

Internal Truancy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide Darwin Middle School community members information about the management of internal truancy.

Applicability

This Policy is applicable to the Darwin Middle School Community, which includes but is not limited to students, teachers, support staff and guardians.

Governance

The Northern Territory Government provides Legislation and policy via the Department of Education and Training. This directs Darwin Middle School to adopt them into local policies, procedures and guidelines to support school operations.

The independent School Board develops and drives the school's strategic agenda, setting a strategic vision and managing strategic risks. The School Board provides an independent viewpoint of how relevant legislation and national frameworks are implemented. This strategic oversight ensures that the school's policies and programs align with both the law and contemporary national practices.

This strategic vision is then operationalised by the school who develops, implements, and manages local policy, procedures and programs.

Resources

These resources below should be used in conjunction with this policy.

Resources	Darwin Middle School Core Values
	Darwin Middle School Expected Behaviours Matrix
	Darwin Middle School Behaviour Flowchart

Policy suite

This policy forms part of a policy suite that include the following documents:

- Darwin Middle School Internal Truancy Policy (this document).
- Darwin Middle School Internal Truancy Procedure

This policy is supported by the 'School Wide Positive Behaviour Support,' which is underpinned by the Darwin Middle School Expected Behaviours Matrix, School Values & Behaviour Flowchart.

Roles and responsibilities

Department of Education is responsible for:

- ensuring student wellbeing and positive behaviour information provided to schools is based on best practice and sound evidence.
- ensuring capability-building support is provided to school staff to effectively develop and implement a whole-school approach to student wellbeing and positive behaviour.
- providing leadership support to principals to implement the principles and practices of a whole-school approach to student wellbeing and positive behaviour.
- supporting principals to make decisions in the best interests of their students and school community.
- ensuring schools have a documented whole-school approach to student wellbeing and positive behaviour.
- providing advice, coaching and professional learning support to schools to develop and implement a whole-school approach to student wellbeing and positive behaviour.
- providing support to school staff to deliver student safety and wellbeing programs in line with the Australian Curriculum.
- assisting school staff to access professional learning opportunities that are appropriate to the school context.

School Board is responsible for:

- providing strategic oversight and vision to support the school to achieve the best outcomes for students.
- monitoring school policy and programs, supported by review and audit initiatives to cultivate a culture of continuous improvement and transparency.

Principal is responsible for:

- implementing the *Suspension from School Guidelines 2025*.
- exercising their power to suspend students whose presence is a threat of physical or psychological harm to others at the school.
- ensuring their school develops and implements a whole-school approach to wellbeing and positive behaviour to meet the needs of students, guardians, and staff.
- taking reasonable care to protect all students from any reasonably foreseeable risk of harm.
- ensuring students have personalised plans in place as required.
- ensuring alternatives to suspension are considered, before suspending a student.
- ensuring procedural fairness in their decision making.
- completing a principal's suspension checklist to ensure suspension decisions align with policy and legislative obligations.
- ensuring the investigation of the cause and context of a student's behaviour is fair and impartial.

- ensuring the school develops and implements a whole-school approach to wellbeing, engagement and behaviour, and communicates expectations to the school community.
- ensuring guardians are contacted and advised of any consequences resulting from internal truancy that occur during school.
- ensuring meetings are facilitated with the student and their guardian to advise of any consequences, should the behaviour or incidents of internal truancy continue to occur.

Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- ensuring internal truancy information is entered into Compass.

Assistant Principals and Senior Teachers are responsible for:

- making recommendations in relation to truancy matters. These recommendations should include details of truancy, management strategies employed and the recommended consequence.
- providing support to classroom teachers in the management of truancy. They will assist with the identification and implementation of management strategies as per the Darwin Middle School Expected Behaviours Matrix, School Values and Behaviour Flowchart, which may recommend withdrawal, mediation or suspension to be considered by an Assistant Principal or the Principal.
- supporting and contributing to meetings with students and guardians regarding internal truancy.

Classroom teachers are responsible for:

- recording and reporting when students leave class without permission and do not return.
- issuing class leave passes on an as-needed basis in line with this policy.
- supporting and contributing to meetings with students and guardians regarding internal truancy.

Parents and students are responsible for:

- reinforcing the expected behaviours around classroom attendance.
- ensuring students do not attend school during the suspension period, in accordance with section 94 (2) or section 94 (3) of the *Education Act 2015* (the Act).
- complying with the conditions of the suspension.
- attending the re-entry meeting to discuss the internal truancy and to develop a Positive Behaviour Support Plan.

Policy details

Internal truancy

Attending school but not attending a timetabled class is referred to as internal truancy. At Darwin Middle School, all students are expected to attend all timetabled classes. The classroom teacher or support teacher has the discretion to issue an out of class leave pass or break card to authorise a

student's absence from the class for a specific purpose and period of time. Reasons for the issue of a leave pass may include, but are not limited to the following:

Out of Class Pass (paper copy)	Out of Class Card (Laminated)
Toilet	Break Card
Drink	Wellbeing Card
Buddy Class	Building 7 Pass
Front Office	

Any unauthorised absence from class is treated as an internal truancy issue and will be dealt with in accordance with this Policy and the Darwin Middle School Behaviour Flowchart.

Considerations

Section 90 of the Act requires consideration on a range of factors prior to making any decisions relevant to the management of a student's behaviour. Teachers and senior educators should also apply these principles prior to making any determinations. The factors include:

- the age of the student
- the developmental stage of the student
- whether the student is a child with special learning needs
- the mental health and wellbeing of the student
- the physical health and wellbeing of the student
- any relevant religious or cultural considerations
- the student's home environment and the arrangements in place for the student's care.

Parents/carers who are having difficulty with student attendance are encouraged to discuss the matter with the Year Level Coordinator, who can assist with support strategies.

Parents/carers of students who are of Aboriginal descent can contact the school's AEO and further information on school attendance can be found on the [National Indigenous Australians Agency website](#).

Compliance

Any disciplinary responses applied to truancy will be proportionate to the behaviour displayed and in line with the Darwin Middle School Behaviour Flowchart and the *Education Act 2015 (NT)*.

- **First Incident:** Recorded on Compass and family notified through Compass.
- **Second Incident:** Recorded on Compass and family notified through Compass. Attendance is monitored by Attendance Officer and Year Coordinator.
- **Third Incident:** Recorded on Compass and family notified to attend a formal meeting with the family and student to develop a Positive Behaviour Support Plan and possible referral

to external support services. Senior Staff will decide, in consultation with the family and student the appropriate course of action.

- All instances of truancy will be recorded on Compass by the Attendance Officer.
- All students found to be truanting will be subject to the consequences as outlined in the Darwin Middle School Behaviour Flowchart.
- Continued internal truancy can lead to further consequences, including suspension if the presence of the student is likely to constitute a risk of physical or psychological harm to others at the school.

Repeated Internal Truancy in a Day

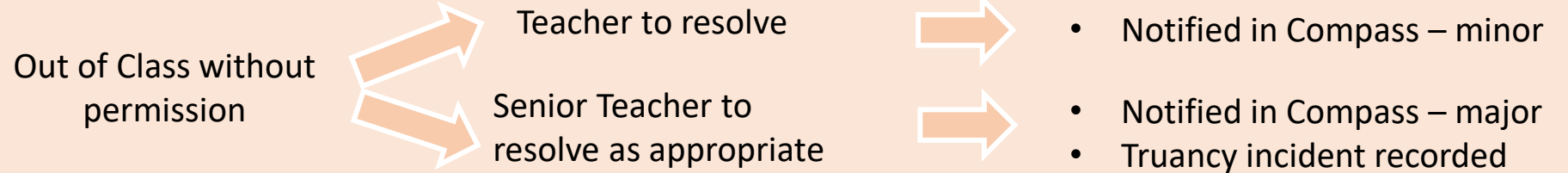
This can be defined as a student being absent from multiple classes within the same school day without a valid excuse or parental knowledge. This behaviour indicates a pattern of skipping classes, which can disrupt the student's learning and overall school performance.

- **Repeated Internal Truancy in a day:** Recorded on Compass and family notified to attend a formal meeting to review Positive Behaviour Support Plan and consequences, for example. student may be collected by a parent or guardian.
- **Continued Repeated Internal Truancy:** Recorded on Compass and family notified and contacted to discuss consequences, including suspension.

Darwin Middle School Internal Truancy – Procedure

Key points:

- Classroom teachers or support staff will issue an out of class pass as per the Internal Truancy Policy.
- Any unauthorised class absences will be treated as internal truancy.
- All truancy matters will be recorded in Compass by Attendance Officer.
- Issues of internal truancy will be dealt with as per the Internal Truancy Policy and the Behaviour Flowchart.



First Incident

- Recorded on compass and family notified through compass.

Second Incident

- Recorded on compass and family notified through compass.
- Attendance monitored by Attendance Officer & Year Level Coordinator.

Third Incident

- Recorded on compass and family notified to attend a formal meeting to develop a Positive Behaviour Support Plan for the student.
- Referral to external support services if applicable.

Repeated Internal Truancy in a day

- Recorded on compass and family notified to attend a formal meeting to review Positive Behaviour Support Plan and discuss consequences.

Continued Repeated Internal Truancy

- Recorded on compass and family notified and contacted to discuss consequences, including suspension.