

# Newcastle High School

Information for Parents/Carers and Students



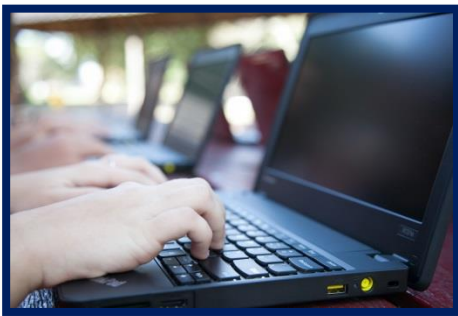
An attendance rate of 75% means a student misses 25% of their school year.  
This means the student will miss one whole year of learning over four years.  
Think of the impact on your child's education and future!



Attendance is an  
Educational and Safety issue  
that is a priority for both staff and parents

# Contents

Why Attend? .....	3
1 Attendance Requirements .....	4
2 Student Responsibilities .....	4
3 Recording Attendance .....	4
4 SMS Alerts .....	4
5 Explaining Absences... You have options .....	5
6 Exemptions .....	5
7 Partial Absences .....	6
8 Senior Attendance.....	6
9 ROSA and HSC .....	6
10 Knowing Your Child's Attendance Pattern.....	7
11 Top ten tips .....	7
Keeping Track.....	7



# Why Attend?

**The aim of education is to develop in students the following Key Competencies**

- Collecting, analysing and organising information
- Planning and organising activities
- Communicating ideas and working with others
- Working with others in teams
- Solving problems and using technology
- Using mathematical ideas and techniques

These key competencies are essential for success in gaining employment, progressing in a career and for making important everyday and lifetime decisions.

**Good attendance will allow students to develop those key competencies and provide employers with evidence of employability**



## **Employment opportunities**

**Employers want** employees who turn up every day and on time

**Employers look** at report comments to determine a person's attitude to work

**Employers ring** schools to check the attendance data of students

**Employers check** a student's compliance with school rules and their levels of achievement

# 1

## Attendance requirements

Regular attendance at school is essential to gain maximum benefit from schooling. Students are required to attend school EVERY day of the school year, unless there are circumstances which make this impossible. These circumstances can include illness, accident or family crisis. Family holidays should be planned for school holiday time, where possible (see point 6 – Exemptions). An attendance rate of 95% is expected. Students must be at school before 8.45am for morning roll call.

# 2

## Student Responsibility

It is a student's responsibility to:

- Arrive at school before 8.45am
- Attend every school day (unless circumstances make this impossible)
- Attend all timetabled classes once at school

# 3

## Recording attendance

Rolls are marked in the morning at the commencement of Period 1. Class rolls are marked at the beginning of each lesson. Teachers mark the class roll electronically. Students must be present to have their attendance recorded. If students are late to school they must sign in at the student office in administration where their time of arrival will be recorded. If a student fails to do this there will be errors in their school attendance record. Students are expected to remain at school for the whole day, unless they have a pass signed by a Deputy Principal, are ill and collected by a parent, or have been suspended and collected by a parent. Students who are absent from school must bring a written note of explanation on the next school day. Any absence from school **must be** explained.

# 4

## SMS Alerts

Parents/Carers will receive SMS messages to advise of whole day absences and late arrivals. It is important that the school has your correct contact details. An SMS will automatically be sent to the primary contact listed on enrolment by 11.30am for all absences recorded. Parents/Carers may respond to this SMS to explain the absence. Only replies to a school generated SMS will be received. Parents/Carers are **unable** to initiate SMS communication with the school.



# 5

## Explaining absences... you have options

All absences must be explained within seven (7) days of a student returning to school. After seven (7) days, even if a note of explanation is provided, an absence cannot be changed from 'unexplained' to 'explained'. A negative attendance record may have an impact on your child's future employment prospects. Valid explanations are illness, Injury, family crisis and family leave.

**Option 1:** Respond to the SMS Message



**Option 2:** Phone: 02 4969 3177 on the day of absence. Advise the School Administration Officer of the student's name, year, reason for absence, name of person calling and a contact telephone number.



**Option 3:** Write and send a note of explanation with your child on the first day they return to school. This note should be handed in at the student office in administration. The note should contain your child's full name, year and PBL/roll class, the date of absence, a valid explanation, parent/carer's signature and a contact telephone number for verification.



**Option 4:** Email to: [newcastle-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:newcastle-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au) on the day of the absence occurring. Provide the student's full name, year and roll call, a valid reason for the absence and the name and contact telephone number of the person emailing. In the subject line of the email please include: **NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE.**



**Letters are sent home for students who have three (3) or more unexplained absences in one (1) week.**

# 6

## Exemptions

Students requiring extended absence from school can make application to the Principal for a Certificate of Exemption. Application forms are available from administration and on the school's website. Applications must be supported with impartial evidence. Approval is at the Principal's discretion. On approval a Certificate of Exemption will be issued.

Reasons for exemption from attendance:

- Exceptional personal circumstances
- Extended illness or injury recovery
- Employment in the entertainment industry
- Participation in elite sports



Due to changes in the DEC's Attendance Policy 2015, **family holidays are no longer considered reasonable grounds for an exemption.**

An *Application for Extended Leave – Travel* should be completed and provided to the Principal.



## Partial absences

### Late Arrivals

Late arrivals are classified as partial absences.

Students who arrive late to school must report to administration to have their attendance recorded.

Two slips will be issued to students who arrive late without a note: a late slip which is to be given to the classroom teacher; and an absence notification slip which is to be filled out and signed by a parent/carer and returned to the mentor teacher the following day.

All late arrivals must be explained with a note to avoid absences being recorded on student records.

### Early Leaver

Early leave is classified as a partial absence.

Students who need to leave school early are required to provide a written note of explanation to the Student Office for approval by a Deputy Principal. The note must contain a satisfactory explanation with sufficient detail and a parent/carer's signature. An Early Leave Pass will be available for collection from the Student Office in administration during the recess/lunch breaks.

### Sports Days

**Sport is a compulsory school requirement.** When students require doctor's appointments, these should be made outside of school hours if possible. Sports days should not be used for such appointments. When an appointment has been made for a sport day, students are required to apply for a leave pass BEFORE the date and present their appointment card (for specialists) at the time. Students with passes are required to sign out through administration prior to leaving the school grounds.

All notes of explanation for absences should contain

- The date, student's name, year and roll class
- A valid reason for the pass (NOTE: Comments such as "I give permission for my child to leave" or "I want my child to leave school" are **NOT** sufficient)
- A contact name, parent/carer signature and a contact telephone number for verification



## Senior attendance

Seniors are expected to attend all classes and maintain a percentage attendance above 95%.



## Record of School Achievement (ROSA) and Higher School Certificate

Poor attendance can affect the ability of your child to achieve these valuable records of their schooling. Poor attendance affects a child's ability to meet course outcomes, complete assessments and follow their courses of study with sustained and diligent effort.

When students fail to meet the BOSTES requirements for courses they will be issued with an N Award. These awards can result in students failing to gain the certificates they are hoping to achieve. Students may need to repeat these courses the following year.

10

## Knowing your child's attendance pattern

Parents are notified about overall attendance in the School Reports issued to students twice a year. (end of Semesters 1 and 2)

Letters are sent home for students:

- Whose percentage attendance falls below a satisfactory level. Year Advisors, Deputy Principals and the Head Teacher Administration (Students) may also contact home over matters relating to attendance
- who have three (3) unexplained absences in one week

11

## Top ten tips for improving your child's attendance and ensuring their safety

- Encourage full attendance
- Explain the importance of attendance for learning and success
- Insist your child attend sport and school carnival days
- Limit the half day passes you request by organising appointments out of school time
- Send your child to school on excursion days even if they are not attending the excursion. In many cases only a small number of students are involved and classes will run normally
- Check the school's website and Facebook page for upcoming events  
<https://newcastle-h.schools.nsw.gov.au/>  
[www.facebook.com/pages/Newcastle-High-School/](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Newcastle-High-School/)
- Do not let your child miss school for minor matters
- Contact the school on the day if your child is genuinely absent
- Ask your child about their day and discuss their subjects
- Request attendance data if you suspect your child may be truanting
- Check for notes from the school about upcoming events









# *Notes*

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# *Notes*

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Respect, Responsibility & Participation

## **NEWCASTLE HIGH SCHOOL**

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