



STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Updated January 2015

1. RATIONALE

- All children between the ages of 6 and 17 are required by law to attend school.
- Monitoring of student attendance is the school's responsibility. This policy outlines the responsibilities of all parties concerned and sets out the procedures which will be followed when a student is absent from school without a satisfactory explanation, or when a student is consistently late for school.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

PARENTS

- Ensure that children attend school every day unless there is a legitimate reason for not doing so - illness, legitimate family reason etc.
- Notify the school by phone or provide a note on each occasion the child has been absent from school explaining why he/she has been absent.
- Present a Doctor's certificate if the child has been absent for more than three days.
- Inform school in advance if the child is going to be away for a prolonged absence as an Exemption from Attendance form may need to be completed.
- Ensure that children arrive punctually to school.
- Sign the child in at the front office and provide a reason for late arrival.
- Sign the child out at the front office and provide a reason for early departure.

TEACHERS

- Keep accurate records of daily attendance and punctuality on the roll.
- Send daily record to the office for data input by the SSO responsible.
- Amend records when explanation notes are received from parents/caregivers and bring to the attention of SSO inputting Data.
- File notes explaining absences in roll book.
- Keep the SSO responsible for data input informed of any extra-ordinary circumstances regarding a student's absence from school or late arrival.
- Report Unsatisfactory School Attendance for students who are, without satisfactory reason:
 - absent for a prolonged period (more than 3 days)
 - absent on a regular basis
 - frequently absent
 - regularly lateand forward to Principal/ Deputy Principal.

SSO RESPONSIBLE FOR DATA INPUT

- Enter the attendance data daily.
- Report to the Principal/ Deputy Principal unexplained absences, continual lateness or prolonged sickness.

PRINCIPAL/DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

- Monitor attendance of students and contact parents when necessary.
- Initiate letter of Student Lateness and/ or absences (appendix 1) and forward to parents/caregiver.
- File copy of Late or Non Attendance letter in student file.
- Involve ACEO when Aboriginal student's attendance is an issue.
- Contact Attendance Officer for a pre-referral and follow up referral if required.

EXEMPTION FROM ATTENDANCE

- The Principal may approve family holidays/ travel for up to 12 months.
- For exemptions of more than 1 month the Principal will work with parents to ensure students are not educationally disadvantaged during the absence.
- Medical and other exemptions of more than 1 month are to be submitted to the Central Delegate and/ or Director of Special Education.



Government of South Australia

Department for Education and
Child Development



MOUNT BARKER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Date:

Student Lateness and/or Absences

Dear Parent/ Caregiver of

At this school, it has been one of our continuing priorities to address issues of attendance amongst students. Our records for terms **1 of 2015** show that your child has had **00** days absent from school, **00** of those being 'unexplained' (no reason provided by the parent / caregiver).

We understand that this may be due to unavoidable reasons, including illness or family holidays, which cannot be taken at any other time of the year.

However, irrespective of the cause, it is known that students who are regularly late or absent from school experience greater difficulty in terms of their educational and social progress and wellbeing. Your child's current level of absences and/or lateness places him/her at risk of such disadvantages. The negative effects that children often experience as a result of regular absences and/or lateness include:

- Gaps in educational knowledge and understanding (the teaching of basic concepts are missed). This can result in the child having less confidence in doing their school work and the teacher having a reduced ability to determine what their learning needs are.
- A decreased continuity and familiarity with school processes, routines, opportunities and behavioural expectations. This can result in a reduced sense of belonging and feeling less involved and secure within the school environment.
- A decreased ability to play informally with their friends, which helps to develop and improve social, emotional, problem-solving and thinking skills.
- A decreased ability to develop and maintain friendships, which can result in increasing the likelihood of being bullied, teased or left out of activities.
- A decreased understanding of the value of education, participation, commitment and punctuality to their overall wellbeing and future opportunities.
- A decrease in their self-esteem and self-confidence.
- An increased likelihood of leaving school before completing their education, which has a direct link between employment opportunities and wellbeing.

We ask that you consider the reasons for your child's absences and work to improve his/her attendance in the coming weeks. If there are difficulties in making improvement that we are not aware of, please contact us to make a time to discuss them. We may be able to access or help you access services that can provide the necessary support.

Yours sincerely,

Principal / Deputy Principal