



*Inspiring a love of learning
in a caring community*



Government of South Australia

Department for Education and
Child Development

Attendance Policy

Compulsory Attendance and Enrolment

Government preschools and schools in South Australia are committed to educational excellence. The Education Act (1972), provides for compulsory attendance of any child required to be enrolled at the school for which she or he has been enrolled on every day, and for such parts of every day, as instruction is provided at the school for the child between the ages of 6 and 17 years.

Beliefs about the importance of attending school

From the first day, every day counts. The benefits of regular attendance for students include:

- Regular attendance leads to an increased likelihood of being successful at school.
- Getting maximum benefit from school will optimise your life choices.
- Attending school regularly will develop skills and attitudes that will help you to be successful later in life, these include punctuality, being organised and self discipline.

Six days' absence per term from Junior Primary to the end of Year 7 equals one year of missed schooling.

Responsibilities

Parents/caregivers responsibilities:

Parents/caregivers must enrol their child in an education program from 6 years (the age of compulsion).

When they enrol their child in a school they accept the responsibility to:

- Enable their child to attend school punctually and regularly every day. Children must arrive at school between 8.25am and 8.50am (students who are travelling by bus may arrive earlier).
- Ensure their child attend school on every day unless there is a valid reason for being absent.
- Provide the school with either a written explanation or via phone call for the student's non-attendance.
- Record late arrival/early departure in the register located in the front office.
- Apply for an exemption whenever their child is removed from the school for more than 1 week.
- Work with the school on intervention strategies to improve attendance.

School Staff responsibilities:

- Monitor each child's attendance.
- Record attendances/absences according to DECD requirements.
- Ensure correct codes are used when recording attendances/absences in LearnLink.
- Attendance/absence data is exported from LearnLink and imported to EDSAS weekly.
- At the end of each term teachers sign 'roll book' print out to validate students enrolled, left, transferred and student absences. Teacher returns the signed copy to the front office for filing and auditing purposes as a legal requirement.
- Contact home on the third day of absence if no explanation has been provided.
- Co-ordinate class work for students who are unable to attend school for acceptable reasons and for whom work is requested.
- Provide a relevant and dynamic learning program that seeks to engage all students and offers opportunity for success, thus encouraging regular attendance.

Principal's responsibilities:

- The Principal has a responsibility to ensure that attendance records are maintained and monitored at school.
- Consult with the class teacher regarding any absentee/lateness concerns, including documenting this process.
- Principals have delegated authority from the Minister to approve applications for temporary exemption from school attendance for periods of up to one calendar month. All applications for temporary exemptions exceeding one calendar month, and for permanent exemptions, require an ED 175 form to be completed.
- The Principal has a further responsibility to ensure that unexplained absences are investigated, and that high levels of absenteeism are adequately explained.
- The Principal will contact parents of students with high levels of unexplained or unapproved absences, with the view to developing and implementing strategies to minimise absences.
- Ongoing unexplained absences, or lack of cooperation regarding student attendance will result in a formal attendance conference being organised.
- Student attendance data is reported to DECD and the wider community each year as part of the annual report.

Late Arrival

We acknowledge that things may arise that can cause children to be late and accept these occasions however, arriving late on a regular basis is unsatisfactory. Children not only miss class time but may feel embarrassed or awkward when entering the room. Late students may also have an unsettling effect on the rest of the class. All students are expected to arrive at school between 8.25am and 8.50am (unless they travel by bus).

Late arrival at school through the primary years is often related to non-attendance during secondary school. Half an hour late each day equals five days' absence per term.

Enrolment

Children are not required to attend school until they are six years old. All children who have a fifth birthday prior to the 1st May are eligible to commence school at the beginning of Term 1 that year. At the time of enrolment parents/guardians are required to provide proof of their child's birth age. The following documents will be accepted by schools in this regard:

- Passport
- Birth certificate, or
- Official Centrelink documentation stating the child's name and birth date.

All schools within the Blue Lake Partnership will use consistent language with families - **School of Right, School of Choice**. In doing so families will know exactly what their rights are when selecting a school. All schools must accommodate School of Right families. School of Choice families will go on a waiting list if the school is at capacity.

Consultation between the pre-school teacher, junior primary teacher, parents and principal will be made regarding the child's enrolment to school.

Prior to attendance, each child will be invited to classroom sessions in support of the smooth transition into school. Blue Lake Partnership Transition Days (for all DECD schools and preschools) are held in Term 4, Week 8, Wednesday and Thursday.

Mil LeI Primary School Attendance Improvement Plan.

Priority	Expectation and Standards	Strategies	Evaluation Measures
School consistently views attendance as a priority.	All stakeholders are aware of the Attendance Policy.	All staff use the correct codes for entering absences. Attendance data is reviewed each term at a staff meeting.	Staff are confident and are aware of when to apply appropriate codes. Staff are able to highlight instances of non-attendance (including reasons for absence) and students at risk.
Reduce the number of unexplained absences to achieve DECD attendance target of 93%.	All absences are accompanied by an appropriate explanation; written or phone call.	Families are aware of their responsibilities regarding providing an explanation of student absence.	A decrease in the amount of unauthorized absences.

REVIEW DATE: 2020 (or when DECD update their Attendance Policy)