

Sydney Distance Education Primary School

Student Wellbeing Policy

2019



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www.sdeps.net

Sydney Distance Education Primary School



SDEPS Student Wellbeing Policies and Procedures

Including:

Discipline Policy

Approaches to Wellbeing

Learning and Support Team Procedures

Synchronous Teaching Guidelines

Excursions Procedures

Home Visit Procedures

Anti-Bullying Policy

Child Protection Procedures

Attendance Procedures

Updated May 2017

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Staff Responsible for Welfare Issues

The school's Learning Support / Welfare Team oversees all areas of Student Wellbeing. The team consists of the:

Principal

Deputy Principal

Assistant Principal – Learning & Support / Welfare

Assistant Principal – Stage 1

Assistant Principal – Stage 2

Assistant Principal – Stage 3

School Counsellor

In addition, the following staff responsibilities may support Student Wellbeing:

Anti-racism Contact Officer

Gender Equity Co-ordinator

Learning & Support / Student Welfare Committee

Learning & Wellbeing Advisor

Aboriginal Contact Person

Multicultural Contact Person

Policy Overview

Learning Support and Student Welfare encompasses everything that the school community does to meet the personal and social needs of students. It can be seen to incorporate the positive attributes in the quality of a child's life in: cognitive, social, emotional, physical and spiritual domains. It involves recognising, valuing and developing each student as a total and unique individual. Sydney Distance Education Primary School endeavours to create a school environment in which students are safe, secure and feel cared for. Students are encouraged to become active and empowered members of the school community. We believe that in providing our students with choices, opportunities to achieve meaningful and appropriate goals, positive relationships, enjoyment of learning, personal development and health and safety we are committed to their wellbeing.

This collection of policies aims to support our focus on developing and maintaining:

- A safe and caring school environment that is free from bullying and any form of discrimination
- Students that are self-reliant, responsible and active citizens of our community
- Clear expectations for student behaviour and the strategies used to promote good discipline and effective learning
- Clear procedures for acknowledging student achievement and citizenship
- Clear procedures for dealing with unacceptable behaviour

SDEPS will implement the procedures and expectations within the Student Welfare Policy to students by:

- Communicating the policy to students
- Discussing the school rules and appropriate behaviour and consequences with students
- Regularly reminding students of their responsibilities during live lessons and phone conversations
- Using the procedures of this policy in our interactions with students

Supervisors will:

- Be made aware of the Student Welfare Policy through the school website and supervisor pack
- Be involved in the evaluation of the policy and asked to provide comments regarding future directions.
- Support the principles of the policy from a distance and when required to attend meetings at school.

Teachers will:

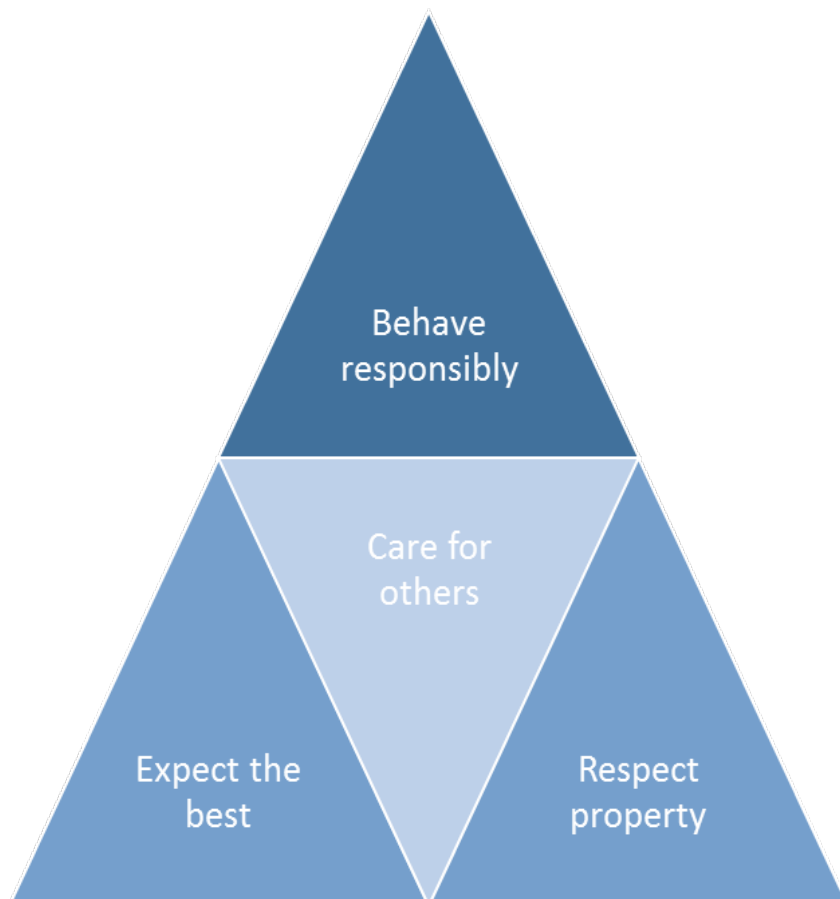
- Ensure that they are familiar with all aspects of the Student Welfare Policy
- Contribute to the provision of a caring, well-managed, safe environment for all students, fellow staff and parents
- Participate in the school community's implementation of the Student Welfare Policy
- A safe and caring school environment that is free from bullying and any form of discrimination

Sydney Distance Education Primary School's Core Framework

Our **vision** is to instil our students with the values, esteem and knowledge they need to be happy, healthy and successful individuals.

Our **purpose** is to provide a stimulating, dynamic and engaging learning environment that our students can access with ease from a distance.

Our **core values** are as follows:



School Rules

Students at Sydney Distance Education Primary School will:

1. **Apply** themselves diligently to all learning programs inside and outside the school.
2. **Show** courtesy and good manners to all members of their family, school and community.
3. **Behave** in a responsible and safe manner in class, at school, as well as travelling to and from school.
4. **Show** respect for the dignity and feelings of other people and their cultural heritage.
5. **Respect** the property of the school and the personal property of others.
6. **Attend** class daily and be prepared to follow a regular teaching and learning routine.

The following social skills are encouraged to develop self-esteem:

1. **Respect** yourself
2. **Care** for others
3. **Think** before reacting
4. **Work** together in a non-violent way
5. **Expect** the best

Students' Responsibilities and Rights

Rules	Responsibilities	Rights
Behave Responsibly	It is your responsibility to act appropriately with your peers and family.	It is your right to expect others to talk and act appropriately with you.
Care For Others	It is your responsibility to let others learn and feel happy. It is your responsibility to understand and practice this skill.	It is your right to learn and feel happy at school It is your right to expect 'Kindness and Courtesy'
Expect The Best	It is your responsibility to do your best to learn and play safely.	It is your right to expect the best from others and yourself in all school situations.
Respect Property	It is a responsibility to behave in a respectful manner to yourself and others. It is your responsibility to take care of your belongings and to respect property belonging to others and the school.	It is your right to be respected. It is your right to expect that your property will be looked after.

Approaches to Wellbeing Updated June 2017

- At SDEPS we value all aspects of our students unique personalities and skillsets and recognise the potential to flourish in them all.

We have identified the following as key factors in promoting wellbeing:

- Use of explicit curriculum
- Promotion of positive student-teacher relationships
- Promotion of positive peer relationships
- Promotion of parent-school engagement – welcoming environment transcending context, culture, and language, create structures, policies, procedures, processes, resources encouraging family involvement
- Promotion of school-agency relationships

We support The Wellbeing Framework for Schools' initiative:

- **Connect** to learning and others – respect one another, feel a sense of belonging to school and community
- **Succeed** – be respected, valued, encouraged, supported and empowered
- **Thrive** – grow, flourish, do well and prosper

We recognise the different domains of a child's wellbeing and address these domains in the following ways:

- **Cognitive Wellbeing:** motivation and persistence to achieve.
 - Give student's choices: a selection of options to write about, or a selection of methods for expression. A section of choices for behaviour to empower and engage them.
 - Share and display clearly defined objectives
 - Provide a safe, supportive environment.
 - Use positive reinforcements: praise, social attention, privileges (give students choices about the positive reinforcements with rating scales)
 - Help students to learn how to receive praise (may be challenging due to history of abuse, positive reinforcements being served alongside negative ones etc.)
 - Give praise immediately, vary wording, give descriptive information about the competence and attribute success to ability and effort
 - Use token economies – effective for use in the supervisor's context (delayed gratification)
 - Focus on belief in abilities
 - Encourage students to recognise each other's abilities and praise one another
 - Include supervisors in the praise system
 - Eventually teach students to self-reinforce – decide whether they deserve rewards
 - Support different learning styles

- Give students responsibilities – leading activities, jobs etc.
 - Plan for fair and balanced pair and group work
 - Encourage and teach self-reflection
 - Know and understand students abilities, interests the way they learn
 - Help students to strive for intrinsic motivation – help them to understand what it means for them to be successful and how they can go about doing it
 - Have high expectations that are attainable and realistic – provide opportunities for all students to be successful
 - Give specific strategies for improvement when giving feedback
- **Emotional Wellbeing:** self-awareness and emotional regulation.
 - Teach students about Growth Mindset – research-backed – embrace challenges, persist in the face of obstacles, view effort as the path to mastery, learn from feedback, take inspiration from others
 - Ask students what was difficult, what was confusing – teach that these feelings are an integral part of learning
 - Provide opportunities for reflection on growth – ‘Before I knew this..., now I know this..., I learnt it by...’ Use personal learning journals
 - Provide assessments and activities that encourage high-order thinking skills such as essay/expressive options rather than multiple choice
 - Encourage reflexive thinking – to remove prejudice – incorporate dialogue that challenges human and societal biases
 - Work on improving students’ resilience
 - Take a strengths-based approach – positive reinforcement
 - Teach problem-solving, decision-making and coping skills
 - Let students know the teacher trusts them
- **Social Wellbeing:** positive relationships and connectedness to others.
 - Anti-bullying policy
 - Parent training / meetings
 - Teacher training
 - Disciplinary methods
 - Cooperation between school staff and allied health professionals
 - Engagement of school community
 - Use literature to teach empathy – books, videos etc.
 - Opportunities to get to know classmates – interviews etc.
 - Random acts of kindness
 - Charity fundraisers
 - PDHPE Units: Unique Me, Friends Club
- **Physical Wellbeing:** Feeling physically safe and healthy
 - Nutrition – Live Life Well (Food logs), Live Lessons – Making rice paper rolls, Butter etc. Units: English – You’ve Got to Eat Breakfast

- Preventative health care – PHDPE Child Protection Units: Let's Keep Safe
- Physical activity – Live Life Well (Physical Activity Log), PHDPE units: functional movement skills etc.
- Physical safety and security – PHDPE Child Protection Units: Let's Keep Safe

- **Spiritual Wellbeing:** Sense of meaning and purpose
 - Culture, religion, community connections
 - Beliefs, values and ethics
 - School Counsellor – review meetings
 - PDHPE
 - Citizenship/Ethics

Discipline Policy

Strategies to Promote Good Discipline and Effective Learning

The strategies to promote good discipline and effective learning at Sydney Distance Education Primary School will be:

Strategies for teachers in support of students and supervisors:

- Provide supervisors with clear guidelines on processes and expectations including weekly requirements.
- Provide students with clear guidelines for each set of work.
- Discuss expectations and the “Charter of Obligations” with supervisors and students.
- Guide the supervisor through the “Supervisor’s Folder” and refer to it frequently.
- Consult with the supervisor and student on the agreed quantity and quality of work.
- Provide the supervisor with professional reading on student discipline from publications held within the school, when necessary.
- Model courteous personal communications in all your dealings.
- Model in writing the expectation of student’s writing.
- Present packages in an organised and neat manner as a model for students in their returns.
- Be aware of each student’s situation and gain as much knowledge as possible of that environment in order to interact more fully with the family.
- Be professional and confidential in dealing with families.
- Develop rapport with supervisors so that they will feel comfortable enough to seek support.
- Give praise to students and supervisors for effort, improvement or excellent work as deserved.
- Assess all work fairly. Comments need to be positive and constructive. Remember that the student is far away and is unable to receive the non-verbal signals teachers frequently use in classroom situations.
- Provide appropriate curriculum to meet the learning needs of each student.
- If needed, make reasonable adjustments to the curriculum of students with disabilities so that they are able to access the curriculum on the same basis as students without disabilities.
- Support students in achieving success in learning
- Develop rules which are fair, clear and consistently applied.
- Discuss, with parents and carers, their role in promoting acceptable student behaviour.
- Attend appropriate training and development programs.
- Provide appropriate support programs, e.g. counseling, learning support team.
- Provide programs that develop self-discipline, self-reflection, the national values and conflict resolution skills.

Strategies for Dealing with Unacceptable Behaviour

“Students require clear limits and guidelines in order to function effectively in a community and learn to their full potential in a safe and caring environment.”

(NSW Department of School Education, 1996)

Discipline at a distance is based on supporting parents to support their children in order to ensure that lessons are completed to a satisfactory standard and that students are progressing at an appropriate rate. The school accepts that at times it may have limited impact on student behaviour due to situational circumstances. None-the-less, the school does have an important discipline role to play.

At SDEPS unacceptable behaviour may not be immediately evident so teachers need to be alert to indicators of student difficulties and be proactive.

Indicators of student difficulties may include:

- Direct comment by the supervisor about work and work habits
- Comments made during feedback or written by the student as feedback to the teacher
- Observation of use of language, expression and tone in communication
- Noting when the feedback is fractured during a lesson
- Work which seems to be done by, or is heavily influenced by the supervisor
- Repeated excuses about work not being completed
- Poor standard of work returned
- Equipment not returned or in poor condition
- Summary sheet not completed or returned, and some lessons missing

Procedures for students continuing to experience difficulties:

- Students identify aspects of their behaviour which are inappropriate and discuss proactive strategies with their classroom teacher, executive staff or Principal.
- Students are praised for employing acceptable behaviours.
- If the behaviour persists, students are given “time-out” from the current activities in order to change the focus of behaviour.
- Appropriate intervention is initiated by the principal or executive staff
- If a program is initiated, the teacher provides regular feedback to the executive on the progress of the program
- Intervention by the Principal may involve support personnel from the relevant district. District support is sought where possible and when feasible.
- If a student’s enrolment is under review, a Home School Liaison Officer referral is completed and sent to the District Student Welfare Consultant. The student remains on the roll at SDEPS until the district has had time to investigate the case and initiate action if required.

The **practice** for dealing with unacceptable behaviour at Sydney Distance Education Primary School) will be:

1. **Warning** – reminding student of the appropriate school rule.
2. **Second warning.**
3. **Time out** from current activity to give time to address the behaviour with proactive strategies.
4. **Report to Executive** - If behaviour continues, the Deputy Principal or Principal are consulted and asked to intervene.

Acceptable Behaviour for Students Visiting the School

- Clear expectations to be communicated to all students.
- Students will show respect and courtesy to their parents, teachers and staff of SDEPS, other students and adults working with them.
- Students will show respect for the property of other students and also of the school.
- Students will be aware of safety and act in accordance with safety rules.
- No violence, discrimination, harassment, bullying or intimidation will be tolerated.
- No weapons, illegal drugs, alcohol or tobacco will be permitted at school or school activities.
- Students will accept that school discipline is a shared responsibility of the SDEPS staff as well as parents and caregivers.
- Walk safely in school buildings, keeping to the left when using the stairs.
- Keep well clear of any vehicle in the school grounds.
- Take care of equipment and return it to the right place.
- Following the recommended school guidelines in our **Anti-Bullying Policy, Mobile Phone Policy and Internet Policy.**

Our students are **not allowed** to:

- Enter the school building unless supervised by a teacher.
- Leave the school premises during school time without the permission of parents or classroom teacher.
- Interfere in other students' games or activities.
- Use abusive language to any student, teacher, parent or community member.
- Throw food, stones or any other objects.
- Climb trees or fences in the school grounds.
- Play in toilets or washrooms.
- Ride bikes, skateboards, roller blades, scooters etc. in the school playground during school time.
- Play wrestling or running games in the playground.

Acceptable Behaviour for Students During Live Lessons

- Set up Zoom at least five minutes prior to the lesson starting to ensure punctuality.
- Only use chat box or annotation tools when instructed.
- Raise hand when wanting to speak and wait to be called upon.

- Be respectful and caring towards teachers and classmates.
- Only show yourself if you agree to being recorded in the lesson.
- Dress as you would to attend school.
- Ensure a supervisor is close by and is also dressed appropriately.
- Do your best to ensure that your environment will not be distracting to yourself or other lesson participants.
- Give your best efforts to make positive contributions to the lesson.

Practices Designed to Recognise Student Achievement

Positive Behaviour Practices

- A system of school merit rewards is implemented inside and outside of the classroom. Student results are recorded and published in our school publications e.g. *In The Distance*.
- Students who receive multiple class merit awards, are presented with a Principal's Award each term. Students who receive a Principal's Award are published in our school publications.
- Positive reinforcement is an important teaching strategy used at Sydney Distance Education Primary School, used both informally and formally.

Positive Academic Achievement Practices

- Fortnightly Merit Certificates are awarded to students who have displayed outstanding academic achievement in class.
- Term recognition of students who receive Principal Awards.
- Community awards are presented to students who participate in and receive placements in the following competition: The Dorothy MacKellar Poetry competition

SYDNEY DISTANCE EDUCATION PRIMARY SCHOOL

Disciplinary Responses to Student Misconduct on School Premises

Levels of Misconduct	Examples	Disciplinary Response	Response Options
1. Minor misbehaviour on the part of the student: - impeding classroom procedures or interfering with the orderly operation of the school - usually handled by an individual staff member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Three warnings * Improper language * Backchat * Disruptive behaviour * Inappropriate behaviour * Out of bounds * Disobedience 	<p>Immediate intervention by the staff member supervising the student. Identify and discuss rule being broken. Time-out with class teacher. <u>Repeated misbehaviour requires P/T conference: - with class teacher.</u></p>	<p>Verbal reprimand Time-out from current activity Incident book entry Parent notification Special assignment</p>
2. Misbehaviour which, because of its frequency or seriousness, disrupts the learning climate of the school: - these infractions require the intervention of an Deputy Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Spitting at others * Abusive and/or racist language * Leaving school grounds * Dangerous inappropriate behaviour 	<p>Time-out with Deputy Principal. Deputy Principal meets with student to discuss behaviour. Behaviour Passport is given to monitor student behaviour in the school. Deputy Principal signs the passport each day. <u>A proper and accurate record is maintained of the offence and disciplinary action. Parent conference is held with class teacher/Deputy principal.</u></p>	<p>Time-out from current activity Behaviour Passport Parent notification Notification of school's Anti-Racism Officer Referral to Counsellor</p>
3. Acts directed against persons or property but consequences do not seriously endanger the health or safety of others in the school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Fighting/Threatening * Vandalism * Stealing * Abusive and/or threatening language * Repeated intended unexplained absences 	<p>Time-out with Deputy Principal. Deputy Principal initiates disciplinary action by investigating the infraction and conferring with staff on the extent of consequences. Behaviour Passport is given to monitor student behaviour in the school. Deputy Principal signs the passport each day. Principal meets with parents about the misconduct and resulting disciplinary action. <u>A proper and accurate record of the offence and of the disciplinary action is maintained by the Principal.</u></p>	<p>Time-out from current activity Behaviour passport Parent notification Counsellor referral</p>
4. Acts of violence directed at another person or person's property, or which pose a direct threat to the safety of others in the school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Physical violence * Extortion * Possession/use of a dangerous weapon * Vandalism * Arson * Possession/sale of stolen goods * Threats of violence towards teacher 	<p>Time out with Principal. Principal verifies offence, confers with the staff involved and meets with student. The student is immediately removed from the school environment. Parents are notified and an interview is requested. Principal may contact police. <u>A complete and accurate report is submitted to Bondi School Education Area Office</u></p>	<p>Time-out from current activity Behaviour Passport Parent Notification Counsellor notification Police intervention</p>

Procedure for Making Adjustments to Programs and/or Referring Students to the Learning and Support Teacher

- Teachers to first consult Stage Coordinator.
 - If it is decided necessary, teachers make minor adjustments to meet minor learning variations.
 - The Parent Sign Off for Adjusted Programs form is sent to parents to sign after they have been consulted and agreed to the proposed adjustments.
 - This document will remain current until there is a significant change in the student's program (if a Stage 3 student remains on Stage 1 outcomes as agreed to by the parents in Term 1, the student will not need to sign a new letter for Term 2.)
 - Termly consultation about the appropriateness of the adjustments is needed.
 - All documents concerning adjustments (letters, emails etc.) are to be kept in the student's 'Programs' electronic folder
-
- If the student has more significant learning needs and consultation with the Stage Coordinator reveals that further assistance is needed, an appointment is to be arranged, via email, with the Learning and Support Teacher (LaST).
 - Prior to the meeting, the teachers is to fill out, and give to the LaST, the first page of the Referral document. The student's SRC should be consulted in this process and, if necessary, contact with previous teachers/other professionals should be made to get as full and accurate a picture of the student as possible.
 - At the meeting, an action plan is agreed upon and documented on the second page of the LaST document.
 - The teacher is to maintain regular contact with the LaST about the students' progress and make future appointments where necessary.

Parent Consent Letter for Program Adjustment

13/09/17



Parent consent Program Adjustment or Individual Education Plan

This form is to be completed by the parent.

My child _____ (student's name)

is currently enrolled in _____ (grade or year level)

My child's teacher is _____ (teacher's name)

I understand my son or daughter's educational program has been adjusted to better suit his or her educational needs.

I have been consulted during the process of adjustment and I understand the nature and implication of these adjustments with regards to my son or daughter's educational program.

Please indicate your affirmation of these adjustments by signing and returning this document to the Principal.



Robin Roberts

Principal, Sydney Distance Education Primary School

Student Name.....

Grade.....

Teacher.....

Parent/Carer Name.....

Signature.....

Date.....

This document will remain current until there is a significant change in the student's program.

Learning & Support Teacher Referral Form

LEARNING & SUPPORT TEACHER STUDENT INFORMATION AND REFERRAL FORM

Student Name: _____ D.O.B _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Teacher Name: _____ Enrolment Category: _____

REFERRAL CONCERNS	Not an issue	Minor Issue	Of Concern	Serious Problem	COMMENTS/CONCERNS?
LEARNING					
Attention span					
Reading Skills					
Understanding oral instructions					
Does not understand class work					
Writing skills (handwriting)					
Writing skills (sentences etc)					
Does not complete set tasks					
Disinterested/Indifferent					
Below class average					
Learning Difficulties					
Numeracy problems					
ESL needs					
Talkative					
Victim					
IDENTIFIED DIAGNOSIS					ANY OTHER CONCERNS?
Sight problem					
Hearing problem					
Speech problem					
Mental Health					
Circle where appropriate: ASD ADD ADHD ODD MH SPD Med OTHER:					

TO BE ACTIONED PRIOR TO REFERRING STUDENTS TO LaST (please bring HC of this to meeting).

Have the concerns been discussed with parents?	Tick	Have the issues been discussed with your supervisor?	Tick
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Name & Signature (Class Teacher)

Name & Signature (Stage Supervisor)

ACTION REQUIRED					
	Discussion with Counsellor		Educational Assessment		Intellectual assessment
	Parent Interview		Referral to Other Agency		
Other:					

<u>Successful strategies and interventions:</u>	<u>Strategies attempted and found unsuccessful:</u>
What outcomes are you hoping from this referral:	

Support for Students Enrolled on “SSN and ALSN” Categories

- Teachers keep regular communication with Learning and Support Team Coordinator.
- A copy of the students’ documentation and all correspondence to be kept with Learning and Support Coordinator and School Counsellor.
- School Counsellor to request Counsellor file from previous school.
- Teachers will emphasise the development of appropriate work habits and behaviours as part of their teaching.
- Teachers establish an atmosphere of trust to ensure students feel safe by modelling behaviours that are predictable, consultative, affirming, respectful, and consistent.
- The school explores all avenues for providing support for students in order to meet their social and emotional needs as well as their academic needs.
- Learning and Support Team Coordinator to keep regular communication with relevant Learning & Wellbeing Officer.
- Review meetings to be held at SDEPS for students twice a year. The parents/carers, school counsellor, class teacher and Learning and Support Team Coordinator to be present at meetings. Learning & Wellbeing Advisors to be invited / sent a copy of meeting minutes.
- Learning and Support Team Meetings to be held termly to discuss meeting the needs of these students.

Support for Students Enrolled on “MED” Categories

- Teachers keep regular communication with Learning and Support Team Coordinator.
- A copy of the students’ documentation and all correspondence to be kept with Learning and Support Coordinator.
- The school explores all avenues for providing support for students in order to meet their social and emotional needs as well as their academic needs.
- Learning and Support Team Coordinator to keep regular communication with relevant Learning & Wellbeing Officer.
- Review meetings to be held at SDEPS for students once a year. The parents/carers, school counsellor, class teacher and Learning and Support Team Coordinator to be present at meetings. Learning & Wellbeing Advisors to be invited / sent a copy of meeting minutes.
- Learning and Support Team Meetings to be held termly to discuss meeting the needs of these students.

Synchronous Teaching Guidelines

Updated May 2017

Synchronous Teaching is offered to all students enrolled in Sydney Distance Education Primary School. Synchronous teaching is offered via online technologies such as Zoom or via telephone. All students should be encouraged to take up the regular opportunities of synchronous teaching. Telephone teaching should be regarded as enrichment to a student's learning program providing 'real time' benefits.

Synchronous teaching aims to provide an additional means of educational instruction for students. Synchronous teaching may serve to lessen the difficulty in engaging with a new mode of educational instruction as well as lessen the isolation of studying at a distance. Teachers will need to be mindful of time differences for inter state and overseas students.

Synchronous teaching will entail each student being offered with a minimum of 1-2 lessons per week. Duration of lessons will normally be in the range of twenty to forty minutes; naturally this may be extended depending on the need and the activity. In this time, teachers may correct lessons previously sent to the student; assist the student with new work or concepts; or provide pastoral care and support. Work must always be meaningful and challenging.

Where appropriate, teachers with the support of a team teacher and students may wish to conduct a conference. Small groups may comprise students of similar ages, interests and abilities. Should a student elect to have an individual lesson, then this should be given priority.

Telephone lessons may be supported with other technologies such as e-mail. . In some circumstances the school may be able to provide some equipment to support such initiatives. The school will not be able to provide Internet access to families who presently do not have such facilities. The school may be able to loan computers depending on availability and through negotiation with the principal, on a case by case basis.

Telephone teaching should be conducted during normal school hours, eg 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM. If contact is requested outside of these times, then the request will need to be conveyed to the principal for approval. Teachers should not contact students on their private mobile or residential phone.

Teachers are to remind supervisors that a condition of enrolment is that a competent adult, dressed appropriately, is present at all times to assist the student during normal school hours. It is also a requirement that an adult is at least present in the home during Synchronous teaching sessions. Lesson support for the supervisor may be included as part of a student's Synchronous teaching time.

Teachers are required to inform students and supervisors that certain protocols are to be followed at all times. Teaching time should not be used solely as time for an informal talk.

Information of a personal or sensitive nature should be avoided. Should you believe the student requires the support of professional personnel such as a guidance counsellor, then a recommendation should be made to the Principal and the appointed LST teacher.

If the student engages in offensive or inappropriate language or topics the teacher is to inform the student that their behaviour should be no less than what is accepted in a regular classroom. If the student continues, the teacher may take the following steps:

1. Remind the student that the lesson is being recorded.
2. Inform the student the lesson will be terminated
3. Seek to speak to the student's supervisor
4. Alert the LST Teacher or another teacher

Teachers should not give their students personal information about themselves nor should they provide contact details other than their school phone number, or e-mail address. Similarly students should not provide personal mobile numbers or any other contact details other than what has been provided by the supervisor on the official enrolment forms. Current enrolment details are available from the enrolment officer.

Teachers are encouraged to share their experiences and techniques employed in their Synchronous teaching lessons. Teachers requiring additional support in this should discuss the matter with the principal.

Teachers are required to keep a Synchronous teaching log that will include the date and time of class, duration of the call and a brief lesson outline. This information is to be kept with each student's program. Updated lesson programs are to be provided to the principal each term so the student's continuing enrolment may be evaluated in accordance with the Department's distance education policy and procedures.

Synchronous teaching records are to be regarded as official records in the same manner as student programs. All student Synchronous records should be legible and kept up-to-date at all times. Like all official records they may be requested by authorities outside the Department of Education & Training.

Synchronous teaching is an extra service provided by the school. The effectiveness of the service will be reviewed on a case by case basis by the teacher, case manager and principal.

Excursions Procedure (Updated June 2017)

Excursions are valuable parts of quality teaching and learning programs. They offer opportunities for students to develop their interests, talents, knowledge and abilities. Excursions can take place at SDEPS in a variety of ways:

- Supervisors who are travelling, or abroad, with their students may choose to take their students on educational excursions that:
 - further their understanding of their new environments;
 - teach them a new skill;
 - and/or support and extend the learning of material covered in the student's academic program.
- Supervisors who are in New South Wales, Australia, with their students may choose to take their students on excursions that:
 - support and extend the learning of material covered in the student's academic program;
 - further their understanding of local environments and/or places of interest;
 - and/or teach their students new skills.
- SDEPS teachers may hold virtual excursions to:
 - further students' understanding of different environments or educational sites
 - strengthen partnerships with outside agencies who have educational benefit;
 - and/or support and extend the learning material covered in the students' academic program.

1) General Excursion Procedure

In determining the educational value of an intended excursion, it is essential always to assess:

- The students' individual needs and circumstances
- The resources available
- How the excursion fits within the learning program
- The inclusivity of the excursion to all learner profiles

2) Procedure for Supervisor Excursions

- Supervisors are encouraged to take their students on excursions subject to the General Excursion Procedure (1).
- It is also encouraged that parents take full advantage of the educational value of the site visited.
 - The student may complete a practical activity, which is suited to their learning needs, to make use of the learning opportunities available to them.
 - The supervisor is encouraged to work with their student's teacher in determining what this activity will be and to have an understanding of the educational outcomes (taken from the NESA syllabuses) that the students may be working towards.

3) Procedure for SDEPS Virtual Excursions

SDEPS staff may organise and hold virtual excursions subject to the General Excursion Procedure (1). These excursions could:

- involve SDEPS staff being off site and conducting video lessons remotely;
- and/or involve external agencies
- Duty of care is owed to students at all times and cannot be delegated to any applicable hosting organisations. It is, therefore, key that SDEPS staff supervise and moderate the event from start to finish.
- The obligation to report suspected risk of harm to children and young people applies throughout all stages of an excursion.
- Parents are to be fully briefed about the details of the excursion, including:
 - The expected activities
 - The estimated timing of the excursion
 - The materials that will be needed to participate fully in the excursion
 - The expectations of the students (as per the Live Lesson Procedure)
 - The expectations of the supervisor (as per the Live Lesson Procedure)
 - The credentials of the organisation, if applicable, who will be hosting/featuring
 - The fact that lessons may be filmed and later shared with other SDEPS families
- It is essential that students are supervised during virtual excursions
- It is essential that students and supervisors are suitably dressed should they be videoed
- All students should be extended an invitation to participate regardless of their circumstances as part of the school's inclusivity commitment.

Home Visits Procedures (June 2017)

Scope

The procedures related to home visits are aimed at ensuring the safety of SDEPS staff, families including students and supervisors, and other multidisciplinary staff. These procedures apply to all staff who are conducting a home visit outside of Department of Education school grounds to meet with families. 'Staff' may include social workers, speech pathologists, psychologists, teachers, medical professionals and Aboriginal Education Officers.

Joint visits, comprising of at least two staff are always recommended to avoid potential grievances and allegations.

Purpose

A home visit may be facilitated when it is believed that it may assist with positive change while a student is learning in a distance education environment. This may include improved learning outcomes, establishing and building relationships with a greater number of stakeholders, breaking down barriers, helping to create a more effective learning environment and sharing significant information.

Wherever possible, these meetings are to occur at a Department of Education facility, however in some circumstances a home visit may be deemed more constructive. Home visits should always be carried out in a mutually beneficial and respectful manner with the safety of the visiting staff members a priority.

Procedures

1. Assess all current and available information relevant to the student to determine if a home visit is needed. This is to be done in partnership with a member of the Learning Support Team and/or the principal. The following should be discussed:
 - Could the meeting occur at SDEPS? Transport may be made available to the family if required.
 - Could a meeting at a neutral/alternative location, such as a DoE school that is close to where the student lives take place?
 - Could the agenda for the home visit be carried out just as efficiently if it was to be done via telephone, Skype/Zoom or email?
2. When it is decided a home visit will be most beneficial, a time and date are to be arranged with the parent or carer by a member of SDEPS staff.
3. Questions to ask by SDEPS staff when organising the visit could include:
 - Will you be expecting any other visitors during this time?
 - Who will be at home during our visit?
 - Do you have any pets that need to be taken into account?
 - Relevant information specific to finding the property and gaining access
4. Once a date and time and agreed on, an email and/or letter is to be sent to the family advising them of this arrangement as confirmation.
5. Staff conducting the home visit should be aware of any specific cultural or religious sensitivities.
6. A Risk Assessment needs to be drawn up prior to the home visit. This needs to be signed off by the principal.
 - 6a. If the Risk Assessment shows there is a significant risk to employee safety, a home visit **should not be carried out**.

7. At least one mobile phone is to be taken and switched on for the duration of the home visit. The phone numbers of identified emergency contacts are to be stored on the phone/s. The numbers for staff carrying out the home visit must also be lodged at SDEPS. Also, coverage of mobile phones is to be considered for geographically isolated home visits.
8. Home visits are only to occur on a regular school day and within the hours of 9am – 3pm. A time of departure and estimated time of return are to be determined prior.
9. The home visit should occur in an open living area of the house. Exceptions can be made for students with identified mobility or medical issues.
10. Transport for staff carrying out home visits can include public transport, use of own car, and taxi using CabCharge vouchers provided by SDEPS.
11. Staff who are carrying out the visit must inform someone who is presently at SDEPS once the visit has concluded, when they are returning to SDEPS and once they have returned.
12. In the event of a threat or assault on a member of staff during the visit, the principal is to be notified as soon as possible.
 - The principal is to ensure appropriate support is given to all staff involved, which may include counselling.
 - If it is believe the student/s in the home are at risk, the process of Mandatory Reporting is to be followed.
13. Following the home visit, a member of staff who was present is to type up notes, detailing the meeting. This document is to be saved within the student's eLocker folder for future reference.

Anti-bullying Policy

Statement of Purpose

At Sydney Distance Education Primary School we are actively involved in dealing with the issues raised in relation to bullying. We seek the support of the students and the greater school community to help create a safer school climate and reduce bullying within the school.

“Every student has the right to expect that he or she will learn in an environment that is free from bullying and intimidation.”

We are committed to:

- Enhancing our school community by addressing the issues of bullying
- Ensuring that our students feel safe, happy and protected in their school environment

In developing our Anti-bullying Policy we have consulted and received approval from the whole school. This plan has been evaluated and reviewed by the Executive Team and Student Welfare Team.

Protection

There is zero tolerance for bullying at our school. We define bullying as persistent verbal, physical, social, or psychological behaviour that causes harm to individual(s). Cyber bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies.

Bullying can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and all forms of harassment including that based on sex, race, disability or sexual orientation. We are aware that bullying can have long-term effects on all parties involved.

Forms of bullying:

Verbal	Physical	Social / Psychological	Cyber
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teasing• Name calling• Abuse• Putdowns• Sarcasm• Insults• Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hitting• Tripping• Punching• Kicking• Scratching• Spitting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spreading rumours• Excluding• coercing• Alienating• Making inappropriate gestures• Hiding or damaging possessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sending inappropriate text messages• Sending inappropriate pictures• Threatening behaviour in chat rooms or on social network sites or over email

Possible signs of bullying:

- change in relationships
- school refusal
- underachievement
- personality change – i.e. snappy, withdrawn, outbursts of crying, etc.
- lack of confidence – i.e. withdrawal from social activities
- unusual outbursts of temper – i.e. abusive language, etc.
- avoidance of specific lessons/ days
- change of school routine – avoidance of a regular learning routine.
- delays in the return of work
- torn/ damaged clothing, belongings
- bruises, cuts, scratches that child can't really explain
- psychosomatic illnesses such as headaches, stomach aches and other pains
- jumpiness, forgetfulness, distractibility

Resources:

- **“Bullying Information for Parents” (DETYA).**
- **“Bullying preventing and responding to student bullying in schools; Guidelines” (NSW DEC)**
- **There are a number of personal development resources in the school library.**

RESPONSIBILITIES**School Staff** have a responsibility to:

- Respect and support students
- Model and promote appropriate behaviour
- Have knowledge of school and departmental policies relating to bullying behaviour
- Respond in a timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the school's Anti-bullying Plan.
- Provide curriculum and pedagogy that supports students to develop an understanding of bullying and its impact on individuals and the broader community.

Students have a responsibility to:

- Behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity
- Behave as responsible digital citizens
- Follow the school Anti-bullying Plan
- Behave as responsible bystanders
- Report incidents of bullying according to the school Anti-bullying Plan.

Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to:

- Support their children to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible online behaviour
- Be aware of the school Anti-bullying Plan
- Support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the school Anti-bullying Plan.
- Report incidents of school related bullying behaviour to the school
- Work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur

All members of the school community have a responsibility to:

- Model and promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the school community
- Support the school's Anti-bullying Plan through words and actions
- Work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur

Resources:

- **"Bullying preventing and responding to student bullying in schools; Guidelines" (NSW DEC)**

Prevention

Teachers are to:

- Monitor student use of the internet, cyber communication and prohibit use of social network sites.
- Monitor the use of mobile phone communication between students, where possible.
- Be observant and watchful of how students relate to each other via the internet, oral news or journal writing.
- Praise students who are 'doing the right thing'.
- Educate students using NSW PDHPE syllabus on all forms of bullying and its risks to everyone's wellbeing

We have embedded anti-bullying messages into a range of units across curriculum areas and in each year level.

Early Intervention

Teachers are to:

- Be aware of high risk / vulnerable students.
- Provide equal opportunities for all students to be involved in all activities
- Model the inclusive behaviour that is expected of all students
- Make themselves approachable to students who might need extra support

Response

Teachers are to:

- Encourage students who witness bullying to report incidents.
- Be PROACTIVE instead of REACTIVE.
- Give students additional chances and warnings when they become offenders.
- Remember 'Duty of Care'.
- Record incidents at Learning Support Team meetings, with response options following guidelines in the Code of Fair Discipline.

Step 1 – Making a Student Welfare Complaint

Any student or parent with a complaint should seek assistance from the school's executive for Welfare

The student or parent making the complaint should have either directly experienced or observed the alleged behaviour or practice.

They may approach any staff member to help them bring their complaint to the school's executive for Welfare. A parent or caregiver may lodge a complaint (on behalf of their child).

The school's executive for Welfare will:

- Obtain details of the complaint;
- Inform the person(s) making the complaint of:
 - (i) the process by which the complaint will be investigated and the confidential nature of that process;
 - (ii) their right to be protected from victimisation for making the complaint;
 - (iii) their right to approach an external body such as the Anti-Discrimination Board or Ombudsman.

Step 2 – Investigating the Complaint

The contact person will:

- Interview the person(s) who made the complaint and any other person who may be able to assist the investigation.
- Interview the student/s against whom the complaint is made; where feasible.
- If appropriate, seek resolution of the issue by conciliation
- Prepare a written report for the principal. The report will include a clear recommendation on what action is to be taken.

Step 3 – Making a Decision

The Principal and Student Welfare Team will:

- Decide on appropriate action.
- Advise all parties of the action and the reasons for it.

The action taken may include:

- provision of an individual or class based student welfare program including, as appropriate, a stronger emphasis on non-discriminatory perspectives and/or anti-bullying in the school's overall curriculum;
- disciplinary action within the context of the school's Code of Fair Discipline;
- dismissal of the complaint as groundless, or lacking in evidence.

Step 4 – Further Action

The Student Welfare Team and classroom teacher will be responsible for regular monitoring of the situation to ensure that the recommended actions are implemented.

Bullying Incident Report Form

Incident / Complaint

1. What happened?

.....
.....

2. Where did it happen?

.....

3. When did it happen?

.....

4. Who was involved?

.....

5. Who saw the incident?

.....

6. How could this problem be solved?

.....

Name: (if you wish to give your name)

.....

Class

SDEPS Child Protection Procedures

It is highly recommended at all staff regularly review the NSW Department of Education policy regarding Child Protection in Schools. It is compulsory that all SDEPS staff complete the annual compulsory child protection training as prescribed by the NSW Department of Education.

In addition to the above, SDEPS staff are required to familiarise themselves with the school's procedures in implementing the NSW Department of Education's Child Protection Policy as mandatory reporters.

1. All staff must have a current Working with Children Check prior to the commencement of the 2018 school year. A copy of your WWCC is to be provided to the Administration Manager for future reference.
2. All staff must complete the Department's update to the Child Protection Policy each year and sign a register to confirm their completion of the training.
3. All staff must familiarize themselves with SDEPS's procedures for implementing and managing Child Protection in The School. Staff will need to sign a register to acknowledge they understand the school's procedures to the best of their knowledge.
4. Staff know their legal responsibilities under the Child Protection legislation and will uphold them to the best of their abilities.
5. Staff acknowledge that they are 'Mandatory Reporters' and that if they suspect a child or young person under the age of 18 in their care, may be in danger or suffering from some form of neglect, that they are required to report their concerns to their Principal or their principal's Director, if relevant.
6. Staff should not investigate matters themselves, discuss matters with other staff but go straight to the principal with their concerns.
7. Staff will note that recognising concerns in a Distance Education environment may be different to other situations and therefore may need to be mindful of other indicators of abuse or neglect.
8. Staff will send, with the parents' or supervisors' consent the school developed learning materials entitled "Let's Keep Safe". These child protection resources have been developed specifically for a Distance Education context.
9. Staff concerned about the welfare of a student will approach the Principal with their concerns. Together they will evaluate the information and seek assistance from the NSW Child Wellbeing Unit or if the situation merits it, the NSW Family and Community Services (FaCS). Staff should be familiar with the "Decision Making Tree" for guidance.
10. Reporting to either agency will generate a Reference Number which will be noted by both parties. Depending on the level of concerns raised, both parties will seek to ensure the matter is followed up and a timely response received.
11. Records of reports and actions are to be maintained in a safe location by the Principal for possible future reference.
12. Confidentiality is to be maintained at all times.

Student Attendance and Participation Guidelines for Teachers

The success of a student's enrolment at SDEPS is based on their regular attendance and participation with their learning programs. Both attendance and participation needs to be recorded weekly to comply with *Student Attendance in Government Schools Procedures, 2015* and *Distance Education Enrolment Procedures, 2017*.

Definition of Attendance

Attendance is difficult to determine when a student is following a program provided by distance education. Attendance at SDEPS is based not only on the number of hours, but also on the timely and regular return of completed programmed work, regular communication and participation in organised programs.

Definition of Participation

SDEPS students are generally asked to complete approximately 20 hours of school (and educationally related) work each week. This can be negotiated in some circumstances with the Principal or Deputy Principal when a student enrolls or as circumstances arise. Programmed work is provided for a fortnightly period. Work may occasionally need to be adjusted to weekly or four week sequences in order to accommodate 10 or 11 week terms and the school holidays. The completion and engagement of the student in their learning programs largely defines the level of student participation.

Attendance Slips

It is understood that sometimes personal circumstances prevent students from completing their work in the fortnightly period allowed, in which case the reasons for a delay in its return should be discussed with the teacher on the phone or via email, and will be clearly shown in the attendance slips. Supervisors are required to send the attendance slips back every fortnight where feasible. All absences should have an acceptable explanation.

Class Rolls

Teachers are legally required to maintain an accurate class roll following the examples and guidelines provided by SDEPS.

Marking Attendance and Participation

It is important for teachers to update their rolls weekly as attendance slips and completed work is received, there is communication from the supervisor (phone call, email) and when students have attended online lessons. Teachers also need to record the date that resources and work is posted out to students. The date a non-attendance letter is posted should be noted in the comments column in the roll.

Non-Attendance and Non-Participation Procedures for SDEPS students

Proformas located in SDEPS Virtual Library – eLocker – Attendance

Step 1:

Level Notice 1 – should be initiated by the teacher, two weeks after the expected date of receipt of work if no legitimate reason has been given by the supervisor via phone call or email. If a reason has been given, the teacher may wait two weeks from the newly anticipated arrival date. DO NOT wait beyond this time, even if further reasons for delay have been given (unless evidence is available, e.g. cyclone on the news). Letter 1 should be signed by a Stage Coordinator or Deputy Principal before it is mailed.

As soon as a teacher commences use of Non-Attendance Procedures, a Stage Coordinator /DP will need to monitor and track attendance in the 'Student Non-Attendance Database' for the appropriate year, which is available in the Virtual Library. They may also have initiated a Student Welfare Sheet to record Learning Support meetings and other interventions, if needed.

Step 2:

Level Notice 2 – should be initiated by the teacher, in a timely manner after the first letter was sent and there still has been NO return of work. Level Notice 2 should be signed by an Executive before it is mailed. This should be tracked in the 'Student Non-Attendance Database'.

Step 3:

If the student/parent does not respond to Level Notice 2 within 5-10 school days of the letter having been sent, please report this to the Stage Coordinator or Deputy Principal. They will initiate a HSLO referral to the student's local region with the assistance of the teacher. The Stage Coordinator or Deputy Principal will contact the local case-manager to request a Learning Support meeting for local Support. The Executive will track this in the 'Student Non-Attendance Database'.

Ongoing Pattern of Non-Attendance

Most parents/supervisors will respond to a Non-Attendance Letter and comply with the request. In such cases, no further action will be required.

Occasionally, a parent/supervisor may respond to the receipt of a Non-Attendance Letter by providing an acceptable response and return of work. However, they may slip back into a pattern of unsatisfactory attendance. In such cases, tracking or monitoring non-attendance on the timeline is crucial. When an ongoing pattern of non-attendance is identified, the following actions can be taken by the Stage Coordinator or Deputy Principal in consultation with the Teacher and Principal:

- Organising a parent/supervisor interview
- Placing student on an attendance contract
- Developing a modified individual education program for the student if needed
- Referral to the school counsellor

- Gain permission to contact a medical practitioner to discuss any current medical condition(s)
- Interagency liaison e.g. Police, Health, DADHC, Department of Housing and DOCS
- Contacting the local Case-Manager for regional support as required
- Making a HSLO referral if a student has received 4 or more non-attendance letters within the previous 6 months
- Liaising with the HSLO to establish a positive 20 day attendance improvement program for students – ensuring regular attendance is restored by its completion **(see Appendix I)**
- Referral to the Director of Public school if a student is unable to fulfil the requirements of the 20 day attendance improvement program **(see Appendix I)**
- Reviewing of the student's placement (with relevant personnel) recommending that distance education is not appropriate for students who have received 6 or more non-attendance letters within the previous 12 months, or who are unable to fulfil the requirements of the 20 day attendance improvement program.
(These reviews may coincide with or be in addition to the 6 monthly or 12 monthly reviews which occur due to the DE enrolment category)

While being mindful of the often difficult and challenging circumstances parents face when caring for children with disabilities at the same time as implementing a distance education program, it is important to remain focussed at all times on the needs and welfare of the student. Accommodating the needs of the parents should remain secondary to the needs of the students. Every student is entitled to an appropriate and relevant education.

SDEPS teachers must do everything they can feasibly and legitimately do to support the educational and welfare needs of their students, but they are also accountable and must ensure that they follow the guidelines provided by DoE. By doing so, they can fulfil their 'duty of care' for their students. Distance education can be the best available option for students to engage in an educational program, but there are times when it is not in the students' best interests to remain with SDEPS. When a child is not attending, they are being denied their right to an education.

If a student is unable to fulfil the requirements of the Attendance policy at SDEPS and show improvement in their attendance and participation, the following letter may be sent by the Principal.

Appendix I

Attendance Level Notice to Parents

Dear _____,

I refer to the attendance of your son/daughter, _____, at Sydney Distance Education Primary School.

The Education Act (1990) requires parents to ensure that children between the ages of six and seventeen attend school on each day that the school is open for instruction. If children are absent from school and unable to participate in their learning program, parents are required to provide the school with an acceptable explanation within seven days of absence.

You have been previously advised that _____ attendance is a matter of concern. The school has implemented a range of strategies to encourage _____ full attendance at Sydney Distance Education Primary School without success.

At a recent school Learning Support Team/Student Welfare Team meeting, _____ pattern of attendance was reviewed and it is clear that _____ attendance is still at an unacceptable level.

I am obliged to report apparent unresolved non-compliance with the Education Act (1990) to the local manager of the region's Home School Liaison Program for further investigation by a Home School Liaison Officer to help resolve the matter. The local manager will consider if further action is necessary. This may include the development of an Attendance Improvement Plan with specific targets, strategies and timelines.

If an Attendance Improvement Plan is to be implemented, you will be advised by a Director of Public Schools and provided with a copy of the plan. The local manager and Home School Liaison Officer will review progress within the plan over a four week school period.

If you do not meaningfully engage in the plan and there is no improvement in _____ attendance during this time, the matter could be referred to the Department of Education's Legal Department.

It is important that you work with us to resolve this issue.

Yours sincerely,

Robin Roberts
Principal
Sydney Distance Education Primary School