1. Objectives - Policy Statement

1.1 Section 22 of the Education Act 1990 requires students between the ages of six and fifteen to be enrolled at a government or registered non-government school and to attend that school whenever instruction is provided, or to be registered with the Board of Studies for home schooling.

1.2 All students who are enrolled at school, regardless of their age, are expected to attend that school whenever instruction is provided.

1.3 Section 24 of the Act requires principals to maintain an attendance register (roll) in a form approved by the Minister. Attendance registers must be available to authorised officers at all times.

2. Audience and applicability

2.1 This policy applies to all NSW government schools, excluding pre-schools.

3. Context

3.1 Regular attendance at school is essential to assist students to maximise their potential. Schools, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students.

3.2 Encouraging regular attendance is a core school responsibility.

3.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with current Departmental policies and procedures for enrolment of students in NSW government schools.

3.4 Students must have an attendance percentage of above 80% to be considered for selection for representing the school in sporting and cultural experiences.

3.5 The Department of Education in conjunction with Tingha Public School defines unsatisfactory attendance as:

- More than 3 unexplained whole day absences in a 3 month period
- A regular pattern of absences developing
- Possibility of parent condoned absence where regular non-attendance is covered by notes

4. Responsibilities and delegations

4.1 Parents and Carers

4.1.1 Parents and carers are responsible for enrolling their children of compulsory school age in a government or registered non-government
school, or for registering them with the Board of Studies for home schooling.

4.1.2 Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring that their children who are enrolled at school attend regularly.

4.1.3 Parents and carers are required to explain their children’s absences promptly to the school.

4.2 Classroom teachers will:

4.2.1 Mark the classroom roll each morning before 9:30 am and make the appropriate recording for students who are absent in compliance with the attendance register codes for rolls.

4.2.2 Collect all absence letters.

4.2.3 Encourage student attendance by implementing a range of strategies which could include:
   - Student and parent interviews
   - Reviewing the appropriateness of the student’s educational program
   - Referral to the school’s Attendance Officer, learning support team or school counsellor
   - Provision of a YCDI key at the discretion of the classroom teacher when students display satisfactory attendance

4.2.4 Liaise with the Attendance Officer to ensure students with unsatisfactory attendance (as stated in 3.4) have had letter 2 or 3 sent home to their parents and carers.

4.2.5 Liaise with parents and carers in relation to students with unsatisfactory attendance (as stated in 3.4).

4.2.6 Monitor student absences and notify the Attendance Officer if they have cause for concern of a student’s regular or excessive absences.

4.2.7 Report to the weekly staff meeting students with unsatisfactory attendance (as stated in 3.4).

4.2.8 Complete HSLO referral when necessary in conjunction with the school’s Attendance Officer or Principal.

4.3 Tingha PS Attendance Officer will:

4.3.1 Collect roles, notes and leave forms and adjust rolls accordingly.

4.3.2 Contact parent/carers after two consecutive days of child being absent by phone.

4.3.3 Send home Yellow note (attachment 1) to parent/carers if they have not been notified of an explanation for a student’s absence within a seven day period at the end of the week.

4.3.4 If a student has unsatisfactory levels of attendance (as stated in 3.4) the school Attendance Officer will complete letter 2 or 3 and send it home to the parents and carers.

4.3.5 In conjunction with the Aboriginal Education Officer and the Principal will telephone or initiate contact with parents and carers to discuss concerns in relation to student attendance after no response to letter 2 or 3.

4.3.6 Monitor student absences and notify the Principal if they have cause for concern of a student’s unsatisfactory attendance.

Revised March 2014
4.3.7 Liaise with parents and carers in relation to students with unsatisfactory attendance (as stated in 3.4).

4.3.8 Liaise with staff and monitor student attendance and follow up on students with unsatisfactory attendance.

4.3.9 Report to the weekly staff meeting students with unsatisfactory attendance.

4.4 The Principal will:

4.4.1 In conjunction with the Aboriginal Education Officer and the Attendance Officer will provide clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance (as stated in 3.4) via parent letters (letter 2 or 3).

4.4.2 Liaise with parents and carers in relation to students with unsatisfactory attendance (as stated in 3.4).

4.4.3 Ensure that accurate records of student attendance are maintained in an approved format.

4.4.4 Ensure that all cases of unsatisfactory attendance (as stated in 3.4) and part or full day absences from school are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented.

4.4.5 Ensure that school personnel are provided with information on attendance requirements and their obligation to monitor and promote regular attendance at school.

4.4.6 Ensure that the School Education Director and appropriate Regional Student Welfare Personnel are well informed of issues relating to students with unsatisfactory school attendance (as stated in 3.4).

APPENDIX

1. Letter 1 – regular absence note (yellow)
2. Letter 2 – unexplained absences (pink)
3. Letter 3 – explained absences (green)
4. Letter 4 - Compulsory School Attendance, Medical Certificate request.

Revised March 2014
Dear {parent/career},

Please fill in this note and send it back as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Kerri Tom

Week (Date 2014)

Dear Teacher,

I am aware that my child, {child's name}, was away from school on {day of the week away}.

was late to school on {day of the week late}.

The absence(s) was because of:

☐ Sickness  ☐ Appointment  ☐ For another reason which I would like to talk to the school about

☐ Other (please say what) ________________________________________________________________

Signed ___________________________ Date

______________________________
Parent/Guardian

Revised March 2014
[date]

Dear [parent name],

I am writing to you in response to concerns raised about the high level of absences that your child has had from school.

[childs name] has had [number of days away] days away in the past [days in total] days. This is a serious matter of concern. I have attempted to contact you either phone or by sending home a yellow note, and have had no response to date. [childs name] was away on the follow dates:

[list dates child absent]

These absences will be deemed unsatisfactory in accordance with the Department of Education guidelines and the Tingha Public School Attendance Policy if they remain unexplained. The Department of Education in conjunction with Tingha Public School defines unsatisfactory attendance as:

- More than 3 unexplained whole day absences in a 3 month period
- A regular pattern of absences developing
- Possibility of parent condoned absence where regular non-attendance is covered by notes

Regular attendance is essential to ensure both academic and social progress at school.

The District Home School Liaison Officer may feel the necessity to implement an Attendance Improvement Plan. The District Home School Liaison Officer follows Department of Education guidelines and monitors students with excessive absences. You will be advised by the School Education Director if this is necessary.

We would appreciate your support by encouraging [childs name] ‘s attendance at school each day. We are concerned that [childs name] is missing out on important learning opportunities and social development.

We do accept phone calls explaining your child’s absence/s. Please contact the school to make an appointment to discuss this matter as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Shauna Lennon
Relieving Principal

Revised March 2014
Dear [parent name],

I am writing to you in response to concerns raised about the high level of absences that your child has had from school.

Although many of [child's name]' absences have been explained, these absences have been deemed unsatisfactory in accordance with the Department of Education guidelines and the Tingha Public School Attendance Policy. The Department of Education in conjunction with the Tingha Public School Attendance Policy defines unsatisfactory attendance as:

- More than 3 unexplained whole day absences in a 3 month period
- A regular pattern of absences developing
- Possibility of parent condoned absence where regular non-attendance is covered by notes

Regular attendance is essential to ensure both academic and social progress at school.

The District Home School Liaison Officer may feel the necessity to implement an Attendance Improvement Plan. The District Home School Liaison Officer follows Department of Education guidelines and monitors students with excessive absences. You will be advised by the School Education Director if this is necessary.

We would appreciate your support by encouraging [child's name]'s attendance at school each day. We are concerned that [child's name] is missing out on important learning opportunities and social development.

We do accept phone calls explaining your child’s absence/s. Please contact the school to make an appointment to discuss this matter as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Shauna Lennon
Principal

Revised March 2014
[Month and date] , 2013

RE: Compulsory School Attendance, Medical Certificate request.

Dear [parents name] ,

Regular attendance at school is important for students to reach their full potential. The school is required to record the reason for any absences as a way of ensuring that students are absent from school only when they are sick or have another good reason for missing school.

[child's name] has had [number of full days absent] full days absent, which is equal to [percentage] attendance rate.

Due to [child's name] frequent absence, we advise that we are no longer able to accept sickness as a reason for absence unless it is accompanied by a medical certificate.

We would appreciate your support by encouraging your child’s attendance at school each day.

Yours faithfully,

Kerri Tom
Attendance Officers

Revised March 2014