



East Adelaide School

Attendance Policy 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.
- There is a direct correlation between attendance and achievement.

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. 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.

Every Day Counts

We are committed to assisting our community to understand the impact poor attendance has on learning and will therefore work to develop an understanding about the impact with information like the following:

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 minutes late each day		2 school terms

We therefore believe:

- We are committed to promoting the message that everyday counts.
- Attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community
- All children should be enrolled at school and attend all day, every day unless they are too unwell to attend

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 arriving at and settled in classrooms before 8.50am in order to begin the learning day at 8.50am and end it at 3.10pm.
- Improved parent/school communication regarding attendance.
- 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 WHS and Duty of Care 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 Attendance Policy and Procedures

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' Responsibilities

- 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.
- 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 with the student and parents.
- 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' Responsibilities:

- Record attendances at 8.50am each morning and ensure information is accessible by the clerical officer responsible in sending SMS to families.

- Ensure roll is marked appropriately using two correct codes and any applicable comments, such as Parent advised via Seesaw.
- Contact families after the 3rd consecutive day of all unexplained absences/lateness either via note in diary/communication book or via telephone (dependent on circumstances).
- Record details of above communication with families regarding unexplained absences.
- Report any attendance concerns to the principal.
- Positively encourage maximum school attendance, explaining reasons.
- Ensure all students know and understand school expectations re attendance.
- Check roll summary and certify twice a term as requested under DfE requirements.
- Retain communication from parents in the classroom information folder for archiving in student confidential file.
- Ensure attendance and absence records form part of each student's progress reports to parents/caregivers.

Designated School Services Officer will:

- Provide information to new families on enrolment via information package.
- Report children's absence to parents via SMS no later than 10.30am.
- Notify teachers of children going home from the sick room and record this on SENTRAL.
- Students who leave early are signed out electronically at reception by family members who must present an early departure slip to the teacher prior to the student leaving the classroom.
- Ensure any other concerns/information is provided to the principal, preparing a report three times/term assisting the monitoring of attendance. The SSO also alerts the Principal of ongoing lateness issues via daily or weekly email.
- Ensure attendance records are imported into EDSAS daily.

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 to the absentee line, SMS, personal visit to teacher/front office or written note.
- Request an exemption (ED175) from the principal for any known extended absences of more than three days.
- 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 Policy and Procedure.
- 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 to the absentee line or SMS 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.
- Report to the front office with an adult to sign in late.
- To supply the teacher with a late slip upon entering the class.
- To supply teachers with notes from parent/caregiver explaining all lateness/absences.

Department for Education Student Attendance Counsellor's Responsibilities

- Provide a consultative and counselling service.

- 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



29 July 2020

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



Learning for Life

East Adelaide School



Government
of South Australia
Department for Education

29 July 2020

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