

GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



IMPALA CRESCENT
PRIMARY SCHOOL



GAUTENG PROVINCE
EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

IMPALA CRESCENT PRIMARY SCHOOL

LEARNER ATTENDANCE POLICY

2026

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LEARNER ATTENDANCE POLICY

School Name: Impala Crescent Primary School

Date:

Effective Date:

1. Preamble

1.1 Regular and punctual school attendance is a pre-requisite for educational success, learner retention, and the instillation of discipline. It is a shared responsibility between the school, parents, and the community.

1.2 This policy aligns with the *South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (as amended)* and the *Admission of Learners to Public Schools Regulations, 2025* (Government Gazette No. 53119, Notice 3415). It supersedes any previous attendance policies of the school.

1.3 The school acknowledges that barriers to attendance (e.g., poverty, illness, lack of transport) must be addressed with empathy, but within the firm legal framework of compulsory education.

VISION

Impala Crescent Primary School aims to be a leading institution in the delivery of quality education, where every learner feels valued and inspired.

MISSION

To deliver a curriculum that is based on humanistic values, is future orientated, of a high standard and comprehensive to:

- *Support the schooling process by improving our management, administration, teaching, learning, assessments and overall standards.*
- *Establish both the culture and capacity for lifelong learning amongst our learners and staff. Encompassing values of integrity, passion for accountability and truth.*

2. Legislative and Regulatory Framework

This policy is grounded in the following legislation:

- **The Constitution of South Africa, 1996** (Section 29 - Right to Basic Education).
- **South African Schools Act (SASA), 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996)** - specifically Sections 3 (Compulsory Attendance) and 4 (Exemptions).
- **The BELA Act (Basic Education Laws Amendment Act)** - as operationalized through the 2025 Regulations.
- **National Policy on Learner Attendance** (General Notice 361 of 2010).

- **Admission of Learners to Public Schools Regulations, 2025.**

3. Definitions

- **Compulsory School-going Age:** As defined in SASA, a learner must attend school from the first school day of the year they turn 7 until the last school day of the year they turn 15 or complete Grade 9 (whichever comes first).
- **Continuous Absence:** Absence from school for ten (10) or more consecutive school days without a valid reason as defined in this policy.
- **Parent:** Includes a biological parent, legal guardian, or caregiver legally responsible for the learner.
- **HOD:** Head of the Provincial Department of Education (or their delegate).

4. Attendance Obligations

4.1 Parental Responsibilities

In terms of SASA Section 3(1) and Regulations 2025, parents must:

- Ensure the learner attends school daily, on time, for the full school day.
- Provide the school with a valid reason for absence **immediately** (on the first day of absence).
- Provide a **medical certificate** for absence lasting more than three (3) consecutive days.
- Notify the principal **in writing** at least 7 days in advance for religious or cultural observances.

4.2 Learner Responsibilities

- Arrive at school on time (by 07:45).
- Attend all scheduled classes, extramural activities, and examinations.
- Sign an acknowledgement of receipt of the Code of Conduct and this Attendance Policy.

5. Management of Attendance Records

5.1 The school will maintain **Class Registers** (morning/afternoon) and **Period Registers** as legal documents.

5.2 Registers will be marked daily by the Class Teacher and Subject Teacher. No learner is permitted to mark the register.

5.3 The "Ten-Day Headcount" rule applies: At the start of the academic year, a **Temporary Class Register** will be used for the first 10 school days. The Principal will finalize the official register only after this period to account for late enrolments or dropouts.

6. Valid and Invalid Absences

6.1 Valid Reasons for Absence

The school will excuse a learner only for the following reasons (documentation required):

Reason	Documentation Required	Max Duration
Illness	Medical certificate (if >3 days) or parent letter (if 1-2 days)	As per doctor
Religious/Cultural Observance	Prior written request to Principal / SGB	As approved
Family Bereavement	Notification on return (e.g., death notice)	3 Days
Medical/Dental Procedure	Appointment letter	Specific day(s)
Pending Legal/Home Affairs Process	Affidavit or official receipt (per Reg 13 of 2025)	As advised by HOD

6.2 Invalid Reasons (Resulting in "Unjustified Absence")

- Missing school transport.
- Sibling care (except in extreme emergencies).
- Birthdays or family trips during school time.
- Lack of school fees or uniform (Note: Regulation 10 of 2025 explicitly prohibits exclusion due to inability to pay fees).

7. Procedure for Absence and Withdrawal

7.1 Late Coming

- Learners arriving after 08:00 must report to the office.
- 3 Late arrivals in a term trigger a written warning to the parent.

7.2 Continuous Absence Protocol (10-Day Rule)

Step 1 (3 Days): Class Teacher informs Principal.

Step 2 (5 Days): Principal contacts parent telephonically/email (logged as intervention).

Step 3 (10 Consecutive Days): If the parent has not contacted the school and no valid reason is provided:

- The learner's name will be **cancelled** from the Register of Admissions.
- The Principal must inform the parent in writing of the cancellation.
- The matter will be reported to the **District IDSO (Integrated District Support Officer)** because the parent is in violation of SASA Section 3(1).

7.3 The "Transfer Card" Rule (Regulation 13(10-11))

- Learners transferring to Impala Crescent PS **must** present a Transfer Card from their previous school.
- If the Transfer Card is not available, admission is **not denied immediately**, but the learner may be placed provisionally pending a formal assessment by the Department to verify the correct grade placement.

8. School Examinations and End-of-Year Protocols

8.1 In line with the 2025 Regulations and SASA, learners may **not** take "study leave" at the Primary School level.

8.2 Learners must attend school every day until the last scheduled school day of the academic year, including days when only specific grades are writing examinations.

8.3 No learner will be denied a school report or transfer certificate due to absence, provided that the absence was not related to examination malpractice or suspension.

9. Rights of Undocumented Learners

9.1 In strict adherence to **Regulation 17 of the 2025 Admissions Regulations**, no learner shall be denied admission or penalized for poor attendance solely due to a lack of a Birth Certificate or Immigration documents.

9.2 Parents of undocumented learners must submit a Sworn Affidavit explaining their inability to provide documents.

9.3 The Principal will immediately report undocumented admissions to the HOD, who will assist the parent in obtaining documents from Home Affairs without excluding the child from class .

10. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Primary Attendance Duty
Principal	Submit quarterly attendance reports to the SGB and District. Enforce the 10-day cancellation rule.
SGB	Review attendance data quarterly. Enforce punctuality rules via the Code of Conduct.

Role	Primary Attendance Duty
Class Teacher	Mark register twice daily (morning/afternoon).
Parent	To provide a medical certificate for absence >3 days.
District (HOD)	To hold parents criminally liable for chronic absenteeism under SASA Section 3(6).

11. Short Title and Approval

This policy is called the **Learner Attendance Policy of Impala Crescent Primary School, 2026.**

Approved by: _____ (SGB Chairperson)

Date: _____

Key Changes & Compliance Notes (For your review)

1. **The "10-Day Headcount" (Section 7.2):** I have integrated the specific operational rule used by the GDE (found in your search results and the BELA capacity regulations) regarding the 10-day window to cancel chronic absentees. This is critical for managing enrolment numbers at your school.
2. **Undocumented Learners (Section 9):** The BELA 2025 Regulations (Gazette 53119) are explicit: **"Learners without valid documentation are equally entitled to admission"**. I have added a specific clause to ensure your attendance policy does not accidentally violate the BELA Act by requiring documents that a homeless or foreign national parent might lack.
3. **Medical Certificates:** I have reinforced the SASA requirement that a medical certificate is needed after 3 days of absence to prevent "sick notes" from parents for extended periods without professional verification.
4. **Admission Age:** I have corrected the age reference for Grade 1 compliance. The norm is age 5 turning 6 by 30 June. Your school's admission policy must reflect this, even though it is separate from the *Attendance* policy.

Recommendation: Before final adoption, ensure your SGB reviews **Section 12 (Removal from Register)** to ensure it aligns perfectly with the specific "Continuous Absence" definitions in the attached BELA Gazette.

DRAFT