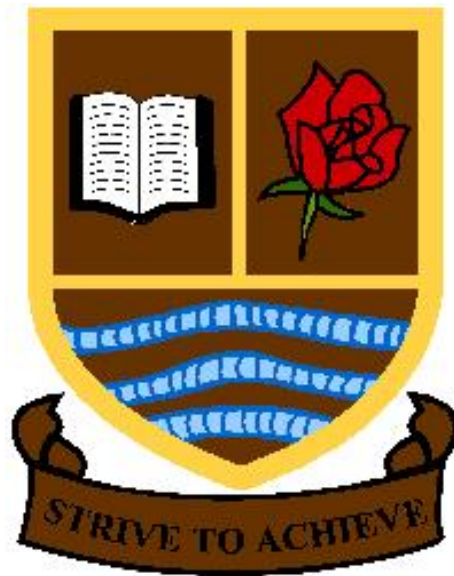


STRUBENVALE PRIMARY SCHOOL



Learners Attendance Policy

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1. TITLE OF THE POLICY: Learners Attendance Policy of Strubenvale Primary School

2. EFFECTIVE DATE: 01 January 2017

3. REVISION HISTORY:

3.1. DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: 30 November 2017

4. PREAMBLE:

4.1. Regular and punctual school attendance by learners will not only instill discipline among learners but is likely to improve learner retention in the system and overall performance.

4.2. While learners stay away from school for many reasons, the effects of poverty cannot be undermined. Irregular attendance of learners can be attributed to one or a combination of the following factors:

- Parent's inability to pay school fees or buy uniforms;
- Lack of transport;
- Parents' or children's chronic illness, including HIV/Aids and tuberculosis;
- Poor nutrition;
- Child labour;
- Unstable or dysfunctional family life and
- Gang violence.

4.3. The monitoring of learners' absence and the taking of appropriate follow up action will enable a school to successfully curb absence. Thus enabling Strubenvale Primary, to protect every learner's fundamental right to education.

4.4. The willingness of parents to play a critical role in assisting the school in getting their children to school on time and on a regular basis is a necessary ingredient to improve learner attendance.

5. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The primary purpose of the learner attendance policy is to:

5.1.1. Provide public schools with standard procedures for recording, managing and monitoring learner attendance.

5.1.2. Inform principals, educators, learners, parents and the SGB of their responsibilities towards promoting punctual and regular attendance at public schools.

6. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

6.1. Definitions.

No	Term	Definition
1	Class	Refers to a group of learners who are under the administrative supervision of a class teacher.
2	Class Register	Means an official document, which may be an electronic document, in which the attendance of learners in a class is recorded each school day.
3	Class Teacher	Is a teacher whom the principal has allocated administrative responsibility for a class for a school year (or part thereof).
4	Continuous absence	Means absence of a learner from school for 10 consecutive school days without valid reasons
5	Educator	Refers to any person, excluding a person who is appointed to exclusively perform extra-curricular duties, who teaches, educates or train other persons or who provide professional educational services, including professional therapy and educational psychological services at school.
6	Head of Department	Refers to the head of a provincial department of education
7	Learner	Means any person receiving education or obliged to receive education in terms of relevant legislation
8	Parent	Means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The parent or guardian of a learner; b) The person legally entitled to custody of a learner; or c) The person who undertakes to fulfil the obligations of a person referred to in paragraph (a) and (b) towards the learner's education at school
9	Period	Refers to time allocated on a school timetable for instruction in a subject or learning area.
10	Period register	Means an official document in which the attendance of learners in a period is recorded.
11	Principal	Refers to an educator appointed or acting as the head of a school
12	School	Refers to Strubenvale Primary School
13	School Governing Body	Is the body responsible for Governance issues at Strubenvale Primary School
14	Suspension	Means the temporary refusal of admission to a learner to a school, usually suspension precedes expulsion
15	Temporary class register	Refers to a register maintained by a class teacher for no more than 10 consecutive school days commencing from the first day of school on which learner reports to school to the 10 th school day.

16	Temporary closure of school	Means temporary closure of a school during the school year by the HoD in terms of 16(4) of SASA or by the SGB in terms of the National School Calendar Policy.
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6.2. Acronyms

No.	Acronyms	Explanation
1	EAS	Electronic Administration System
2	GDE	Gauteng Department of Education
3	HOD	Head of Department of a School
4	HoD	Head of a Provincial Education Department
5	MEC	Member of Executive Council of a province who is responsible for education in the province
6	PAM	Personnel Administration Measures
7	RCL	Representative Council of Learners
8	SGB	School Governing Body
9	SMT	School Management Team

7. APPLICATION AND SCOPE OF THE CONSTITUTION

7.1. This policy applies to the learners, educators, support staff, the school management and parents of the learners at the school.

8. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

- 8.1. Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996), as amended.
- 8.2. National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act No. 27 of 1996), as amended.
- 8.3. The South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996), as amended.
- 8.4. Employment of Educators Act, 1998 (Act No. 76 of 1998).
- 8.5. Education Policy Act, 1998 (Act No. 12 of 1998).
- 8.6. Gauteng Schools Education Act, 1995 (Act No. 6 of 1995).
- 8.7. Policy on Learner Attendance (General Notice 361 Of 2010).
- 8.8. Admission of Learners to Public Schools (General Notice 4138 Of 2001).

9. RELEVANT POLICIES AND PROVINCIAL CIRCULARS

9.1. None

10. POLICY STATEMENTS

10.1. Attendance Records

- a. Strubenvale Primary will maintain class registers and period registers as attendance records.
- b. The registers referred to above will be kept in the form of electronic records and paper based records for monitoring and verification purposes.

- c. For the first 10 days of the academic year, commencing from the first day of school on which learners report to school to the 10th school day, a teacher is required to maintain a temporary class register.
- d. The principal of the school will supply the class teacher with class registers and period registers annually after the 10th school day.
- e. All staff members are required to maintain the respective learner attendance records meticulously and accurately as these are legal documents which may be brought before a court in case a legal action is instituted against a school as a result of a mishap to a learner.
- f. The class register will be marked daily during the registration period by the class teacher and the period register will be marked daily during the teaching period by the form teacher.
- g. In the absence of a class teacher/subject teacher a member of the SMT/another teacher will mark the relevant register.
- h. The class register shall be compiled by the class teacher.
- i. The class register shall be marked twice a day, during the morning and afternoon registration times indicated on the timetable, in accordance with the procedures as set out in Annexure A.
- j. Once the register is marked after each registration, it must be sent down to the administration clerk for capturing on EAS.

10.2. Learner Absence

10.2.1. When is a learner considered to be absent?

In line with the National Policy on Learner Attendance, Strubenvale Primary will consider a learner to be absent from school when such a learner is not present in class during the times when the class register is marked during the class registration period and/or during the time when the period register is marked or when the learner is not participating in an official educational, cultural, recreational or social activity of a school within or outside the school premises.

10.2.2. Valid reasons for learner absence.

Taking the cue from the National Policy on Learner Attendance, Strubenvale Primary considers the reasons on the table below as valid for learner absence implemented by clear action and responsibility:

No.	Valid Reason	Action to be taken	By Whom
a	Physical or psychological illness must be supported by a medical certificate from a registered medical practitioner or traditional healer for illness longer than three days.	The principal should be notified (Telephonically/in writing from the first day the learner is absent.	Parent
b	Religious or cultural observances approved by the SGB.	The parent to notified by school in writing	Principal and SGB Chairman
c	Death of a family member	The principal should be notified on return to school. Documentary proof must be provided.	Parent
d	Maternity leave supported by the medical certificate from a registered medical practitioner or registered midwife.	The principal should be notified.	Parent
e	Suspension by the SGB	The parent to be notified by the school in writing.	Principal and SGB Chairman
f	Natural disasters.	The parent to be notified by the school in writing or through the media.	Principal and SGB Chairman
g	Exceptional cases (decision of the principal)	The parents to be notified in writing.	Principal

10.2.3. What to do in cases of learner absence

- a. A class teacher must inform the principal of the school if a learner is absent from school without explanation for three (3) consecutive days.
- b. The principal will follow up learner absence if a learner is absent for three consecutive days without explanation.
- c. If despite the principal's intervention, a learner persists in being absent without a valid reason:
 - i. The learner will be charged with breach of the school's Code of Conduct for Learners.
 - ii. The learner's record in the class register will be canceled if the learner is absent for ten (10) consecutive days.
- d. Any cancelation of a learner's records can only be implemented on the following grounds:
 - i. Exemption from compulsory school attendance.
 - ii. Expulsion.
 - iii. Transfer to another school.

- iv. Registration for home education.
 - v. Continuous absence
 - vi. Notification by parents that the learner will not return to school.
 - vii. Death of a learner.
- e. After canceling a learner's record from the class register, the principal must in writing:
 - i. Inform the parent and the class teacher of the date and the reason for cancelation.
 - ii. If the learner is of school – going age, inform the District Cluster Leader of the date and the reason for cancelation.
 - f. The principal will ensure that a record of all communication will be kept in the learner's profile.
 - g. A learner whose records were previously canceled on the class register because of continuous absence from school may be reinstated if the principal has reason to believe that it is in the best interest of the learner.

10.2.4. Temporary Closure of Schools

In cases where the school is closed temporary by the HoD or SGB (after obtaining the necessary approval from the HoD), a learner will not be marked absent but the register will show through the correct notation in Annexure A.

10.3. Roles and Responsibilities

10.3.1. Learners

- a. All learners have a responsibility to attend school regularly and punctually.
- b. In Primary Schools:
No learner may take study leave for examinations or when examinations have ended.

10.3.2. Class Teachers

- a. A class teacher must ensure that he/she receives a copy of an official class register or use a computer-generated class list.
- b. A class teacher 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 finalized and maintained in the same manner as the class register in terms of this policy.
- c. 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.

- d. A class teacher will compile and mark a class register during the class registration period during the time allocated on the school timetable on each school day and take it to the principal's office on the last day of the week for safe keeping.
- e. Report to the principal/SMT of any repetitive patterns of absence from school and the reasons thereof.
- f. Inform the principal of the school if a learner is absent from school without explanation for three (3) consecutive days.

10.3.3. Subject Teachers

- a. A subject teacher must ensure that he/she receives a copy of the period register for his/her subject from the Head of Department (HOD).
- b. The subject teacher will receive a period register from the subject HOD on the last day of the week in preparation for the marking the register for the following week.
- c. A subject teacher is responsible for the marking a period register daily and taking it to the subject HOD on the last day of the week for safe keeping.
- d. A subject teacher must report a learner who is absent for a period without a valid reason to the subject HOD.
- e. A subject teacher must support a learner who was absent from a period with a valid reason to make up for the time lost or assessments missed in the form of catch-up programmes.

10.3.4. School Management Team

- a. 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.
- b. The Grade HOD will collect period registers at the prescribed time on the last day of the week from the subject HOD's of that grade and consolidate period attendance statistics for the week.
- c. The subject HOD will collect period registers at the prescribed time on the last day of the week from the Grade HOD and hand to the subject teachers before the end of the last school day of the week.
- d. Compile statistics and reports for learner attendance in the school.

- e. Follow up cases of irregular attendance during teaching time and report to the principal accordingly.

10.3.5. School Governing Body

- a. The SGB must work together with the principal, Management and Staff of the school to develop a culture of punctual and regular attendance at school.
- b. The SGB must include rules dealing with punctuality and regular school attendance in the school's Code of Conduct for Learners.
- c. The SGB must request from the Principal a quarterly report on learner attendance trends and consider the report in the SGB meeting.

10.3.6. Principal

The Principal:

- a. Together with the Staff, SMT and SGB, is responsible for developing a culture of punctual and regular attendance at school.
- b. Will ensure that all staff members understand the importance of accurate record-keeping and monitoring of learner attendance and carry out their responsibilities competently.
- c. Will provide all class teachers and subject teachers with class registers and period registers.
- d. Must give each learner a copy of the school's Code of Conduct and the Learner Attendance Policy. Learners will be requested to sign acknowledgement of receipt.
- e. Will avail a class/period register to an authorized official of the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) or an authorized judicial officer upon request.
- f. Must ensure that quarterly attendance returns are generated and submitted to the District Cluster Leader.
- g. Must implement government programmes to assist learners with problems leading to absence and irregular school attendance.
- h. Must ensure that class registers and period registers are compiled, marked, monitored and securely stored in terms of this policy.

- i. Must monitor and analyse learner attendance statistics by grade and include the information in the report to the SGB and Head of Department for Education (HoD).
- j. Must establish in advance the difficulties that the writing of end-of –year examinations will bring in relation to accommodate 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.

10.3.7. 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 is the person 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 learner’s 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 a learner is absent without the valid reason or permission from the school.
- g. Encourage the learner to participate in catch-up programmes to make up for the time lost for absence from school.

11. SHORT TITLE

This policy shall be called Learner Attendance Policy at Strubenvale Primary School.