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Honour the past, create the future

Orange High School

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Orange High School - Overview

As a school, we proudly educate students from the regional Central Western city of Orange, NSW and surrounding villages. We are a comprehensive, co-educational high school with a passion to deliver the highest quality educational experiences to all students who walk through our gates. Our school is defined by high expectations of all students in all areas of their life including their conduct, achievements inside and outside the classroom as well as their future aspirations. Student leadership is a driving force at Orange High School and the wider student body have a clear voice through the representative groups of the SRC (Student Representative Council) and their prefects. Our school is steeped in tradition with strong connections to our local community, who actively support our many initiatives. Our promising future is encapsulated by our school slogan, Honour the Past, Create the Future; and as result the school is driven and identified by a strong tradition of excellence, achieved in an innovative, progressive and highly structured teaching and learning environment.





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Overview -

Orange High School has proudly provided high quality learning experiences to students in Central Western NSW for over 100 years. Today, we educate up to 1200 students from within the regional city of Orange and its rural surroundings on Wiradjuri country. The foundation of our school community is based on honouring the past with respected traditions while creating the future through dynamic innovation. Our school provides comprehensive secondary education underpinned by the motto: Quod Potero Sedulo, whatever we do, we do to the best of our ability. We relentlessly pursue excellence in all aspects of education and understand our vital role in educating young people to become connected, engaged, knowledgeable and productive individuals.

Aboriginal heritage and culture are present in our school and make our lives richer. We acknowledge and celebrate the contributions that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make to our school culture while honouring their contributions to our school's proud history. Authentic respect for culture equips students with the skills and experiences to succeed and positively contribute to the Orange High Family and the world beyond the school.

Staff are honoured to serve our community of students from a diverse range of backgrounds and experiences. Our teachers have crafted a responsive foundation of inclusive learning that can be practised in students' lives, while respecting their different backgrounds. Acknowledging diversity enhances our learning experience by exploring new ways of knowing, being, and doing we take proactive steps to build confident and resilient young people. Our ongoing and unwavering dedication to well-being and positive school culture supports all our students to thrive within and cherish their time at Orange High School.

Our teachers are invested in our student's success. Staff work collaboratively to ensure every student is engaged through careful evaluation of student data and community feedback. Teachers have the opportunity to guide students in discovering their talents and reminding our youth that they have the ability to make change. Our educators continually review and reform their teaching strategies with the aim of improving our external results in NAPLAN and the HSC by using evidence-based best practice to enhance academic outcomes.

At Orange High School, we remain determined that our students are provided with a wealth of extracurricular opportunities. Through holistic education students are supported to develop their own identity by pursuing their passions in music, agriculture, hospitality, student voice, leadership, sport, work experience, dance, languages, arts and STEM areas. Our co-curriculum is designed to support students to perform at their best, and while success is celebrated, active participation is widely respected by the school community.

The annual Astley Cup is indicative of the school spirit, determination and collaboration that is cultivated by our strong extracurricular programs. Our school's relationships with important community groups and organisations facilitate quality learning opportunities, supporting students to explore diverse career pathways. As a school community, we are proud to contribute to local events particularly Orange's annual ANZAC memorial service. We have an active Parents and Citizens Committee, close links with the Orange AECG and meaningful relationships within the fields of arts, sport, industry and culture.



ATTENDANCE POLICY

All students who are enrolled at school, regardless of their age, are expected to attend school. Full regular attendance is a critical factor in ensuring positive, educational outcomes for students, supporting them in achieving their potential, and increasing career and life options.

Schools, in partnership with parents and carers, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. Section 22 of the Education Act (1990) outlines the legal requirements for compulsory schooling.

This policy reflects the DOE School Attendance Policy and the School Attendance Procedures as they apply to Orange High School.

For the most up to date information, use the following website:

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

Responsibilities

Students:

- all students must complete Year 10. After Year 10 and until they turn 17, students must be:
 - in school, or registered for home schooling, or
 - in approved education or training (eg TAFE, traineeship, apprenticeship) or
 - in full-time, paid employment (average 25 hours/week) or
 - in a combination of work, education and/or training
- bring in absence notes to the middle office letter box explaining each absence the day they return to school
- be at school on time and attend every lesson
- students are expected to arrive at school by 8:50 to allow them to be on time for Period 1, starting at 9:04am
- students are able to check their attendance through the Student and Parent Portal. Any concerns over their attendance can be discussed with the Head Teacher Engagement (Mr Routh)
- who arrive late to school they must present to the administrative offices. Students with a note explaining their lateness with a justifiable reason (eg. Medical appointment) will be entered on Sentral and given a late note to enter class
- who arrive late without a note will be entered as unjustified and given a note to take home to their parent/carers asking them to explain their lateness, to be returned by the following day to the letter box outside the middle office
- be safe, respectful learners

Parents and Carers:

- ensure that their child/ren attend school regularly and on time
- to be enrolled at, and to attend, a government school or a registered non-government school or to be registered for home schooling with the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (NESA)
- explain the absences of their children from school promptly and within seven days as a requirement of the *Education Act (1990)*



Orange High School

- the preferred method for explaining absences are through the Student and Parent Portal, or a note to the middle office. Parents and carers may also explain absences via email or phone call to the school

School staff are responsible for supporting regular attendance of students by:

- provide a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters and enables students to gain a sense of belonging to the school community
- maintain accurate records of students' attendance through the use of Sentral
- seeking verbal or written advice promptly from parents regarding unexplained full or part day absences
- retain records of written, electronic and verbal explanations from parents and carers. Verbal explanations must be noted and kept with written and printed electronic explanations
- implement programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise
- provide clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance

Classroom teachers are responsible for:

- maintaining accurate records of student attendance
- marking the rolls promptly at the start of each period on Sentral through PxP
- recording all absences and partial absences on Sentral, speaking to the student next lesson and/or a phone call home.
- following up partial student absences from their classes as per OHS and faculty policies and have the student make up for lost learning time.
- recording student and parent contact in relation to attendance on Sentral, under Wellbeing, Attendance Record of Contact
- referring and alerting their faculty Head Teacher of continued attendance concerns after making student and parent contact
- referring and alerting the Head Teacher Student Engagement (Mr Routh) of chronic non-attenders and partial truancy after undertaking both classroom and Head Teacher steps

Teachers taking students on Variation of Routine (VOR) are responsible for:

- completing the VOR electronic paperwork as per VOR policy
- checking that all students on a non-curriculum based VOR have attendance at or above 87%
- Marking electronic rolls for VORs at the start of the VOR accurately, if having technology issues forwarding a list of students attending the VOR to Jenny McNabb - Administration
- contacting SASS Administration on the day of the VOR with any alterations to student attendance, if having technology issues. If accurate lists are not given to SASS Administration and a parent is contacted by the school about an absence when they have been on a VOR, the teacher in charge of the VOR is then responsible for contacting the parent and correcting the inaccuracy



Orange High School

Aboriginal Education Officer is responsible for:

- contacting parents and carers of Indigenous students via letter at the start of each school year to explain their role and avenues of support they offer
- using attendance data generated from Sentral to implement attendance improvement programs as needed
- acknowledging Indigenous students with attendance levels meeting and exceeding expectations
- contacting parents of Indigenous students who are not meeting attendance expectations to discuss concerns and support available
- meeting with Head Teacher Student Engagement (Mr Routh) weekly to discuss progress and concerns

Head Teacher Administration-Students is responsible for:

- completing outside agency attendance reports (eg. Centrelink, Return of Absences) as required
- ensuring that OASIS/ERN student numbers correspond with Edval and Sentral
- notifying staff of new students and class placements, along with student leavers, to ensure roll accuracy
- forwarding current Exemption and Application for Leaver paperwork to be uploaded onto the school website
- co-ordinating Sentral as the external compliant third-party system
- liaising with outside agencies to provide additional support for students with attendance concerns
- liaising with the careers officer in regards to apprenticeship paperwork

Head Teacher Student Engagement (Mr Routh) is responsible for:

- monitoring and tracking of whole school attendance
- communicating with parents/carers and HSLO regarding attendance issues and interventions in partnership with Year Advisors, Head Teacher Wellbeing and Deputy Principals
- reporting attendance data to the Principal, Deputy Principals and Year Advisors
- recognising and acknowledging student attendance through attendance awards
- meeting with HSLO fortnightly to review attendance reports generated via Sentral, and put in place actions as needed
- monitoring students with identified attendance concerns, and communicating strategies with staff
- referring students with wellbeing concerns impacting on their attendance to the Head Teachers Wellbeing
- resolving parent queries over roll marking inaccuracies/absences
- alerting staff to roll marking inaccuracies
- alerting Principal and Head Teacher of staff with ongoing roll marking concerns
- overseeing the twice weekly sending of texts to parents and caregivers of unexplained absences
- completing and submitting the Mobility Tracker by the end of Week 2 each term to Student Services
- completing HSLO referrals as needed, once school procedures, including Learning Support Team (LST) plans, have been implemented
- generating attendance reports fortnightly to be tabled at LST meetings for follow up by appropriate staff members
- implementing PAP's for students with non-wellbeing related attendance issues.

Head Teacher Wellbeing is responsible for:

- supporting students with mental health or other wellbeing concerns that is impacting on their attendance, including liaising with their caregivers and outside agencies
- implementing PAPs for students with Wellbeing issues
- overseeing and monitoring the attendance of Out of Home Care (OoHC) students, and communicating and liaising with all stakeholders
- supporting Year Advisors as needed to monitor, encourage and acknowledge attendance



Orange High School

Year Advisors are responsible for:

- identifying issues that may be impacting on student attendance, and working with the student, family, HT Wellbeing, HT Student Engagement, HT Administration – Students or Deputy as relevant to support
- monitoring late arrivals in conjunction with the Attendance Tracker for their year group if allocated, and then implementing strategies to support
- check in students/ families when a 3 day absence notification has been generated via Sentral
- following up on the attendance report given to them on Wednesday Week A and completed data entry on the shared attendance Google Sheet before Monday Week A 5pm
- if needing to discuss student cases in more detail, attend the Attendance meeting with the HSLO and Head Teacher Student Engagement (Mr Routh) to review year group attendance
- to follow up on students with attendance between 70-90%

Senior Executive will ensure that:

- students are enrolled in line with the requirements set out in the Enrolment of Students in Government School
- attendance records are maintained in approved format and are an accurate record of the attendance of students
- all attendance records including DoE details of transfers and exemptions are accessible as required
- the Director, Public Schools NSW, is informed of serious attendance issues, including students for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue
- school staff are provided with information on attendance requirements and their obligation to monitor and promote regular attendance

The Principal must ensure:

- attendance records are accessible to nominated personnel
- the school regularly evaluates and addresses school attendance through the school plan
- contacting the NSW Police Force to request a child safety check for children not sighted
- open communication is promoted with parents
- must 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
- or their delegate will undertake all reasonable measures to contact parents promptly and within two school days of an absence being unexplained, if contact has not already been made. An absence is unexplained if parents have failed to provide an explanation to the school within 7 days
- attendance records are maintained in an approved format and are an accurate record of the attendance of students.
- that for students with attendance concerns, the learning and support needs of those students are addressed in consultation with parents.
- when frequent absences are explained as being due to illness that:
 - 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.



Orange High School

- that school staff are provided with information on attendance requirements and their obligation to monitor and promote regular attendance at school
- 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).

The Principal may grant:

- sick leave to students whose absences are satisfactorily explained as being due to illness
- accept other explanations for absence and record the absence as "L"
- decline to accept an explanation for absence and record the absence as unjustified
- an exemption from school attendance for periods totalling up to 100 days in a 12 month period for any one student provided certain conditions are met (See the Exemption from School - Procedures) .
- part-day exemptions from school for periods totalling up to 100 days in a twelve month period (See the Exemption from School - Procedures).
- exemption from enrolment for students who have completed year 9 and have the required approval to complete their education in special circumstances through an apprenticeship or traineeship (See the Exemption from School - Procedures).

Attendance Registers (Rolls)

- Attendance registers must be maintained on all days that the school is open for instruction, including school sports day, swimming carnivals, excursions and similar events.
- School attendance will be marked period by period and recorded on Sentral.
- Specific sports rolls must be marked at the beginning and conclusion of each sports session. Attendance information contained on sports rolls must be transferred to the attendance register (roll). Class teachers in the first instance, and then the Sports Co-ordinators must follow up absentees promptly and ensure that the school's procedures for managing truancy is implemented.

Attendance verification for ABSTUDY and other Centrelink payments

The following will be completed by the Head Teacher Administration (Students):

- In order to qualify for payment of ABSTUDY School Term Allowance, a student must attend school for a minimum of 85% of days in a school term.
- When calculating 85% attendance unapproved and unauthorised absences from school will be utilised.
- Any days lost to suspension will be counted as an unapproved absence, and therefore may impact on a student's eligibility for ABSTUDY.



Orange High School

Exemption from School

A child may be exempt from being enrolled at and attending school if the Minister or delegate is satisfied that conditions exist which make it necessary or desirable that a Certificate should be granted. A Certificate of Exemption may be given subject to conditions and limited to a period specified in the certificate.

A Certificate of Exemption must only be granted when it has been clearly demonstrated by the applicant that an exemption is in the student's best interests in the short and long term. Alternatives to exemption should have been fully explored. For example, it may be in the student's best interests and be more appropriate to access Distance Education.

In these Procedures the term 'parent' or 'parents' includes any person or persons having the custody or care of a child.

A Certificate of Exemption should not be approved where the student has been the subject of contact with the Child Wellbeing Unit or a child protection report to Family and Community Services and/or there are unresolved issues concerning a risk of harm. Prior to granting a Certificate of Exemption a risk assessment should be completed to identify and manage risks.

Where the delegate is aware of existing child protection concerns, (including where it may be in the child's best interests to grant the exemption) the Director, Student Engagement and Interagency Partnerships must be consulted prior to approval being granted.

If parents request authority not to enrol their child, this must be considered an application for exemption from enrolment

Exemption from Attendance at School

Reasons for granting full day exemptions from attendance at school -

Principals, Directors, Public Schools and Executive Directors (Schools) may grant exemptions due to:

- exceptional circumstances (including the health of the student where sick leave or alternative enrolment is not appropriate)
- the child being prevented from attending school because of a direction under the Public Health Act 2010. (The parent is not required to complete an application for exemption)
- employment in the entertainment industry – refer to children's employment
- participation in elite arts or elite sporting events

For any other matter not covered by the above points, the delegate must consult the next most senior delegate in their reporting line.

Note: Students travelling during school terms are not to be exempt. If the principal accepts the reason then leave is granted and the 'L' code should be used, consistent with the implementation of National Standards for Student Attendance Data and Attendance Register.



Orange High School

Reasons for granting part day exemptions from attendance at school

The Education Act 1990 gives the Minister or delegate the power to grant a Certificate of Exemption from the requirement to attend school during the times specified in the Certificate.

- For students participating in the entertainment industry, elite arts or elite sporting programs who are required to attend regular activities/training during school time an Application for Exemption from Attendance/Enrolment at School must be completed and submitted to the principal for approval prior to commencing the program. (Appendices A and E)
- Students may participate in school based programs including behaviour management transition plans*. An Application for Part Day Exemption should be completed. (Appendices B and F)
- For part day exemption due to the requirements of a health care plan*, the principal should seek the parents' consent to obtain information from health professionals responsible for the health care of the child. (Appendices B and F)

Students participating in school programs may be granted part day exemptions for periods of time not exceeding the equivalent number of full school days. Close monitoring of exemption periods is necessary so that the approval period is not exceeded.

Participation in such school programs must be approved by the Director, Public Schools NSW. Principals should submit the transition plan to restore the child to full-time attendance to the Learning and Engagement Officer for recommendation who will forward it to the Director, Public Schools NSW.

The attendance register must indicate part 2.2.7. day exemptions with the code P/M. Note: Students accessing Links to Learning Programs for part of a school day or part of the school week should not be exempt from attendance at school. Principals should use the school business symbol B on the Attendance Register as an explanation of the student's absence.

* For school programs associated with behaviour management or health care plans it is not necessary to complete a separate Application for Exemption from Attendance/Enrolment at School.

Attendance for non-curricula based activities

For students to be eligible to attend non-curricula based events and excursions (for example Malynley Shield, Debating, or CHS sport) students must have a minimum attendance of 87%. This will rise by 1% per year, until reaching 90% in 2024.

Teachers in charge of non-curricula based activities are responsible for checking the attendance of students who are involved in the activity. Any students who are below 87% will not be permitted to attend.

For major non-curricula based activities such as Malynley Shield and Astley Cup, the teacher in charge will follow up and check the attendance of all students involved, and seek clarification on any students with lower attendance through the relevant Deputy Principal.



Orange High School

Attendance flow chart

Students are to be present in class, on time and learning

Rolls are to be accurately marked and submitted within the first 10 minutes of a lesson.

Absent from your lesson (partial)

Teacher will follow up with student the next lesson and ensure the student catches up on missed learning time

Absent from your lesson (partial) – casual staff member

Leave a note for the classroom teacher, they will follow up with student the next lesson and ensure the student catches up on missed learning time

Continue partial absences, HT intervention:

Teacher will follow up with the faculty HT for support and place on a HT monitoring booklet. Phone call home, possible Reflection Time. Document on Sentral and tag HT Student Engagement in the entry

Continue partial absences after HT intervention:

Teacher to refer the matter onto the HT Student Engagement for support and follow up.

Continue partial absences after HT Student Engagement intervention:

HT Student Engagement to follow up with the school intervention checklist, family interview, potential attendance letter and PSLO/HSLO interview. If limited improvement referred to HSLO if school-based support fail.

If absent. Families to inform school, with supporting documentation where possible via email, portal or phone call.

Absent whole days

Year Advisor to follow up with home and investigate further after 3 days absent. Automatic YA notification

Absent whole days, continued after YA support

YA to refer the matter onto the HT Student Engagement for further support if little or no improvement.

Absent whole days, still no improvement

HT Student Engagement to follow up with the school intervention checklist, potential attendance letter and PSLO/HSLO interview. If limited improvement referred to HSLO if school-based support fail. Run MRG for Educational Neglect (Habitual Absence)

Removing students from class:

Removing a student out of a lesson (partial) – OHS staff member

Staff member will ensure that the students' attendance is corrected through Jen McNabb

Removing a student VOR – OHS staff member

Staff member will ensure that the electronic roll in Activities is set up before an excursion commences and will correctly mark and submit the roll at the start of the VOR.

Removing a student out of a lesson (partial) – OHS staff member

Staff members that fail to update attendance will need follow up with the family of the student. Attendance is a legal requirement of all staff and if not completed correctly, staff may be in breach of the code of conduct and may be asked by the principal to explain why this requirement has not been met.