed to maximising every student's learning opportunity by working with parents and families. The school now notifies all parents when their child is late more than 5 times per term.

Our attendance data records show , has been late on … occasions so far this term.

We understand there are times when it may difficult to get your child to school on time, however we hope that with your support your child can arrive at school between 8:15 – 8:30am every morning.

It is important to have your child at school 15 minutes prior to school commencing at 8.30am so that they can get ready for the day's teaching and learning activities.

Benefits of students arriving on time include:

- being organised at the start of the day.
- being calmer and more receptive to learning.
- maintaining better relationships with peers and teachers.
- accessing the full curriculum through continuity of learning.

Please contact me on 9234 7700 or via email at rebecca.burns@education.wa.edu.au if you would like any support from the school in providing strategies to ensure your child is at school on time. If this continues to be an issue we will need to convene a meeting to put a risk management plan into place.

Kind Regards

Rebecca Burns
Principal
Date

WHY GOING TO SCHOOL MATTERS IN KINDERGARTEN

Why is it important for my child to attend school every day?

Research shows that to develop the habit of regularly going to school, a routine starts in the first years of school.

By regularly going to school, your child and your family gets to know the teacher, other children and families. The more you are involved in your child's learning the more we can work together to support your child and make sure they get the best start to school.

Attending regularly helps your child develop a sense of belonging and connection to school.

Does my child have to go to Kindergarten?

Enrolment in Kindergarten in Western Australia is not compulsory, but if your child is enrolled, attending is compulsory. Regular attendance helps your child to feel comfortable in their surroundings, develop friendships with other children, and relationships with school staff.

The early years of school gives your child new experiences and sets the foundation for all their future learning. At Kindergarten, your child is supported to develop and learn new ideas and skills in a setting of acceptance, and one that inspires and challenges them. Going to school every session allows your child to build on what they know and what they have learnt.

The skills learnt in Kindergarten set the foundation for Pre-primary, which is the first compulsory year of schooling in Western Australia. In Kindergarten your child will build important social and emotional skills that help them throughout their school life. They also develop literacy and numeracy skills.

For more information please contact:

Southern Grove Primary School on 9234 7700

Did you know?

- The attendance habits set by children when they first start school continue throughout their school life.
- Learning is cumulative – if your child regularly misses school, it is harder for them to catch up.

!

Missing half a day of school each week =
Missing one month of learning opportunities a year.

—

Missing a day of school each week between Kindergarten and Year 12 =
Missing nearly two and a half years of school.

What if my child doesn't want to go to school?

Talk with the teacher or someone from the school as soon as possible so you can get advice and support.

You may also attend a Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) for additional support and advice about parenting, including setting boundaries and routines.

What can you do to help your child?

Developing the habit of going to school regularly from Kindergarten is vital so your child does not miss out on important ideas and skills they need for future learning.

You can help by:

- talking positively about school so your child is happy to go each day
- having set start and finish times for breakfast
- having a set time and routine for going to, and getting out of, bed and getting enough sleep each night
- encouraging your child to have their school uniform and school bag ready the night before
- spending some time each day together reading for enjoyment and talking about what happened in their day.

WHEN IS IT OK TO MISS SCHOOL?

It is important for children to attend school all day, every day.

When is it OK to not go to school?

An OK reason is one that *prevents* your child from getting to school. This could include:

- when your child is sick or unwell
- attending cultural or religious observances such as sorry time and funerals
- an unavoidable natural event such as flood waters or a cyclone
- an unavoidable medical appointment

The principal decides if the reason given for your child's absence is acceptable.

It's NOT OK to miss school if your child:

- is celebrating a birthday
- is going on a family holiday
- is visiting family and friends
- has slept in or had a big weekend
- is looking after other children
- has sport or other recreational activities that have not been approved by the school
- has appointments such as haircuts and minor check ups

If possible, routine medical and other health appointments should be made either before or after school, or during the school holidays.

For more information please contact:

Southern Grove Primary School 9234 7700

Information for schools – School refusal, anxiety and attendance

Repeated school refusal can negatively impact on a young persons' learning and development.

What is it?

Anxiety

Anxiety can be a normal reaction, such as feeling nervous or worried before an exam or public speaking. At some stage, every individual will feel anxious when faced with a difficult situation. You can support students to cope with feelings of anxiety by using a number of strategies and in doing so, enhance their resilience. When feelings of anxiety are intense, persistent and impact upon the student attending and/or participating in school or enjoying normal life experiences it may indicate development of an anxiety disorder.

School refusal

School refusal can occur when a young person finds it difficult to attend school because they experience emotional distress, such as anxiety, in doing so. (Headspace – Understanding School Refusal). This may become evident due to the student:

- being absent from school
- attending school initially but leaving during the day
- entering school with behaviour problems (clinging, crying, tantrums, refusal to move, running away)
- remaining at school but in a distressed state.

It is common for the student to express that they are feeling physically ill, either at home to their parents prior to leaving for school, or during school hours through repeated visits to the school nurse or sick bay. Behaviours such as tantrums, crying, avoidance or defiance may also occur. There are many factors impacting students school attendance. It is important that parents understand that school refusal is not a disorder in itself, but the student's way of responding to fear or anxiety.

Understanding these underlying concerns is key to development of effective strategies to overcome the behaviour. Your school psychologist may assist in developing an intervention plan.

School refusal is NOT the same as truancy

Truancy is when a student pretends to go to school, but doesn't arrive, or leaves school for certain classes to spend their time elsewhere (not with parents). Truancy is not a parent-condoned absence.

Risk factors for anxiety and school refusal

- transition from primary to secondary school, or from middle to senior secondary school
- change of schools
- separation anxiety: the child experiences overwhelming feelings of distress when parting from their parents or family home.
- anxiety about a parent leaving or losing a parent or fear that something bad will happen to their parents while they are at school.

- bullying or social difficulties
- academic pressure or difficulties
- poor teacher/student relationships
- social anxiety or fear of not having friends
- family stress
- moving house
- change in parent's job or experiencing change in home life
- parent anxiety.

Complicating factors

- homelessness
- poverty
- pregnancy
- school violence and victimisation
- school climate
- drug/alcohol use
- chronic illness and medical conditions.

Overcoming anxiety related to attending school

Regardless of the cause or symptoms, the main aim for overcoming school refusal is to increase the motivating conditions for the student to attend school, minimise benefits to staying at home and promote a coping approach. This involves:

- teachers and support staff understanding anxiety and school refusal as a complex problem
- providing a warm and supportive learning environment
- identifying and acting on absences immediately
- promoting a coping approach. In the absence of any obvious physical problems, parents should not let their child stay home from school. This can work to further exacerbate anxiety.
- identify concerns the student has within the school environment such as peers, bullying, subjects, teachers, etc.
- form a partnership with the parent and assist with strategies for using at home

Strategies for schools

Understanding school refusal

In order to best determine how to support students and their families, it is important to understand the reasons that underlie school refusal. It is important for teachers and support staff to understand that school refusal is not 'naughty behaviour' or about 'bad parenting'. School refusal is a complicated problem due to underlying fears or anxieties that the student is experiencing. Involving your School Psychologist for assistance or advice about appropriate steps, strategies and services that may be of help.

Whole-school strategies

- clear expectations of full-time attendance for all students.
- strong monitoring procedures to enable early identification of attendance concerns.
- considered and thorough planning for cohorts transitioning from and to other schools or campuses.
- create a positive school culture that is educationally engaging, culturally responsive and prevents bullying.
- promote and utilise school-family partnerships.**Personalised strategies**

The main aim of strategies devised should assist the student to learn skills for managing anxiety and returning to school as soon as possible.

- work with parents
- encourage parents to take a consistent approach. The student's distress is likely to increase at the beginning and needs to be managed calmly, with recognition given when the student makes any progress
- provide a quiet room, such as the library, for the student to go to when they're feeling anxious, particularly before class or in the lunch break
- nominate at least one contact person for the student to go to when feeling anxious
- social skills training (e.g. assertiveness, dealing with bullying, joining in with a group, inviting a friend to do something)
- reduced homework incentives
- teacher to avoid triggers for anxiety in class
- avoid increasing expectations too early
- avoid ultimatums
- document background, student strategies and staff strategies and share this with relevant staff
- remember that this may be hard work at first!

Conversation starters for talking to the student about their attendance

The below conversation starters may assist with identifying the student's underlying concerns.

"I've noticed you haven't been at school lately. I'm wondering about what is happening that is making it hard for you to get to school. Tell me a bit about…

- friends
- subjects (likes, dislikes)
- schoolwork (likes, dislikes)
- teachers.

Documenting the strategies

Ensure the student is involved in the development strategies. Key considerations include strategies for the arrival and separation from the parent, dealing with the student's complaints and running away as well as educational and classroom planning.

For example: arrival and separation from parent

- repeated messages that attending school is important and non-negotiable
- determine a 'drop-off' of 'hand-over' location
- have a nominated staff member greet the student
- parent says goodbye and leaves immediately (parent may need support for this)
- provide a reassuring phone call to the parent once the day has started.

For example: dealing with complaints/tantrums

- a 'calm-down' area and/or activity may assist the student before class starts
- if the students won't return to class straight away, ensure an alternative is provided (going home is not an option).

For example: dealing with running away

- low key monitoring – don't chase the student. Disengage and allow the student to calm.
- approach the student with clear statements of options
- contact the parent immediately if the child leaves the school site. The parent can return them promptly, with minimal conversation.

For example: educational and classroom planning

- provide routine and certainty
- smile, be welcoming and make no reference to the student's absences on arrival
- curriculum adjustment if the student's fears are related to not doing well or feeling pressure at not being able to complete assigned tasks.
- ensure the student has someone to sit and work with
- to begin with, avoid selecting the student to participate in activities that would draw class attention, such as completing tasks at the front of the class and public speaking.
- praise (ensure this is quiet and understated for older students)
- if the student complains of feeling sick and wishes to be sent home, avoid discussing or arguing, be patient and ignore the behaviour. The student can be sent to the nominated quiet area if this continues, not to the sick bay.

Monitor and review

- avoid increasing expectations too early
- reset the 'goal posts' when needed
- ensure all strategies support the promotion of a coping approach
- keep the 'big picture' in perspective and keep trying
- foster collaboration with parents – neither the school or parent can improve the situation alone
- if physical problems have been ruled out and the behaviour continues over a long period of time, an evaluation by a mental health specialist may be required.

References

Be You - School Refusal Fact Sheet

https://beyou.edu.au/fact-sheets/development/school-refusal

Headspace - Understanding School Refusal

https://headspace.org.au/friends-and-family/understanding-school-refusal

Learning Potential - School Refusal, Australian Government

https://www.learningpotential.gov.au/articles/school-refusal

REQUEST TO PLACE A STUDENT ONTO THE
STUDENTS WHOSE WHEREABOUTS ARE UNKNOWN (SWU) LIST

- Fields marked with ***** are required.
- We recommend you consult with the student tracking coordinator or other relevant staff in your education regional office.
- Department staff can access information about the process to request a student is added to the SWU list, on [Ikon](#).
- For additional enquiries please contact Student Tracking at Student.Tracking@education.wa.edu.au or 9402 6449.

Email your completed form to the Student Tracking at Student.Tracking@education.wa.edu.au

Student information						
* School name					School code	
* Student surname		* First name		**Preferred name**		
* Date of birth	DD/MM/YY	* Gender	Male ☐ Female ☐ Other ☐	School Curriculum and Standards Authority ID		
* Year level		Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	Yes ☐ No ☐	* Date of enrolment	DD/MM/YY	* Last date of attendance	DD/MM/YY
* Parent/Carer name:						
Parent/Carer address:				Parent/Carer contact number:		

Attempts made to locate student		
Written communication ☐	Emergency telephone numbers contacted ☐	Relatives contacted ☐
Phone calls home ☐	Transfer documentation checked ☐	Peer group queried ☐
Home visit ☐	Previous school information checked ☐	Relevant agencies (if involved) contacted ☐
Consulted with Education Regional Office : Yes ☐ No ☐ Region: _____		_____ _____ _____
Name of Education Regional Officer authorising this request (Government schools) _____		Consulted with Student Tracking Coordinator: Yes ☐ No ☐

Action taken to locate student	
* Record enquiries already made and any anecdotal information which may assist in the location of this student.	

Student safety and wellbeing concerns
* Did you have concerns about the safety and wellbeing of this student? Yes ☐   No ☐
If yes, was a referral made in regard to these concerns? Yes ☐   No ☐   Date/s of referral: DD/MM/YY
Referring agency: Comments:

School Information		
Referring officer name (person making this request)		
Principal's approval	Yes ☐ No ☐	Principal's name	
School email address (confirmation of SWU will be emailed to this address)		
Date of request	DD/MM/YY	