



Attendance Procedural Document 2025

GRC Peakhurst Campus

1. Rationale

Georges River College Peakhurst Campus is committed to creating a safe, caring and effective learning environment **that encourages and promotes positive attendance** for its students. The welfare, happiness and wellbeing of students at GRC Peakhurst, is of paramount importance.

Attendance is a shared responsibility between the school, parents/care givers and student. All students are expected to attend school each day it is open for instruction. Under the Education Act (1990), parents and guardians are legally responsible for the enrolment and regular attendance of all children in their care up until the age of 17.

Our policy focuses on addressing the personal, social and learning needs of our students, by creating a safe, harmonious and caring school environment, in which students are nurtured and supported as they learn and develop into responsible young citizens. **GRC Peakhurst understands that student achievement starts with attendance. Regular attendance is essential for students to maximise the learning opportunities provided to them at GRC Peakhurst.**

Regular school attendance is essential for every student if they are to achieve their potential and increase their career and life options. Schools in partnerships with parents are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, school staff, as part of their duty of care, record and monitor part and whole day absences. Schools foster students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the school community by providing a caring teaching and learning environment which addresses the learning and support needs of all students, including students with additional learning and support needs or complex health conditions. Supporting positive school attendance is a shared responsibility - everyone has a role.

2. Whole school responsibilities

Principal:

- Provide clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance.
- Must ensure the school has effective measures in place to monitor and follow up student absences.
- Must ensure that school staff are provided with information on attendance requirements and their obligation to monitor and promote regular attendance at school.
- Must ensure that any matter relating to school attendance where safety, welfare or wellbeing concerns arise for a student:
 - Consideration is given to the requirements of the Protecting and Supporting Children and Young People Policy
 - All required reports are made to the Community Services Child
- Protection Helpline or contact made with the Child Wellbeing unit (as required by the Mandatory Reporter Guide).
- Attend Wellbeing Team meetings / Learning Enhancement Team meetings fortnightly to monitor and review attendance.
- Contact parents promptly and within two school days of an absence being unexplained.

Parents:

It is a legal requirement that the parent/guardian of a child of compulsory school-age ensures their child is enrolled at and attends school up until the age of 17.

It is essential that parents/caregivers work in partnership with the school to ensure their child has the best possible opportunities to succeed in their time at GRC Peakhurst by ensuring:

- Students are at school when it is open for instruction
- Students are able to travel safely to and from school
- Students arrive at school by 8:40am
- If parent/guardian is aware that their son/daughter will be late arriving to school, a note should be written by that person explaining the reason for the lateness.
- This note should be clearly marked at the top with child's name, year, roll class and date printed in block letters.
- Reply using SMS, by phone or sending a note with their child on return stating the explanation of absence
- Use of the 'CENTRAL for Parents App' to communicate with the school
- A note is provided in advance if you know your child will be absent

Students:

Latecomers

- Between 8.40am and 9.00am students should go directly to the front office, hand in their note, whereby, their lateness will be entered into the CENTRAL school attendance system. A late note will then be issued which will enable the student to enter their PL Class.
- After 9.00am, students should go directly to the front office in D Block and hand in their note, whereby, their lateness will be entered onto the CENTRAL school attendance system. A late note will then be issued which will enable the student to enter their class. Students are not permitted to enter class (when late) unless they have the late note from the front office.
- The same procedure applies if a child is late to school (e.g. bus delay) and does not have a note. The late note that is issued under these circumstances has a section where parent/guardian has to sign and an explanation given for their child's lateness. This note should be returned the next day to the roll teacher.
- Please note: If a child is late to school and is accompanied by parent/guardian, the school still requires a verbal explanation from the parent which will be recorded into the CENTRAL school attendance system.
- Year Advisor (YA) or Assistant Year Advisor (AYA) will monitor students in their year group who are habitually late, unexplained and or unjustified and will contact parents/carers to raise this issue and place a consequence.
- Late 1 - 2 times – unexplained/unjustified in the fortnight, YA or AYA to have a conversation with the student.
- Late 3 -5 times - SAIP staff contact home for a reflection to be completed with the YA or AYA recess or lunch on a day suited by the YA or AYA for 15 minutes. A conversation with the student is required before SAIP staff are to contact home.
- Late 6 times and above- SAIP staff contact home for a reflection to be completed with the YA or AYA recess or lunch on a day suited by the YA or AYA for 15 minutes on two separate occasions. A conversation with the student is required before SAIP staff are to contact home.

Early leavers

- When it is necessary for a student to leave school early, a written note is required from parent/guardian. Students should present this note (with name, year, roll class and date) to the front office for authorisation. The front office will ring parents to confirm the time of departure. Once authorised, students will receive an early leaver pass.

School Staff

Office Staff:

- Ensure automated text and CENTRAL app information is sent for all late arrivals and student absences without explanation by 10:00am.
- Enter absentee, late and leave information into CENTRAL School Attendance System.
- Issue early leave passes to students following phone call authorisation from parents.
- File Absentee notes.

- Adjust computer records for Excursion details / Late Students / Pass outs / Fractional Truants / Clinic / External providers / Internal variations of routine.
- Post letters to parents / carers, generated by the SENTRAL Attendance module.
- Create data entries for all suspensions (E) and exemptions (M) (Expand on the codes) using the attendance codes on the SENTRAL school attendance system.

Teachers:

To assist in accurate attendance data all teachers are required to:

- Accurately mark the official attendance roll for their class during the Peak Learning (Roll Call) Session each morning using SENTRAL PxP.
- Accurately mark the attendance roll for each of their timetabled lessons using SENTRAL PxP. In addition, indicate on Sentral PxP when a student has arrived late or when a student leaves the class (explained if with a note; unexplained if without a note) and the timeframe. Issue reflections to make up the time.
- Provide names of students involved in school based activities to the office to be recorded as school business prior to the event
- Ensure students are not running unnecessary/non-urgent errands during class time.
- Only allow students to attend toilets one at a time, with a note in student diary and not within 20 minutes before or after a break. (unless with a medical pass)

The Wellbeing Team and the Learning Enhancement Team meet fortnightly. Attendance is tabled in the Wellbeing Team Meetings. The team is comprised of:

- Principal
- Deputy Principals
- Head Teacher Wellbeing
- Head Teacher Special Education / Learning Enhancement
- School Counsellors
- Learning and Support Teachers (LaST's)
- Student Advisors
- Assistant Student Advisors
- Girls and Boys Mentors
- Careers Advisor
- EAL/D Teacher
- Student Representative Council Coordinator
- School Chaplain / Youth Workers
- School Engagement Officer (SEO)
- Home School Liaison Officer (when necessary)
- Anti-Racism Coordinator (ARCO)

Deputy Principal:

- Attend Wellbeing Team meetings / Learning Enhancement Team meetings fortnightly to monitor and review attendance
- Coordinate whole school attendance procedures and follow up – including HSLO referrals and HSLO attendance improvement meetings.

Head Teacher Wellbeing:

- Convene regular Wellbeing Team meetings / Learning Enhancement Team meetings and liaising with staff to provide feedback regarding student wellbeing issues as appropriate
- Liaise with Executive Staff, School Counsellors, Student Advisors/Assistant Student Advisors, Careers Advisor/Girls' Supervisor/Boys Mentor, Youth Workers, LaST's, HSLO and other key personnel within student wellbeing roles.
- Assist Principal, Deputy Principal and Student Advisors, with parent, teacher and student interviews.
- Assist in the formulation and review of the School Wellbeing Policies and Programs.
- Coordinate the organisation of and assisting in implementation of whole school wellbeing programs. e.g. Peer Support, Mind Matters, Peer Mediation and specific year group programs.
- Facilitate the implementation of preventative and remedial programs for student wellbeing. e.g. personal development, health, mental health, mentoring, school attendance and drug education.
- Work closely with counselling staff in liaising and networking with community wellbeing agencies including Family and Community Services, Community Health Centres, Youth Support Services, Juvenile Justice, 3 Bridges, Headspace, Georges River Life Care and Family Planning Association as examples.

- Facilitate and organise professional learning opportunities for staff.
- Organise seminars and information evenings for parents / P&C / community stakeholders.

Student Advisors:

- Possess a sound understanding of Child Protection and Student Wellbeing policies and procedures.
- Promote wellbeing, cooperation and a sense of identity with the school.
- Organise specific Year Group activities throughout the year in line with the School's Wellbeing, Management and Engagement Policy.
- Monitor and follow up poor attendance patterns and liaising with the student, parents, PEAK Advisor, Deputy Principal, Head Teacher Wellbeing and the HSLO where necessary to obtain a satisfactory attendance rate and fortnightly check of students' absence percentages.
- Be the first contact for students, parents and staff in matters concerning a student's overall attendance, progress and wellbeing at school.
- Consult with the School Counsellor, the Head Teacher Wellbeing, the Deputy Principal and other experienced personnel in making appropriate referrals re students when necessary.
- Monitor students causing concern and pass information on to the Deputy Principal and/or Head Teacher Wellbeing.
- Organise work for students with extended absence.
- Liaise with Head Teacher Special Education/Learning Enhancement regarding Special Provisions and/or with the Careers Adviser and coordinate Pathways for students at risk.
- Liaise with Head Teacher Special Education/Learning Enhancement, Head Teacher Wellbeing, Counsellor and Senior SASS/SASS.

Assistant Student Advisors will:

- Monitor attendance fortnightly.
- Conduct attendance interviews with students
- Contact parents of students with initial attendance concerns through written correspondence and phone calls
- Review and reward positive attendance

Learning and Support Teachers (LaSTs)

- Participate in regular Learning Enhancement Team meetings and liaising with staff to provide feedback regarding Learning and Support issues impacting on attendance.

Head Teacher Special Education/Learning Enhancement

- Participate in regular Learning Enhancement Team meetings and liaising with staff to provide feedback regarding Learning and Support issues impacting on attendance.

Careers Advisor:

- Liaise with the Deputy Principal's, Student Advisors and Head Teachers to coordinate alternative pathways for identified 'at risk' students. Providing access to work experience and workshops for students interested in seeking alternative choices of education or employment.
- Provide links, workshops and work experience between school, work and TAFE for identified students at risk of not completing the Record of School Achievement.

School Counsellors

- apply expertise in mental health, learning, and behaviour to help children and young people succeed academically, socially, behaviourally, and emotionally.
- School counselling staff work with teachers, families, school executive, and other professionals to create safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments that strengthen connections between home, school, and the community.
- Students and parents can contact their school counsellor or school psychologist directly through the school. School counsellors and school psychologists:

1. Provide counselling to students individually or in groups
2. Assess students with specific needs
3. Work collaboratively with teachers and specialist staff

4. Help families understand and manage their children's learning and mental health needs
5. Liaise with external agencies and other mental health professionals to provide coordinated, wrap around support for individual students.

Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO) will:

- o Liaise between all parties to assist in the resolution of attendance problems.
- o Provide Wellbeing Support.
- o Support Equity Outcomes.
- o Visit schools on referral to resolve attendance issues.
- o Conduct periodic roll checks.
- o Interview/clarify contributing factors associated with attendance concerns.
- o Suggest solutions.
- o Collaborate with other Department of Education personnel.
- o Form support teams.
- o Support students, parents and schools.
- o Monitor results of interviews.
- o Participate in student absence reduction programs.
- o Organise conciliation conferences.

3. Whole School Approach - Attendance support strategies and programs

Universal preventions:

- Wellbeing days 2x each year
- School handbook information
- Whole school presentation each semester
- Induction handbook for casual staff
- 100% attendance awards
- Student of the week
- Promotion of good attendance on Facebook
- Newsletter items
- Year assemblies
- Deputy's reports in newsletter
- Parent's app linked to SENTRAL being rolled out will give parents extra opportunities to explain absences and reasons for being late. School to have an awareness raising blitz.
- The Wellbeing and Learning Enhancement Team meet fortnightly to monitor wellbeing and attendance

Attendance strategies:
<https://education.nsw.gov.au/student-wellbeing/attendance-matters-resources-for-schools/attendance-strategies>

Targeted intervention:

- PL Wellbeing that is targeted to students
- Careers Advisor support for disengaged/ alternate pathways
- Bounce Back- students supported to engage with school e.g. student who improved from 30% attendance to 100% over three terms
- Learning Enhancement Centre- students can seek support with learning
- Shine and Own It programs
- Pacific Islander support- built attendance /self esteem
- Student Advisors- Monitoring and following up poor attendance patterns and liaising with the student, parents, Deputy Principal, Head Teacher Wellbeing and the HSLO where necessary to obtain a satisfactory attendance rate and fortnightly check of students' absence percentages.

Individual interventions:

- School Counsellor
- HSLO-provide specialist support in the resolution of attendance programs
- Three Bridges Youth workers/ School Chaplain (mix of self-referral and referred)
- Year 9/10 work education elective
- TVET for identified students- incl. white card training etc

4. **Communication strategy**

Parents:

- Parents receive an automated text after 10:00am if their child is not at school
- Parents receive a letter at the end of each month requesting an explanation of all unexplained absences for the previous month
- Attendance Expectations outlined in Social Media (FaceBook / Instagram)
- Attendance Expectations outlined in School newsletters
- SENTRAL for Parents app – reporting absences, receiving messages and notifications re: attendance
- Rewards and letters for attendance

Staff:

- Attendance procedures reminder at Term 1 Staff Development Days
- Staff handbook including information on attendance –‘Universal responses to Fractional Truancy’ and ‘Universal responses to Student Attendance Monitoring’.
- GRC Peakhurst Campus Student Wellbeing, Management and Engagement Policy’.
- Handbook for casual staff and new staff

Student:

- Deputy Principal Expectations Assembly (early Term 1 & early Term 3)
- PBL matrix posters in classrooms
- School Planner / Diary
- Year 6-7 packs for 2023
- Newsletters / Social Media

5. **Illness**

What should be done if there are frequent absences being explained as due to illness?

- Consultation occurs with parents regarding the health care needs of the student
- Medical certificates are sought for the absences.
- Where there are ongoing concerns, approval is sought from parents to contact the student's doctor so the school has all relevant information regarding the student's health care needs.
- Strategies are developed to ensure regular attendance at school.
- Student Attendance Action Plan will be developed in consultation with parents and student
- Transition plan is developed if necessary

6. **Learning and support needs**

Explain how students are identified and supported by the learning and support processes where attendance is an issue in consultation with parents.

- Students identified as requiring learning support are referred by the Wellbeing Team, an individual staff member or a parent to the Learning Enhancement Team. The Learning Enhancement Team considers a range of background information, including previous support mechanisms put in place for the student. If deemed necessary, parents and students are invited to participate in a PLP meeting to develop specific goals for the student and identify processes and procedures for students to reach these goals.

7. **Unsatisfactory pattern of attendance**

Define unsatisfactory attendance. What should be done if a student has an unsatisfactory pattern of attendance? Consequence of unsatisfactory attendance.

Fortnightly monitoring of student attendance occurs at GRC Peakhurst Campus through the Wellbeing Team.

A student is considered to have an unsatisfactory school attendance when they have:

- regular absences without explanation (despite follow-up from the school)
- regular absences and explanations provided by parents are unjustified
- extended periods of absence without an explanation or the explanation is unjustified
- An extended period of absence may be consecutive or irregular patterns of non-attendance.
- the wellbeing team uses the GRC Peakhurst Attendance Flowchart as a guide to monitoring attendance. – see attached.

8. **Record keeping**

All rolls at GRC Peakhurst Campus are recorded electronically via the SENTRAL PxP and Attendance Module. Attendance data is automatically uploaded into the Department of Education database on a fortnightly basis as per requirements.

9. **Roll Call Marking**

GRC Peakhurst Staff are required to ensure all timetabled rolls are accurately and punctually marked each day. The official attendance roll of the day is marked during the Peak Learning Session – 8.40am – 9.00am each morning. Front Office staff complete a daily audit to ensure all Peak Learning Rolls are marked. The Deputy Principal runs regular audits of PxP roll marking data to ensure rolls are accurately marked across all lessons of the day.

10. **Monitoring processes**

How does the school monitor and follow up student absences?

Student absences are monitored by the Wellbeing Team on a fortnightly basis using the GRC Peakhurst Attendance Flowchart and SENTRAL attendance data. This data is tabled at Wellbeing Team meetings. Year Advisors / Assistant Year Advisors collate the data to identify students at risk and follow the procedures outlined throughout the Attendance Monitoring Flowchart. See attached.

Assistance from home school liaison officers and Aboriginal student liaison officers is requested after all school based intervention strategies are exhausted.

11. **Reporting Child Protection concerns**

How does the school manage child protection concerns relating to student attendance?

- Students identified as a Child Protection Concern related to student attendance are identified through the processes listed above. Students of concern are discussed at a Senior Executive level and the Deputy Principal or Principal in conjunction with the Home School Liaison Officer will contact the Child Wellbeing Unit or the Department of Community and Justice to notify a risk of significant harm through educational neglect where necessary.

12. **Exemptions**

How does the school manage applications for exemptions from attendance at school?

- Applications for exemptions from attendance from school will be considered through the Senior Executive of the school in consultation with relevant stakeholders. For more information about exemption from school procedures, please click on the following link:
<https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2005-0259-01>