



Melaleuca Park
PRIMARY SCHOOL



Government of South Australia
Department for Education

Attendance Policy

Reviewed September 2023

Our Beliefs

Regular school attendance is important. Teachers have the responsibility for the early detection and assessment of the causes of non-attendance. Teachers need to encourage regular attendance by providing appropriate curriculum and by setting up curriculum that supports the needs of the students.

The United Nations Convention on the rights of the child, article 28, (www.unicef.org.au/united-nations-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child) states that every child has the right to education. Partnership between caregivers and the school to address barriers to attendance is critical to ensure these rights are upheld.

Compulsory Attendance

The Education and Children's Services Act 2019 and the Regulations impose statutory responsibilities in relation to attendance at school. The Education and Children's Services Act 2019 requires that children must be enrolled in a school or approved learning program from the age of 6 years until they turn 17 years of age. The Education and Children's Services Act 2019 also requires that a child must either: attend the school at which they are enrolled on every day the school is open and at all school activities the school requires the child to attend, or participate in the approved learning program in which they are enrolled. Parents have a responsibility under the Education and Children's Services Act 2019 to ensure their children attend school regularly. If a child or young person does not attend, without a 'prescribed reason' for their non-attendance or an approved exemption, their parents may be guilty of an offence.

Procedure

1. If a student is absent without explanation for three or more consecutive days, on the third day of absence teachers are to attempt to make contact with the parent/guardian via a phone call / SMS / email correspondence – recording each contact attempt on Sentral, noting the time, date and reason.
Note: if there are known risk factors or other concerns follow up should occur before 3 days – refer to school leadership for guidance.
2. If the teacher is unable to make contact, they are to advise Social Worker via email for additional follow up. If Social Worker on leave, refer to school leadership for delegation regarding who will undertake follow up tasks.
3. Teachers and Social Worker communicate via email in relation to any identified patterns of unexplained absenteeism (eg student away every Friday, or 2 days every fortnight, or after holidays / long weekends).



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4. The Social Worker is to contact the family, keeping the teacher informed throughout the process. Contact is to be attempted via the following methods: SMS, phone calls to all known numbers at different times of the day, email and if necessary registered letter.
5. Social Worker to complete a mandatory notification via the Child Abuse Report Line notification system.
6. If all contact attempts remain unsuccessful, and there has been no response from the family, the Social Worker and a school staff member may need to conduct a home visit. A safety / risk assessment is to be completed prior to visit. If known safety risk, refer to Principal for consideration of SAPOL stand-by breach of peace or welfare check.
Note: home visits should be conducted earlier than one month of non-contact.
7. If contact with the family is unable to be made, the Social Worker will send a contact letter to the family via registered mail and email, requesting the family contact the school to organise a meeting as soon as possible.
8. If contact is still unable to be made and the child is unable to be sighted by school staff during a home visit, a SAPOL welfare check may be required – to be authorised by Principal. Home visit to be conducted prior to request assistance from SAPOL unless known safety risk (as per point 6).
9. If there are on-going concerns regarding the student's attendance, a meeting will be convened by the Social Worker/School leadership team, and attended by the parents, student (if appropriate), and when appropriate the teacher.

The purposes of this meeting are:

- to define and explore the problem
 - to identify strategies/steps which would assist in improving/achieving attendance
 - to explore other avenues whereby the student can be supported in their school attendance responsibility.
10. Where regular attendance is not resumed, the Social Worker will contact the Social Work duty line for advice, with the possibility of a Social Work Truancy referral to be made.

NB If the Social Worker is not available, the site leadership team will undertake the duties above.

Mid Term meetings between Wellbeing Leader, Principal, Social Worker, AET to review attendances for all students at risk.



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