

QRG – Common Leaver Questions Clarified

As a result of a number of help desk calls regarding DET policy we have asked the appropriate policy units for guidance to be given to ERN users. This is the official (Student Welfare, Attendance and Enrolment policy) on these issues:

Question 1: Can a school refuse to mark a student as LEFT because they have outstanding fees, loans, library books, musical instruments, learning materials etc?

No. The student must be able to continue their education. Schools may of course pursue the return of any outstanding items. An advantage of ERN is that if the student has gone to another government school, the school they are now attending will be visible to their previous school. This will even be true should the student spend any amount of time outside of NSW public schools.

Question 2: If a student simply doesn't show up to school anymore how long do I need to wait before removing them from ERN?

Should this student have applied to enrol at any other NSW public school, they will have a blue flag next to their name. This feature of ERN may assist in tracing these students.

If the student is of compulsory school age, is not attending and the matter is not able to be resolved through school intervention with parents, the student's absence must be referred to the regional Home School Liaison Program. The student must remain on the attendance register until the matter is resolved (e.g. attendance is restored, the student is accepted for enrolment in another school, or the student is no longer of compulsory school age).

If the student is of compulsory school age, they are no longer attending school and their whereabouts is unknown, their absence must be reported to the Home School Liaison Program in the region. A Home School Liaison Officer will undertake an investigation of the student's whereabouts. If the student's whereabouts is unable to be established, the HSLO will advise the school to remove the student's name from the attendance register (and ERN). The last day of attendance for the student will be recorded as the last day of enrolment. The HSLO will add the name of the student to the database of students whose whereabouts is unknown.

If the student is no longer of compulsory school age (currently 6-15), the student has not attended school for 15 continuous days and their whereabouts is not known, their name can be removed from the attendance register (and ERN). The last day of attendance is recorded as the last day of enrolment.

For further information refer to section 4.11 of *Student Attendance in Government Schools - Procedures*

Question 3: If a student's parent/carer informs us they intend to leave our school on a given date I mark them as LEFT or do I need to wait for notification from their new school to arrive?

If the student is not of compulsory school age, their name can be removed for the attendance register.

If the student is of compulsory school age, it will be necessary for the school to consider the particular circumstances.

If the student had a satisfactory record of attendance and there was no reason to believe the information provided by parents/carers was incorrect, it is not necessary to maintain the student on the attendance register or ERN. They may be marked LEFT.

On the other hand, if the student has a history of attendance issues, and has been subject to HSLO intervention, the Department would want the HSLO to confirm the new enrolment prior to the student being removed from the attendance register. If the enrolment didn't proceed, it is likely the parent would be subject to legal action for failing to ensure regular attendance.

If a student seeks to enrol in another NSW public school a blue flag will appear next to their name and clicking on this will tell you where they are applying to enrol.

If the child's parent/carer indicates that the student is leaving to travel overseas but will be subsequently returning, the enrolment should not be terminated. Rather, the matter should be treated as an application for exemption from attendance and the student should be maintained on the attendance register.

If the school has grounds to believe that a student of compulsory school age is leaving school and is not intending to enrol elsewhere, it should make contact with the Home School Liaison Program in the region.