

Pooraka Primary School



POLICY ON ATTENDANCE

Rationale

The Education Act requires that children of school age (six to sixteen years) resident in South Australia are required to be in full time attendance at a government or registered non-government school unless they are receiving approved home tuition, correspondence education, or have been granted an exemption by the Education Department.

Pooraka Primary School staff strive for all students to achieve high attendance and punctuality rates. Absences and lateness often mean that students miss important stages in the development of topics and skills, causing them to find 'catching up' difficult. Poor success with school work and the development of important relationships with teachers and other students can often be the result of serious and/ or regular absenteeism.

Illness is reasonable grounds for absence from school; activities such as shopping excursions or birthdays are not.

Aims

To maximise student learning opportunities and achievement by ensuring that children required to attend school do so regularly, by 8:50am and without unnecessary or non urgent absences.

How this policy is implemented at Pooraka Primary School

Responsibilities of Parents/Caregivers:

- Ensure that all children are at school by 8:50am.
- Ensure that children attend school regularly and are only absent if ill or if absolutely necessary.
- Provide a written note or contact the school explaining why an absence has occurred.
- Return the 'Reason for Absence' note when requested to explain absence
- Communicate regularly with the school before and during any case of prolonged absence
- When required, present a Doctors certificate to the school.
- Immediately contact their child's teacher or the school leadership team in the event of students refusing to attend school
- Ensure their child attends school when permission has not been given for camps or excursions
- If collecting children early from school do so through the front office and follow signing out procedures.

Responsibilities of Classroom Teachers:

- Record all student absences and lateness at the beginning of the day. Lateness is recorded as arrival time after the 8:50am bell.
- Send 'Reason for Absence' note home when a student has returned to school with no communication from parents/caregivers as explanation for absence.
- After 3 days of absence, make initial contact with families to seek explanation of prolonged absence.
- Make initial contact with families where children are regularly late and/or absent.
- Record days absence and late on every students report at the end of terms 2 and 4.
- For prolonged illness, where a Doctors Certificate has been received, teachers will provide a suitable classroom program in the core areas of learning.

Responsibilities of Leadership Staff:

- Contact the parents and carers of students with high levels of unexplained or unapproved absences.
- Implement attendance plans for individual students and families when required
- Ensure attendance records are maintained and monitored at school.
- Regularly monitor and review the overall attendance rate for the school as well as individual students and families.
- Communicate regularly with DECD Attendance Counsellors to ensure good support for families and students with attendance/lateness issues
- Ensure all absences and lateness are recorded on the EDSAS data base and are communicated to the Department of Education and Child Development.

Responsibilities of Department of Education and Child Development (DECD)

- For ongoing unexplained absence or lateness leadership staff may contact the DECD Attendance Counsellor and an attendance plan may be put in place to support the student and their family which may include home visits.
- Department of Education and Child Development attendance and /or enrolment auditors may request student attendance data.

Families Requiring Exemption for School

In special circumstances families can seek exemption from school for their child. These circumstances usually relate to interstate or overseas travel that is unable to be avoided during the school term. Families must request permission through a form obtained at the front office that must then be signed by the Principal prior to the travel.

A parent/family brochure on the importance of regular attendance is available from the front office.

Policy ratified by Governing Council: September 2013

Review: September 2016