



<b>Responsibility of:</b>	<b>Darwin High School Principal</b>
<b>Effective Date:</b>	<b>1 January 2018</b>
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	<b>July 2018</b>
<b>Target Audience:</b>	<b>DHS students, parents, staff</b>

## 1. POLICY

Darwin High School supports all students to engage fully in the learning opportunities provided by the school. This requires students to arrive on time to attend each scheduled class throughout the day, including study lines, and complete the full school term without interruption.

The school recognises that students best engage with learning opportunities that align to their interests and aspirations and, as such, is committed to making available alternative learning options where these are suitable for students. Any actions carried out under this policy are intended to enhance engagement and improve attendance for every Darwin High School student.

The school will maintain accurate attendance records in accordance with the provisions of the NT Education Act (2016) and communicate attendance rates and expectations to students and parents.

## 2. BUSINESS NEED

Strong student attendance is required to ensure all students benefit from quality teaching and contribute to a collaborative learning environment. This will support academic success, wellbeing, build students' skills and capabilities to achieve their full potential, and ensure success in meaningful pathways beyond schooling.

Northern Territory Government funding of government schools is calculated on effective enrolment, which includes average student attendance. Therefore, it is imperative that student attendance is high to maximize both human and material resources to support the delivery of positive student outcomes.

## 3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Year 10, Year 11, Year 12 and Secondary Intensive English Unit students every school day during school hours, 8am-2:30pm. Some provisions are in place for Year 12 students and those with an Individualised Learning Plan.

#### 4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

##### Students will:

- attend every scheduled learning opportunity throughout the school year unless an authorised absence has been given or the student has an agreed Individualised Learning Plan.
- if arriving late, report straight to class for the teacher to record their time of arrival.
- remain on school grounds between 8am and 2.30pm unless parental permission has been given to leave for an approved absence. If leaving, Year 10, Year 11 and SIEU students will sign out from Student Services to receive a leave pass and wait in the pick up/drop off zone if they are being collected from school. Year 12 students may leave school grounds at recess, lunch and during study lines after signing out at either Student Services or Student Support Services.
- carry a lesson pass or leave pass if out of class during timetabled lessons and produce this if requested by a member of staff. Students will be directed to their class if they do not have a pass.
- actively seek out support from the Student Support Team to identify barriers to engagement and the support required to ensure regular attendance. This may include instigating a meeting with a class teacher, Faculty Senior or Year Level Coordinator to determine an Individualised Learning Plan.

##### Parents will:

- support their child(ren) to arrive by 8am every school day. This includes scheduling family holidays outside of term time.
- notify the school of absences and lateness at the earliest opportunity.
- monitor their child's attendance
- provide a medical certificate if requested for absences in excess of three (3) days due to illness.
- participate in the development and progress of their child's Individualised Learning Plan.

##### The school will:

- accurately record and monitor attendance daily, including late arrivals, notified and un-notified absences.
- regularly communicate student attendance to parents, staff and students and follow up as required.
- include attendance on student reports.
- support students through the Student Support Team to maintain regular attendance. Where regular engagement with a standard timetable is not maintained, students will be supported to alternative learning options through an Individualised Learning Plan.

## **5. PROCEDURES**

### **5.1 Recording and monitoring attendance**

Teachers will accurately mark student attendance in Compass, using the codes P (Present), NP (Not Present) and L (late). This will be done at the earliest available opportunity each lesson and confirmed by 3pm each school day.

Senior Teachers are responsible for ensuring the quality and timeliness of roll marking by their faculty through regular review of marked rolls. Relief Coordinators are responsible for ensuring the quality and timeliness of roll marking of relief teachers, including providing them with access to Compass.

The attendance for students enrolled in Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses or work experience is managed by the VET Coordinator and marked as V (VET Course). If the student attends class at the school instead of VET, the class teacher will mark the student in line with usual procedures and notify the Home Liaison Officer of the student's attendance. A student's attendance at VET is provided to the VET Coordinator by external providers, and school administration will update student attendance in SAMS G2 and Compass, as required, at the earliest convenience of receiving the information.

The Student Support Team will apply a range of attendance codes to student records in Compass to reflect Individualised Learning Plans. These may include O (out of class), B (attendance not required), V (VET course) and others as identified in the Department of Education's Lesson Attendance Codes and Descriptions form.

All attendance data will be transferred from Compass to SAMS G2 by the next school day to ensure that completion and validation processes are in line with DoE Guidelines: Attendance – Recording and Reporting.

Year Level Coordinators, Assistant Principals, Principal and the Home Liaison Officer will regularly review attendance reports to monitor progress.

Parents are encouraged to monitor their child's attendance record in Compass or contact the school for a report on their child's attendance.

Students found out of class during scheduled lesson times will be asked to produce a lesson or leave pass. If they do not have said pass, the student will be directed back to class.

## **5.2 Notification and authorisation of absences**

Parents will notify the school of all student absences, including partial days. Independent students must notify the school themselves. This can be done by completing an Absence Notification in Compass, calling the Front Office on 8999 1222, emailing [dhs.attendance@ntschoools.net](mailto:dhs.attendance@ntschoools.net), or completing the absentee notification form on the Darwin High School website.

Where a teacher is notified of an absence by a parent or student, they will complete the Absence Notification template for a Chronicle Entry in Compass, recording the name of the student's parents, reason for absence and date range of absence. School administration staff will authorise this teacher-notified absence in Compass or escalate the request to Home Liaison Officer or Assistant Principal for further consideration if required.

An absence will not be considered authorised by the school until a parent has provided a satisfactory explanation. As outlined in DoE's Attendance and Participation Policy, satisfactory explanations for absences include illness, medical appointment, unexpected family circumstances or 'other' as determined by the Principal and situation presented.

A family holiday during school term will not automatically be authorised.

Authorised absences will not negatively impact a student's calculated average attendance rate.

## **5.3 Recognising strong and improved attendance**

Darwin High School will recognise students with 100% attendance and improving attendance.

## **5.4 Identifying and following up with non-attendance**

5.4.1 When a student is absent or late without explanation for three (3) consecutive days or a pattern of absences and/or lateness has been identified, the following actions will be taken:

- a. If a student is absent or late from only one class, that class teacher will follow up with the student to discuss a plan for improvement. The class teacher will notify the parent as soon as practicable, but within the week. All attempts to contact the parent(s) must be logged as an Attendance Chronicle Entry for the student in Compass.
- b. If a student is late or absent from several classes, or discussions with the class teacher do not show an improvement in attendance, the Year Level Coordinator will follow up with the student and parent(s) as soon as practicable. These attempts to contact the parent will be logged as an Attendance Chronicle Entry for the student.
- c. If a student's attendance requires further attention, a meeting with the school, the student and parent(s) will be called to discuss an Individualised Learning Plan. This plan will be communicated to all teaching and support staff working alongside the student.

5.4.2 When a student has a record of un-notified absences or 'lates' for 50% or more of classes over a two-week period, the following actions will be taken:

- a. The Student Support Team will facilitate a meeting between the parent(s), student and school to identify barriers to engagement and determine an alternative pathway to improve student attendance. Independent Students may choose to bring a support person. All attempts to contact the parent will be logged as an Extended Absence Notification Chronicle Entry in Compass for the student. The plan will be communicated to all teaching and support staff working alongside the student.
- b. The Student Support Team will follow up with those students on individualised learning plans to ensure progress on the plan as required.
- c. The School Executive and the student's parent(s) will monitor progress on the Individualised Learning Plan.

### **5.5 Consequences of ongoing non-attendance**

Students with an attendance record of 90% or below may not be allowed to attend extra-curricular activities, such as the Year 12 formal, school sport activities and interstate and overseas excursions.

Where a pattern of absences/lateness is affecting the achievement of other students, the student may be removed from an identified subject.

For students of compulsory school age, if the Principal considers their attendance to be unsatisfactory and the school has exhausted all re-engagement strategies, including alternative learning options, they may be referred to a Senior Attendance and Truancy Officer. (NTG Attendance Compliance Guidelines 4.1)

For all other students, if the Principal considers their attendance to be unsatisfactory and the school has exhausted all re-engagement strategies, including alternative learning options, their enrolment is at risk of termination.

### **5.6 Communicating student attendance**

Students, staff and parents have access to attendance records, including daily attendance, through Compass.

Individual student attendance, including lateness, will be included on regular student reports.

Reports on whole of school student attendance, including lateness, and students on an Individualised Learning Plans, will be reviewed regularly by the school.

The school board will regularly review attendance data where this impacts funding and learning outcomes.

Attendance data will be regularly communicated with staff and students.

## 6. DEFINITIONS

**Alternative learning options:** These are identified through an Individualised Learning Plan and may include an apprenticeship, YouthWorx, the Malak Re-engagement Centre or other options as determined by the school, parent and student.

**Authorised absence:** As outlined in the Department of Education's Attendance and Participation Policy, satisfactory explanations for an absence to be authorised include illness, medical appointment, unexpected family circumstances or others as determined by the Principal and situation presented.

**Compulsory school age:** A child who has turned six years of age on or before 30 June of the school year and has not completed Year 10, or turned 17 years of age, whichever comes first.

**Compass:** The system utilised by Darwin High School to record and maintain student data including, but not limited to, attendance, academic performance and wellbeing.

**Identified subject:** A subject with selective enrolment, limited capacity or is otherwise a subject requiring a significant amount of collaborative work between students. Such subjects include all Centre for Excellence subjects, Dance, Music, Business, VET courses, apprenticeships, etc.

**Independent Student:** A child who is of or above the age of 14 years and not living with a parent. A child who is living with a parent is also considered to be independent if the parent is unable to assist the child in relation to enrolment, attendance and participation.

**Individualised Learning Plan:** A plan determined by the school, student and parent (s) to create a positive schooling experience for students to succeed academically and with improved attendance. The plan may include, but is not limited to, a personal timetable, switching students to alternative classes, adjusting their timetable to include fewer classes or alternative days, and a process for making up missed work. Timetable changes will be documented in Compass.

**Late:** A student who arrives after the first 10 minutes of class is considered late.

**Learning opportunity:** All scheduled classes and educational activities as determined by a timetable or Individualised Learning Plan. These may include VET courses and school-based apprenticeships, training, work experience, study lines, required excursions, assemblies and other school-related activities.

**Lesson pass:** A pass provided to students when they have permission to be out of class during a scheduled learning opportunity.

**Leave pass:** A pass provided to students when they are leaving the school site during the school day after signing out from Student Services.

**Notified absence:** A student absence that has been communicated to the school by a parent. Students living independently will notify their own absence.

**Un-notified absence:** A student absence that has not been notified by a parent or independent student

**Parent:** A child's mother, father, guardian or other person who has parental responsibility for the child, including a person who is regarded as a parent of the child under Aboriginal customary law or Aboriginal tradition. This must be recorded as such on the child's record at the school.

**Parental permission:** A child's parent is required to give permission through contact with the school for all absences, including where a student is required to leave before the end of the school day. Where a student is identified as an independent student, parental permission is not required.

**Personal timetable:** A printed timetable which a student carries with them and has signed by the teacher at the end of each class to confirm attendance and provide feedback on progress.

**Senior Attendance and Truancy Officer:** Officers who work under the Education Act (2016) and the *Social Security (Administration) Act* to reduce non-attendance by administering legislative powers. Such powers include, but are not limited to, issuing notices, conducting compulsory conferences, referring student files for prosecution and recommending suspension of Category H Centrelink payments.

**Student Administration and Management System (SAMS G2):** The mandated student administration system used in all NT government schools to manage student enrolment and attendance data.

**Student Support Team:** The team of school staff responsible for ensuring student engagement and attendance. This includes Year Level Coordinators, Assistant Principals, Home Liaison Officer, School Counsellor and/or the Aboriginal and Islander Education Worker.

**Student Services:** The administration team managing sign out procedures.

**Teachers:** Those employed to teach a class, including casual and relief teachers.

## 7. RELATED POLICY, LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

<b>Northern Territory Department of Education</b>	<a href="#">NT Department of Education Attendance and Participation Policy</a> <a href="#">NT Department of Education Attendance: Compliance guidelines</a> <a href="#">NT Department of Education Attendance: Exemptions from Attendance and Participation Guidelines</a> <a href="#">NT Department of Education Attendance: Recording and Reporting guidelines</a> <a href="#">Lesson Attendance Codes and Descriptions</a>
<b>Northern Territory Government</b>	<a href="#">NT Education Act (2016)</a>
<b>Federal</b>	<a href="#">School Enrolment and Attendance Measure (SEAM)</a> Part 3C of the <a href="#">Social Security (Administration) Act</a>

## 8. EVALUATION

All staff are responsible for the ongoing monitoring of performance and student attendance in line with this policy. The policy and associated guidelines will be reviewed after six (6) months and revisions made to accompanying guidelines as necessary. This will include analysis of enrollment and attendance and the impact of Individualised Learning Plans.