



Attendance Policy

Governing Council Endorsed: 2023

Review Date: 2025

Purpose

Research shows that attendance at school all day and every day positively affects learning, wellbeing, employment and life outcomes for children and young people. Learning is cumulative and is disrupted when students are absent from school often.

School Attendance and the Law

Attendance at school is compulsory. The Education and Children's Services Act 2019 states that all children must attend school from 6 until they turn 17. This could be in a school or an approved learning program.

Parents or legal guardians (carers) can be prosecuted if they do not make sure their child goes to school. This can mean, without an approved exemption, families may be guilty of an offence.

Department for Education's Policy

The South Australian Department for Education's [Attendance Policy](#) guides the responsibilities of the whole school community to ensure children and young people attend school. This includes school staff, parents, carers and students.

Schools work with their community to develop positive attendance habits. This starts from the earliest years. This provides a safe, inclusive and culturally respectful environment. Schools use effective and consistent local practices to monitor and manage absences.

Students at risk from missing school:

Students can be away from school for many reasons. Schools use categories to identify children and young people at risk. We make sure that appropriate follow up and support is provided.

- Habitual non-attendance: a student has 5 to 9 days absent in a term for any reason.
- Chronic non-attendance: a student has 10 or more days absent in a term for any reason.

Implementing the Department for Education's Policy

At Ingle Farm Primary School our attendance practices align with the Department for Education's attendance policy.

We support student attendance when we:

- promote the importance of education from the earliest years of life and throughout school
- assess patterns of non-attendance and develop ways to address this
- actively engage and include all children, young people and their families
- provide support to address the barriers to attendance, learning and wellbeing
- monitor attendance to make sure progress is documented and supports are in place
- evaluate the need for further or ongoing support and referral for additional support.

We use data to create our attendance improvement plans. This is in partnership with our community. Our plan includes the actions we will take to make sure all students can attend school.

Expectations

School starts at 8.55am each day and finishes at 3.05pm.

Families must provide an explanation if their child is absent for the day, late or has to leave early. In this case all students must sign in or out at the front office.

Roles and Responsibilities

Students

- Attend school every day the school is open unless they are ill or have an approved exemption.
- Arrive at school and to all lessons and activities on time.
- Participate positively in all learning activities.

Note: a student's age and circumstances affect the level of responsibility.

Families

- Make sure their child attends school every day the school is open, unless they are ill or have an approved exemption.
- Are responsible for their child's travel to and from school.
- Make sure their child arrives at school on time, between 8.35am and 8.55am.
- Provide school with current contact details.
- Provide a reason if their child is absent, late or leaving early. The same day if possible.
- Provide a medical certificate or written explanation if their child is ill for 3 or more days in a row.

Respect



Honesty



Persistence

Staff

- Read and adhere to the Department for Education's Attendance at School Procedure.
- Make sure all families are aware of attendance expectations, policies and procedures.
- Accurately record each absence, late arrival or early departure with the appropriate code.
- Contact parents or carers if there is no explanation for an absence, or a pattern of absences.
- Document contact with parents and carers about absences, including attempts to contact.
- Request a medical certificate from parents or carers if needed.
- Consult with the local Student Support Services if needed. For example Social Work, Truancy.
- Make notifications about chronic non-attendance (via the Child Abuse Report Line – [CARL](#)) guided by Responding to Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care ([RAN](#)) training and the [Mandatory Reporting Guide](#).
- Contact the parent or carer on the third day their child is absent, for example by SeeSaw or phone call and document the attempt on Academy.

Authorisation of Exemptions

In some circumstances, the principal has authority to approve an exemption from school. This can be for up to 4 weeks. It can also be for up to 12 months for a family holiday.

Before asking for an exemption, families should talk to a site leader. Students must attend school until an exemption is approved.

Our school requires an exemption for absences more than 3 consecutive school days. This does not include illness.

Parents or carers must apply in writing. The principal will advise them in writing of their decision. A copy is kept in the student record folder. Forms are available from the front office.

Exemptions of more than 4 weeks (excluding holidays) must be approved by the Department for Education.

Note: Exemptions are counted as student absences from school.