



East Adelaide School

Attendance Guidelines and Procedures

Rationale

The Education Act 1972 requires that children of compulsory school age be enrolled at school. The Compulsory Education Legislation requires children of up to the age of 17 years participate in a full-time approved learning program. A condition of enrolment is that a student is required to fully participate in the education program arranged and approved by the enrolling school. Such participation is to include engagement and attendance as required by the program.

East Adelaide School has identified attendance as a priority. If students miss the basic skills in the early years of schooling they often experience learning difficulties later on. Research has indicated 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.
- Being half an hour late to school each day from Reception to Year 10 equates to missing one year and one and a half terms of schooling.
- Being absent five days a term from Reception to Year 10 equates to more than one year of missed schooling.
- Missing one day a week from school from Reception to Year 10 equates to missing two years and one term of schooling.
- There is a direct correlation between attendance and achievement.
- Frequent absences make it difficult for teachers who have to continually re-teach information and skills.

Research has also highlighted the benefits of regular attendance leads to:

- The development of skills and attitudes such as self-discipline, punctuality, being organised and sticking to routines will optimise life choices.
- Making friends and learning how to maintain relationships over a period of time.
- Learning social skills necessary to live and work with others.
- The more students attend, the more they learn and the more they will like school.

Monitoring lateness and attendance are legal responsibilities of teachers and schools – employees of the Department for Education and Child Development (DECD). Parents expect that when their child leaves home, they will arrive at and attend school each day. Teachers expect that if they have not heard from parents, students should be at school all day.

During school hours, teachers assume duty of care for students in their care. Knowing where students are and what they are doing during school hours is a legal responsibility. If a student is not at school, the school must establish the reason for the student's absence.

Aims

East Adelaide School has developed the Attendance and Lateness Policy with the aim to:

- Improve student access and participation.
- Improve student achievement and success.
- Develop lifelong positive routines and practices.
- Intervene early if the need arises.
- Provide support for students, parents/caregivers and teachers.
- Maximise learning opportunities by ensuring student absenteeism is kept to a minimum.

- Ensure that the maintenance and approach towards regular school attendance is the responsibility of all school staff, parents/guardians and students.
- Put into place agreed processes for managing student absences within the school.

Outcomes

- Improved student attendance.
- All students attending 8.50am to 3.10pm.
- Improved parent/school communication.
- All students' whereabouts known and satisfactorily explained.

At East Adelaide School Attendance Means

- Students are in class ready to start their day of learning by 8.50am with a full days attendance until 3.10pm
- As an OHS requirement, particularly in times of a critical incident, the safety & knowledge of student whereabouts is paramount, therefore if a child is late/leaves early the parent/guardian needs to sign their child in/out using the appropriate process at reception.

To support the implementation of the R – 7 Attendance Policy

School Staff Responsibilities

- Set a good example of attendance and punctuality.
- Follow attendance procedures.
- Maintain accurate records.
- Acknowledge good attendance and punctuality.
- Provide regular Newsletter articles reminding parents/caregivers and students of policy requirements.
- Document all information relating to non-attendance and place in student's file.
- Communicate regularly with parents/caregivers and students, providing feedback on good and poor attendance and punctuality.
- Report all chronic/patterns of non-attendance to Principal.

Leaders will:

- Ensure that new families to the school are informed of attendance expectations.
- Ensure the community/new staff and families are kept informed.
- Monitor and follow up attendance concerns – this includes phone calls home followed by student attendance notifications #1 and later #2.
- Supervise attendance information and monitor cross school patterns.
- Support teachers/students/families – by meeting with families and making necessary referrals to agencies/regional attendance counsellor.
- Leaders, after checking attendance records and consulting with the teacher and the student, decide upon a strategy to be employed. As chronic absenteeism is often indicative of other problems including lack of school engagement and family issues, the support strategies employed will be determined on a case by case basis.

Support strategies may include:

- Initial phone contact with parent/caregiver
- Meeting sessions with parent/caregiver
- Home visits
- Information/Referral to support services
- Development of an Individual Attendance Plan
- Making regular school attendance a prerequisite for extra-curricular activities
- Consultation with the Regional Student Counsellor should be made should chronic non-attendance continue.

Teachers will:

- Check pigeon hole daily for absence notification slips.
- Record attendances and absences by 9.00am each morning.
- Ensure roll is marked via LearnLink appropriately using two correct codes.
- Contact families after the 3rd consecutive day of all unexplained absences/lateness either via note in diary/communication book or via telephone (dependant on circumstances).
- Record details of above communication with families regarding unexplained absences.
- Amend roll via Learnlink once advised by the parent through the school diary or communication book.
- Inform principal of continued lateness/non attendance.
- Monitor patterns of non-attendance/absences or extended absences.
- Ensure all students know and understand school expectations re attendance.
- Remind parents whose children are late that they need to sign in at the front office.
- Check roll summary and certify twice a term as requested under DECD requirements.
- Retain absentee notification slips and communication from parents in the classroom information folder.
- Bring to the attention of Leadership any student whose attendance is irregular, who does not provide written notes adequately explaining absences, or whose absences appear unwarranted.
- Ensure attendance and absence records form part of each student's progress reports to parents/caregivers.

Designated School Services Officers will:

- Provide information to new families on enrolment via information package.
- Be available 8.20am to receive calls of absence/lateness/early departure and recorded messages left on the absentee line.
- Notify teachers of any absences using notification slips.
- Notify teachers of children going home from the sick room or leaving school early for other reasons.
- Ensure any other concerns/information is given to principal/teachers/school.
- Enter late arrivals/early departures from student movement book into LearnLink.
- Ensure attendance records are imported into EDSAS at least twice per week.

Parent/Caregiver Responsibilities

The primary responsibility for meeting the legal requirements rests with the legal guardian – parent/caregiver.

Parents/Caregivers are required to:

- Ensure children attend school.
- Ensure children arrive at school by 8.45am to start learning by 8.50am.
- Inform the school of any absence for part/whole day by a telephone call, personal visit to teacher/front office or written note.
- Request an exemption (ED175) from the principal for any known extended absences of three days or longer.
- Communicate any needs or concerns which may affect child's attendance.
- Sign student in upon arrival if after 8.50am through procedure at the front office.
- Sign student out through the procedure at the front office if taking the child before 3.10pm.
- Apply for an exemption for a student whose attendance is affected by a period of prolonged illness or other circumstances related to their personal situation. Parents may be required to provide supporting evidence such as medical reports, reports from psychologists/psychiatrists etc.
- Read and follow the Attendance and Lateness Policy.
- Ensure they get their children to and from school.
- Be responsible for making appointments outside of school hours whenever possible.

- Inform the school of the reasons for their child's absence via a phone call on the day of absence by 9.30am.
- Provide a written note with an explanation for their child's absence the following school day if phone contact was not made on the day of absence.
- Inform and discuss with school leaders if an extension of absence is likely.

Students' Responsibilities

- To arrive and attend school and classes daily and on time.
- To supply teachers with notes from parent/caregiver explaining all lateness/absences.

Regional Student Attendance Counsellor's Responsibilities

- Provide a consultative and counselling service.
- Support the school by acting promptly upon referrals in order to restore satisfactory attendance.
- Support the school in identifying reasons for non attendance/lateness.
- Support the school in implementing strategies to encourage/improve and maintain good attendance.
- Support the school in meeting with parents/caregivers and students to encourage/improve attendance.
- Support the school in conducting home visits.

Grievance and the Resolution of Difficulties

Sometimes the attendance concern arises as a result of a grievance with an individual or individuals within the school.

To ensure that students maximize their learning opportunities it is important to ensure that:

- Every individual has the opportunity to effectively resolve issues and concerns regarding a student's attendance.
- General matters such as school policies and school dress can be openly discussed and a range of views canvassed.
- Personal matters are resolved in a confidential manner.



EAST ADELAIDE SCHOOL

Second Avenue, St. Peters 5069
Telephone (08) 8362 1622
Facsimile (08) 8362 0078

STUDENT ATTENDANCE NOTIFICATION # 1

Dear _____,

As part of our duty of care to students, staff become concerned when students are frequently late or absent.

We have noticed from our attendance records that your child _____ has

- Been absent on _____ days to date.
- Been absent without a written reason on _____ days.
- Developed a pattern of absences.
- Arrived late on _____ occasions so far this term.
- Left school early on _____ occasions so far this term.

We understand that this may also be a concern to you because time away from school amounts to lost opportunities for learning. This severely disadvantages your child.

You may be having some difficulty getting your child to school or there may be some particular reason for the absences with which we may be able to assist.

Would you please:-

- Telephone the school if a problem exists requiring our assistance.
- Inform the school by telephone or note, each time that the child is absent from school.
- Make an appointment to meet with a member of the leadership team.

We thank you for your assistance.

Vicki Stravinski
Principal

Date:



EAST ADELAIDE SCHOOL

Second Avenue, St. Peters 5069
Telephone (08) 8362 1622
Facsimile (08) 8362 0078

STUDENT ATTENDANCE NOTIFICATION #2

Dear _____,

We refer to our letter dated _____ regarding the absences from school recorded for your child _____.

We notice that his/her

- Absences have continued with _____ days absent this term.
- Absences have been without reason.
- Late arrival has continued on a number of occasions _____ (times).

Irregular attendance severely disadvantages your child's learning and achievement.

We are keen to assist your child in the resumption of a regular pattern of attendance and will be contacting you soon to arrange a time to meet and discuss this matter.

We look forward to meeting with you.

Vicki Stravinski
Principal

Date: