WHITFORD
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE

Reviewed 2026

Sources of Authority	
CEWA Policy	Community
Executive Directive	Student Safety, Wellbeing and Behaviour

Objective

The Executive Directive – Student Safety, Wellbeing and Behaviour guides the creation of cultures of safety and wellbeing where students feel safe and can flourish in their learning and development.

Rationale

The Education Act mandates that all children of primary age attend school. Other things being equal, time spent learning face-to-face at school is the single biggest factor in learning success. Parents are encouraged not to allow students to miss school unnecessarily as most instruction is sequential and lost lessons may be difficult for children to make up.

Whitford Catholic Primary School monitors and manages student attendance in order to maximise the opportunities of all students to learn.

Definitions

AUTHORISED ABSENCE

An absence where the reason provided by the parent is considered to be legitimate and deemed acceptable by the Principal.

A reasonable excuse for the purposes of explaining a school absence can include:

- medical or dental appointments
- bereavement or attendance at a funeral, including Sorry Business
- illnesses and accidents
- unforeseen and unexplained circumstances
- compliance with another law that results in the child's absence
- the child is receiving distance education through a registered school
- the child is undertaking approved education, training and/or employment
- the child has been suspended
- the child is attending or observing a religious event, culture observance or obligation.

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

An absence recorded as 'Unauthorised' when there has been no reasonable explanation provided for the absence.

If a reason is given to the principal and it is not approved, then the school will notify the parent/carer in writing.

In general, it is expected that these absences would not be excused:

- The parent did not seek approval beforehand, or in accordance with school procedure.
- The student was absent due to leisure or social activities without approval.
- The conditions of an authorised absence were not met (for example, a student absence learning plan during a family holiday was not completed).
- The parent has provided no explanation for the absences.

PARENT

In relation to a child, means a person who at law has responsibility for the long-term care, welfare and development of the child; or the day-to-day care, welfare and development of the child.

Principles

WHITFORD CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL'S RESPONSIBILITY

- Keep accurate attendance records for every child enrolled in the school; these are stored electronically but can be reproduced in written form.

  Records include:

  - If the student was physically present or not.
  - If the student was attending a different approved activity (the teacher running that activity will also record attendance).
  - Any reasons given for an absence.
  - If the reason for the absence is reasonable (see examples).
  - A flag for unexplained absences (removed if a reason is given later).
  - Information about any unsatisfactory attendance at school or classes.
  - A mark for half-day attendance if the student is present for at least two hours of instruction.
- Maintain records for the appropriate period of time under the School Education Regulations 2000.
- Manage alternate attendance arrangements.
- Implement plans and strategies to encourage regular attendance.
- Make sure attendance data is regularly monitored and analysed to look for attendance patterns.

  Patterns of absences can be across the school, a class or at the individual student level. Having accurate data, including the reasons for absences, is important for:

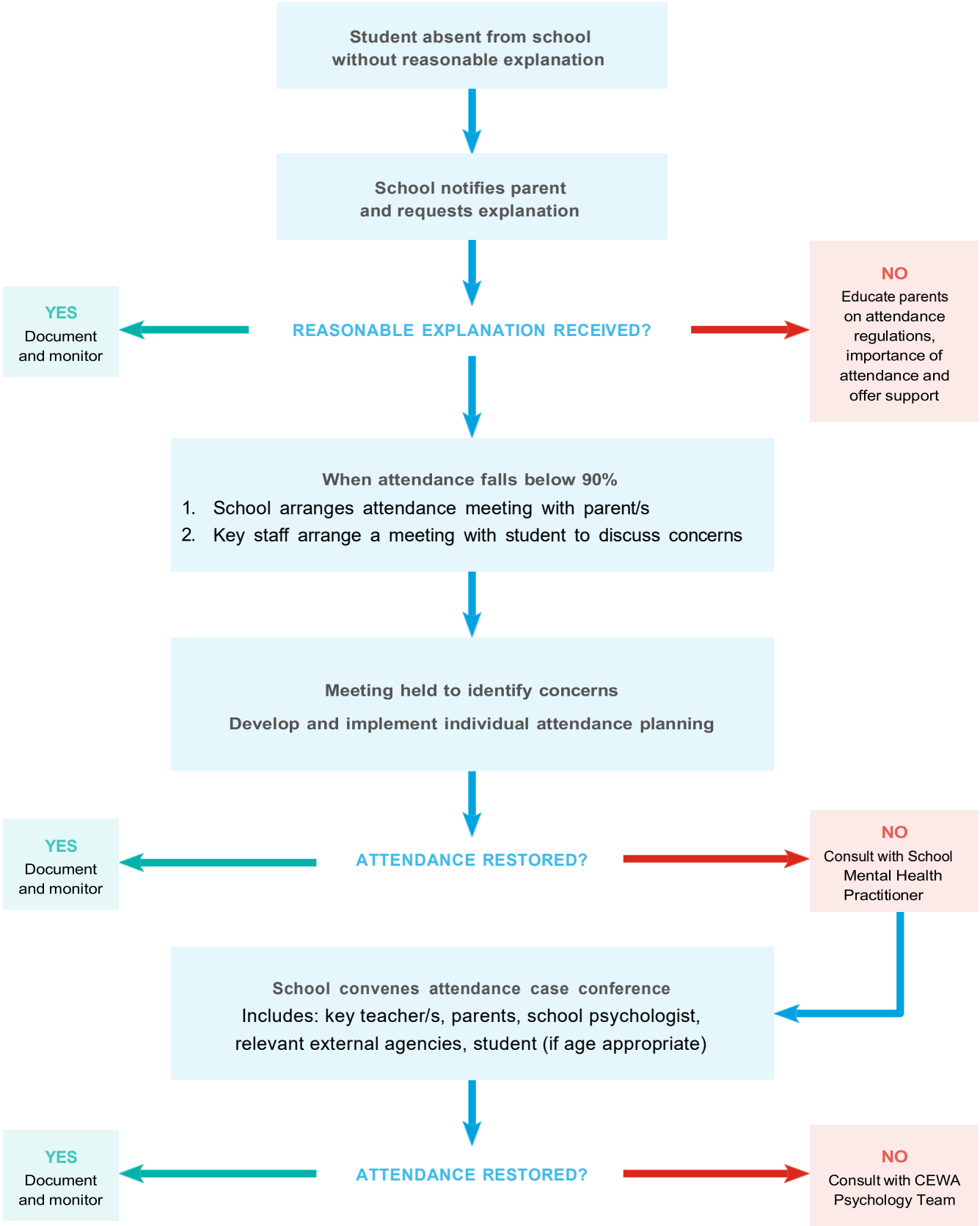
  - developing improvement strategies for students
  - reporting for funding requirements
  - using as evidence when there are attendance concerns.

PARENTS RESPONSIBILITY

- Parents must enrol a child of compulsory age at a registered school and ensure the child attends school at all times when the school is open for instruction.
- Parents/guardians must provide an explanation for any absence their child has and work in partnership with the school to support attendance.
- The parent/guardian of the student is required to:
    - Ensure the child attends school at all times when the school is open for instruction, unless complying with an arrangement under section 24 (Principal authorised alternative education arrangement).
    - Provide an explanation for any absence that their child has had within three days.

PROCEDURES

RECORDING ATTENDANCE

- Classrooms open at 8.30am with classes starting at 8.40am. Students should be in their class by the 8.40am bell.
- Students arriving after 8.40am must sign in the Late Register in the office and take a Pass to the class teacher. If students arrive late to class without a Pass, teachers should send the student back to the office to sign in.
- Teachers will mark students absent or present by 9.00am on SEQTA. Teachers will also mark the roll when class recommences after lunch.
- Parents are asked to notify the school if their child will be absent via the Absentee Line (9404 4244), Absentee email (absentee@wcps.wa.edu.au) or School Stream app by 9.00am. If verbal notification has been given, either directly or on the Absentee Line, this must be followed by written notification, via note or email, on the child's return to school.
- Parents planning an extended absence from school (e.g. holiday) are required to send in a written explanation to the Principal via email at absentee@wcps.wa.edu.au, before departure - a month in advance if possible.
- Notified absences are recorded on SEQTA by the Administration Officer.
- The Administration Officer will send an SMS message to the parents of students who are absent without notification before 10.00am. If parents do not respond to the SMS message, the Administration Officer will follow-up with a phone call directly to the parents.
- Every month, the Administration Officer will send a follow-up email to the parents of all students who have been absent without notification or have not submitted written notification of their absence.
- At the start of each term, the Administration Officer will send a follow-up letter to the parents of all students who have been absent without notification or have not submitted written notification of their absence for the previous term.
- In week 5 each term, a report indicating percentage of attendance is sent to parents.
- Attendance is included in mid-year and end of year reports.

Student Non-Attendance Flow Chart