



## POLICY ON LEARNER ABSENTEEISM AND LATE COMING

Date approved / revised:	September 2016 revised	Date policy updated:	01/03/2021	Date of next review:	2024
Developed by:	Policy Development and Review Committee (PDRC) of the School Governing Body (SGB)				
Approved by:	School Governing Body				
Responsible body:	School Governing Body				
Supporting documents, procedures and forms for this policy:	Legislation (see below)  Annexure 1				
References and legislation:	The South African Schools Act (1996) as amended The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) National Education Policy Act (Act 27 of 1996) PAM Personal Administration Measures: Government Notice 222 (GG No, 19767, 18 Feb 1999) Circular 13 of 2002 Circular 04/2016 Procedures for controlling, managing and monitoring learner attendance.				
Scope:	SGB, School Management Team (SMT), Educator Staff, Learners				
Expiry date of the policy:	2024, provided there are no changes and / or updates.				
Objectives of policy:	To promote punctual and regular attendance of school and provide the Department with up to date statistics on attendance when required.				

## **ARBOR PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### **POLICY ON LEARNER ABSENTEEISM AND LATE COMING**

#### **1. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS**

Learners – all children enrolled as learners (students) at the school.

Educators – persons employed at a school to teach / educate the learners.

Parent / Guardian – a) the parent or guardian of the learner; b) the person legally entitled to custody of a learner.

SASA – South African Schools Act 84 of 1996.

Principal – an Educator appointed or acting as the head of a school.

Deputy Principal – an Educator appointed as the Academic Manager of a school.

Buddy – an appointed friend to support and collect documents during absenteeism.

IDS0 – Institutional Development Support Officer.

SMT – School Management Team

SGB – School Governing Body

D6+ – D6+ School Administration Management System

Compulsory school going age – the age range contemplated in section 3(1) of SASA, namely from the first school day of the year in which the learner turns seven (7) until the last school day in which the learner turns 15 or the ninth grade, whichever occurs first.

Continuous absence – absence of a learner from school for 10 consecutive school days without valid reason.

#### **2. ABSENTEEISM**

As per SASA 1996 (Act 84 of 1996) attendance is compulsory for all children of school going age. It is the responsibility of the parents to see that their children attend school. If a child is absent, the parents need to inform the front office of the school by no later than 09:00 on the first day of absenteeism. A letter of explanation needs to be submitted on the learners' return to the school. (There is a place in the homework diary for such a letter). Medical and personal appointments, where possible, are to be made outside school hours.

Medical certificates are expected if the learner is absent from tests or exams and from school for more than 2 days.

Absenteeism from school for holiday reasons is not encouraged. Any parent requesting absenteeism for holiday reasons must contact the principal in writing. Parents are requested to inform the school in writing, in advance, of intended absence for religious holidays. The learner will be marked absent, but it will not count against 100 % attendance. Any learner absent from school is required to catch up missed work. The educator and buddy are there to assist.

Attendance records are the responsibility of the home room educators and the buddy is to inform the teachers of absenteeism in the subject. Educator to monitor attendance and contact parents if absenteeism persists. The weekly statistics must be handed into the front office so the attendance secretary can forward the weekly attendance statistics to the District Office on a Friday.

After 12 days of absenteeism a standard letter set by the school is to be issued and followed up by the homeroom educator (Annexure 1). After continual absenteeism exceeding 10 days without valid reason or notification, after every effort is made to contact the parents, the learner may be deregistered according to Department policy. If absenteeism over a long period of time or a regular pattern is noticed, the IDSO is contacted and the issue reported.

### **3. LATE COMING**

All parents must make every effort to get their children to school 10 minutes before the start of the day. When the bell rings for the start of the school, all access gates to the school are locked. The only way into the school is through the front office. A secretary is on duty every day and records late coming in the learner's diary and in the D6+ administration system. If this happens on a continual basis the parents are contacted by the Educator to try and solve the problem. A standard letter is issued (Annexure 2). If it still doesn't resolve the issue, the parent/s are contacted by the Deputy Principal / Principal.

### **4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **4.1. Class Educator:**

The class educator must ensure that he/she records absenteeism in the register every morning during homeroom. Absenteeism is loaded in D6+ administration system daily.

The class educator may use a temporary class register for a maximum of ten (10) consecutive days starting on the first day of the first term while class lists are being finalised and maintained in the same manner as the class register in terms of this policy.

The data on the temporary register, once approved by the Principal, must be copied on the official register as soon as these become available after the 10-day life span.

The administration department will print monthly attendance reports per class to be verified by the class educator. The class educator reports to the Principal/SMT of any repetitive patterns of absence from school and the reasons thereof. Inform the principal of the school if a learner is absent from school without explanation for three (3) consecutive days.

#### 4.2. Subject Educator:

A subject educator must support a learner who was absent from a period with a valid reason to make up for time lost or assessments missed in the form of catch-up programmes.

#### 4.3. School Management Team:

The SMT must work together with the Principal, SGB and Staff of the school to develop a culture of punctual and regular attendance at the school.

The SMT follow up cases of irregular attendance during teaching time and report to the Principal accordingly.

#### 4.4. School Governing Body:

The SGB must work together with the Principal, Management and Staff of the school to develop a culture of punctual and regular attendance at the school.

The SGB must include rules dealing with punctuality and regular school attendance in the school's Code of Conduct for learners.

The SGB must request from the principal a quarterly report on learner attendance trends and consider the report in the SGB meeting.

#### 4.5. Principal

The Principal, together with the Staff, SMT and SGB, is responsible for developing a culture of punctual and regular attendance at the school.

- a) Will ensure that all staff members understand the importance of accurate record keeping and monitoring of learner attendance and carry out their responsibilities competently.
- b) Will provide all educators access to class registers and period registers on D6+.
- c) Must give each learner a copy of the school's Code of Conduct and the learner attendance policy (printed in the front of the learner diary). Learners will be requested to sign acknowledgement of receipt in the diary.
- d) Must ensure that quarterly attendance returns are generated and submitted to the District IDSO.

- e) Must implement government programmes to assist learners with problems leading to absence and irregular school attendance.
- f) Must ensure that class registers are compiled, marked, monitored and securely stored in terms of this policy.
- g) Must monitor and analyse learner attendance statistics by grade and include the information in the reports to the SGB and Head of Department for Education (HoD).
- h) Must establish in advance the difficulties that the writing of end-of-year examinations will bring in relation to accommodation of all learners in the school and the likelihood this will have on learner attendance, teacher absenteeism on examination marking duty and the program of action to alleviate this.

4.6. Parents:

A parent of a learner is expected to fulfil the following duties and responsibilities:

- a) Ensure that the learner attends the school daily, on time and for the entire school day unless there is a valid reason for absence.
- b) Ensure that the learner is not taken out of school without a valid reason as determined by the school and without a permission note.
- c) Where a learner obtained permission to be taken out of the school early, inform the school who will be fetching the learner and what relationship the person is to the learner.
- d) Inform the class teacher in a school diary or in a letter to the class teacher or by a telephone call to the administration office if the learner is absent or expected to be absent or be late for school with a valid reason.
- e) Notify the principal in writing well in advance of the learners' intentions to take certain school days off for the purpose of observing religious holidays/festival or cultural practices.
- f) Cooperate with the school in resolving cases where the learner is absent without a valid reason or permission from the school.
- g) Encourage the learner to participate in catch-up programmes to make up for time lost for absence from school.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**MR P.A. ARENTSEN**  
**PRINCIPAL**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Name: \_\_\_\_\_**  
**CHAIRPERSON SGB**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Name: \_\_\_\_\_**  
**DISTRICT OFFICIAL**

*Standard letter to be printed on letterhead.*

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear: \_\_\_\_\_

**RE: ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL**

It has been reported to me that your son / daughter, \_\_\_\_\_ has already missed \_\_\_\_\_ days of school since the beginning of this year.

It is my duty to bring to your attention the following facts:

1. Regular school attendance is **COMPULSORY** for all children between the ages of 7 and 16, according to the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, and parents who do not ensure that their children abide by this regulation are liable to a hefty fine and / or imprisonment.
2. It is my duty to report any absenteeism which exceeds 12 days per year to the education authorities, who will then take further action.

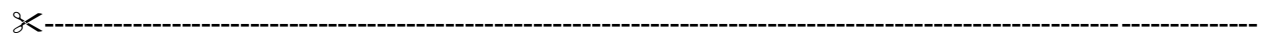
At this stage, I have not yet resorted to reporting your children to the Education Department, but I will have no alternative unless they are at school every day from now until the end of the year.

If there is, perhaps, an underlying medical condition that we are unaware of, and which is causing their absences from school, could you please inform us and supply us with the applicable medical certification. Obviously, this will influence the course of action we may be obliged to follow in the future with regard to Education Department procedures.

I trust that I can count on your support to ensure that your child does in fact, attend school regularly from now on, and that it is her / his responsibility to ensure that all work is caught up and completed on time, not the educator's.

Yours truly,

\_\_\_\_\_  
**P.A. ARENTSEN**  
**Principal**



**REPLY SLIP**

I \_\_\_\_\_ parent of \_\_\_\_\_ have received and read the letter pertaining to absenteeism.

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
CONTACT NUMBER

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Policy No: 1.6

*Standard letter to be printed on letterhead.*

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear: \_\_\_\_\_

**RE: CONTINUAL LATE COMING**

It has been reported to me that your son / daughter, \_\_\_\_\_ has already been late for school on \_\_\_\_\_ days since the beginning of the year.

Please note that our school day begins at 07:40. When your child arrives late, they disrupt the class and also miss out on vital information given at homeroom and the beginning of the lesson.

Please make every effort to rectify this problem so as not to disadvantage your child any further.

Yours truly,

\_\_\_\_\_  
**P.A. ARENTSEN**  
**Principal**

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**REPLY SLIP**

I \_\_\_\_\_ parent of \_\_\_\_\_ have received and read the letter pertaining to late coming.

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
CONTACT NUMBER

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_