



## Attendance Policy

Governing Council Endorsed: 2025

Review Date: 2027

### PURPOSE

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.

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. The Education and Children's Services Act 2019 requires that a child must attend the school at which they are enrolled in every day the school is open and at all school activities the school requires the child to attend.

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.

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.

If children miss the basic skills taught in the early years of schooling, they often experience learning difficulties later. Research indicates that:

- irregular attendance in the early years can lead to poor patterns of attendance in primary years
- poor attendance makes it difficult for students to form positive relationships with their peers
- there is a direct correlation between attendance and achievement.

Research also highlights regular attendance leads to:

- higher chance to stay on track and progress academically
- making friends and learning how to maintain relationships over a period of time
- learning positive life and social skills necessary to live and work with others

If your child misses...	That equals...	Over 13 years of schooling that is
1 day per fortnight	20 days, 4 weeks per year	Nearly 1.5 years
1 day per week	40 days, 8 weeks per year	Over 2.5 years
2 days per week	80 days, 16 weeks per year	Over 5 years
10 to 15 minutes late every day		2 school terms

### PROCEDURE

Students can be away from school for many reasons. Schools closely monitor attendance to identify children and young people at risk. Risk may be related to



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learning and wellbeing. Ingle Farm Primary School ensures that appropriate follow up and support is provided to students and families.

Non-attendance falls into two categories:

**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.

At Ingle Farm Primary School our attendance practices align with the Department for Education's attendance policy. We support attendance when we:

- promote the importance of education across our site and with our community
- assess patterns of non-attendance and develop ways to work together to improve 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 systems are in place
- evaluate the need for further or ongoing support and possible referral for additional support through Social Truancy.

When attendance data indicates chronic non-attendance, the Student Wellbeing Leader along with the TAC (teacher, parent, caregiver, student) will create an attendance plan. The aim of the plan is to ensure attendance can be improved through identifying barriers, goal setting and regular communication.

At Ingle Farm Primary School:

- Students arrive at school between 8:35am and 8:55am and be collected at 3:05pm
- Students are in class ready to start their day at 8:55am with a full day attendance until 3:05pm
- Families provide an explanation if their child is absent for the day, late or has to leave early.
- Families sign in or out at the front office for a late arrival or early dismissal.

### Ways for Families to Communicate Student Absences

- Phone 8262 4864 – office hours for phone messages are 8.30am to 4.00pm weekdays. An answering machine service is available for messages outside office hours.
- Seesaw message with classroom teacher
- In writing:
  - Send a signed and dated note/letter with a sibling/family member/friend to the front office or class teacher
  - email dl.1162.info@schools.sa.edu.au
- In person with the front office staff or classroom teacher.



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### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

#### Families

- Ensure all children attend school from the beginning of each day (8.55am)
- Provide the school with an appropriate explanation for the students non-attendance via telephone to the front office or seesaw message to classroom teacher.
- Provide a medical certificate for illness 3 or more days in a row.
- Request a temporary exemption from school for any known absence for five days or longer.
- Inform classroom teacher in advance of any upcoming absences.
- Be responsible for their child's travel to and from school.
- Provide school with current contact details.
- Check in or out via the office if your child is arriving late or leaving early and provide an appropriate reason.
- Communicate with the classroom teacher any needs or concerns which may affect their child's attendance.

#### 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 absences and reason for absences via the online roll each day before 10.00am.
- Request that all students arriving after 9.00am check in via the front office.
- Contact parents or carers via seesaw or email if there is no explanation for an absence.
- Contact the parent or carer on the third day their child is absent, via phone call and document phone call and all attempts on EMS.
- Request a medical certificate if child has been absent for more the 3 consecutive days.
- Raise any attendance concerns (frequent non-attendance, regulate late arrivals or early departures or patterns of absences) with family.
- Discuss attendance concerns with Wellbeing Leader.
- Sign the end of term summary when distributed and return to Wellbeing Leader.
- 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.

#### Leaders will:

- Monitor and analyse attendance data across the school and report to the school community via their annual report.
- Develop and implement the schools Attendance Improvement Plan.



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- Liaise with classroom teacher in regards to attendance concerns.
- Communicate and meet with families to discuss attendance concerns.
- Complete Individual Attendance Improvement Plan, consulting with families and classroom teacher.
- 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.
- Document all communication and attempts on EMS.

### 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. 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.

**1. ATTENDANCE IS MONITORED**

Attendance data is monitored daily by the class teacher. Classroom teachers will contact families via Seesaw for all unexplained absences. Data will be checked twice a week by the Wellbeing Leader.

**E-CARL**  
At any point throughout the process E-CARLS can and should be made. Talk to Wellbeing Leader for guidance.

**ATTENDANCE CONCERNS 2.**

Teacher will observe any Attendance concerns which include:

- non-attendance of 3 or more days without explanation
- a regular pattern of lateness/early dismissals/collected late or early arrivals
- frequent absences or a pattern of absence.

**3. MAKE CONTACT**

Classroom teacher will make phone contact with family and discuss concerns

**ATTENDANCE IMPROVES  
DOCUMENT AND MONITOR**

**CONCERNS UNRESOLVED**

Refer to Wellbeing Leader who liaises with Classroom teachers and send the first Attendance Letter of Concern to family

**REFER TO WELLBEING 4.**

**ATTENDANCE IMPROVES  
DOCUMENT AND MONITOR**

**CONCERNS UNRESOLVED**

**5. WELLBEING LEADER WILL THEN:**

- Send second Attendance Letter of Concern to family requesting a meeting
- Develop Attendance Improvement Plan
- Monitor Attendance
- Document Contact in EMS

**ATTENDANCE IMPROVES  
DOCUMENT AND MONITOR**

**CONCERNS UNRESOLVED**

Wellbeing Leader to refer to Department for Education Social Worker (Truancy)

**REFERRAL TO THE DFE 6.**



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### ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

**CRONIC NON  
ATTENDANCE  
10 or more days  
absent per term**

#### ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Student(s):

Parent(s):

Date:

Attendance rate:

Those in attendance:

Attendance Concern: Frequent non attendance/ patterns/late/early	
What are the barriers to school attendance?	
Teacher perspectives	
Attendance goal	
Strategies to achieve goal	
Any external agencies supporting the family	
Responsibilities	Teacher:  Wellbeing Leader:  Parent:  Child
Signed	Parent _____ Leader: _____