

## Compulsory School Attendance Policy

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If a student misses as few as eight (8) days in a school term, by the end of primary school they will have missed more than a year of school.

Education for your child is important and regular attendance at school is essential for your child to achieve their educational best and increase their career and life options. IGS works in partnership with parents and caregivers to encourage and support regular attendance of children and young people.

When your child attends school every day, learning becomes easier and your child will build and maintain friendships with other children.

### What are my legal responsibilities?

In New South Wales, school attendance is compulsory for children between the ages of six (6) and 17, or until the completion of Year 10 (whichever occurs first). The *Education Act (1990)* requires that parents and caregivers ensure their children of compulsory school age are enrolled at, and regularly attend school.

**Once enrolled, children are required to attend school each day it is open for students.**

Children are expected to attend all school activities, on time. Regular attendance helps your child. Parents and caregivers are responsible for making sure that their children comply with these legal requirements.

### What if my child has to be away from school?

On occasion, your child may need to be absent from school. If so, you must tell the School and provide a reason for your child's absence. Justified reasons for student absences may include:

- being sick, or having an infectious disease
- having an unavoidable medical appointment
- being required to attend a recognised religious holiday
- an exceptional or urgent family circumstance, such as attending a funeral.

Following an absence from school, parents and caregivers must ensure that they provide International Grammar School with a verbal or written explanation for the absence no later than the day your child returns to school. If the School has not received an explanation from a parent or caregiver, the School will make contact to discuss the absence.

IGS may request medical certificates or other documentation when frequent or long-term absences are explained as being due to illness. IGS may also seek parental or caregiver permission to speak with a medical specialist to obtain information to collaboratively develop a health care plan to support your child. If the request is denied, the absence will be recorded as unjustified.

## Habitual absence

“Habitually absent” is a minimum of 30 days absent within the past 100 school days. In accordance with the Mandatory Reporter Guide, a course of action under the Keep Them Safe Legislation needs to ensue on the part of the School.

## What might happen if my child continues to have unacceptable absences?

Some of the following actions may be undertaken:

- Compulsory Schooling Conferences: You may be asked, along with your child, to attend a Compulsory Schooling Conference. The Conference will help to identify the supports your child may need to have in place so that they attend school regularly. The School, parents and caregivers, and agencies will work together to develop an agreed plan (known as an Attendance Improvement Plan) to support your child’s attendance at school.
- Report to Community Services
- Report to the Youth Liaison Officer.

IGS remains committed to working in partnership with you to address the issues which are preventing your child’s full participation at school.

## Travel

Families are encouraged to travel during school holidays. If travel during school term is necessary, an *Application for Extended Leave – Travel* will need to be completed. Absences relating to travel will be marked as leave on the roll and therefore contribute to your child’s total absences for the year.

## Summary of IGS processes regarding student attendance

IGS, in partnership with parents and caregivers, is responsible for promoting regular school attendance of students, as outlined under the NSW *Education Act (1990)*.

## Lateness

Students need to be at school on time. All students are to attend Home Class or Tutor Group when the bell rings at 8.35am.

Students who arrive late are required to report to Student Reception to obtain a late note that must be given to the teacher.

While the School understands that lateness is sometimes unavoidable, it is important to develop in students the value of being punctual. Late arrival to school can disrupt the learning of the individual and of others. Consequently, unexplained lateness to school may require High School students to make up this time.

## Leaving school early

If a student must leave school early, they are to present a note to Student Reception on the morning of the day requiring early leave. This note needs to be signed by the Head of House or a senior member of staff and students are to report to Student Reception at the time of their departure from the School.

Students not at school during school hours must carry with them an IGS leave pass.

## Short term student absence

The School should be informed before 8.30am if a student is to be away on any given day. Contacting the School via email at [absences@igssyd.nsw.edu.au](mailto:absences@igssyd.nsw.edu.au) is the preferred method for this.

A note, email or telephone call to Student Reception is required on the day the student returns after an absence if this has not been done prior to the student returning to school. If no substantiation for the absence is received, this will remain recorded as an unexplained absence.

## Leave requests

Applications for leave from school for five (5) days or more must be made in writing to the Deputy

Principal Students Wellbeing, Mary Duma, by sending an email to [lesleyr@igssyd.nsw.edu.au](mailto:lesleyr@igssyd.nsw.edu.au)

Parents and caregivers will subsequently be required to complete an application form for the period of absence. Leave requests must be signed by both of the student's parents or caregivers.

*A Certificate of Extended Leave – Travel* will then be issued by the Deputy Principal in accordance with legislative requirements.

Please allow sufficient time for the Deputy Principal to consider all requests that are made and to provide a response.

## Procedures used to follow up student absence:

1. The School Roll and Enrolment Register are legal documents.
2. IGS maintains a register of enrolments on Engage, the School database.
3. IGS monitors the daily attendance and absence of students through roll marking which is done each day during Home Class or Tutor Groups at 8.35am.
4. Student absences from classes or from the School are identified and recorded in a consistent manner by the staff member responsible for the class roll using the code approved by the Minister for Education.
5. The School informs parents and caregivers of students who are recorded absent by an automated digital service which is sent by 10am each day. This system allows the School to verify the whereabouts of students on any given day and also ensures that our records regarding student attendance are maintained accurately. For this reason, students who fail to attend Home Class or Tutor Time must ensure that they record their attendance by signing in at Student Reception. In all cases where a student is recorded as absent, an email or SMS message will be sent to parents and caregivers as a notification of that absence. This will occur even in cases where the absence is known in advance.
6. Attendance registers are moved off-site for storage at regular intervals.
7. If a student has a poor record of school or class attendance, the School notifies parents and caregivers during term time and at the end of each term.
8. Where unsatisfactory school or class attendance is identified, the attendance issue and any action taken are recorded, as appropriate, on the student's file.
9. The register of enrolments is retained for at least five years before archiving, and the register of attendance for a student is retained for at least seven years after the last entry was made in respect to the student.

## Home Class Teachers and Tutors:

- are responsible for ensuring that attendance records are maintained on the School's database and are an accurate record of the attendance of students
- ensure that for students with attendance concerns, the learning and support needs of those students are addressed in consultation with parents or caregivers and senior staff.

Please contact Deputy Principal Wellbeing Mary Duma at [maryd@iggsyd.nsw.edu.au](mailto:maryd@iggsyd.nsw.edu.au) or on 9219 6700, for further information.

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