



## Student Attendance Policy

All school students are expected to attend school every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. Full and regular attendance is a critical factor in ensuring positive educational outcomes for students.

Schools, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. The Education Reform Act 1990 outlines the legal requirements for compulsory schooling.

This policy reflects the DEC School Attendance Policy (2005) and the School Attendance Procedures (2005) as they apply to Collector Public School.

### Responsibilities

#### **Parents are responsible for:**

- ensuring that their children attend school in uniform on time regularly.
- explaining the absences of their children promptly to the school by ringing in the morning and writing a note.
- using effective strategies to resolve attendance issues involving their children.
- Signing their children in if they are late. Children have arrived after 9:00am.
- Picking up their children on time at 3:00pm.
- Informing the teacher of picking up their children early due to an appointment. Then signing their children out of school correctly.

#### **School staff are responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students by:**

- providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students sense of belonging to the school community.
- maintaining accurate records of student attendance using approved procedures such as Class Roll and ERN.
- seeking verbal or written reasons promptly from parents regarding unexplained full or part day absences.
- retaining records of written, electronic and verbal explanations from parents. Verbal explanations must be noted and written and printed electronic explanations are kept in a book.
- implementing programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise.
- providing clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance.

#### **Class teachers will:**

- mark the class roll promptly at the commencement of the school day.
- record all absences and partial absences in the roll using appropriate 'Attendance Register Codes' (appendix A) procedures .
- contact parents promptly and within two days of an unexplained absence occurring. Contact may be made either by providing the parent with a 'Compulsory School Attendance Letter' (appendix B) or by telephone.
- report chronic non-attendance, fractional truancy and persistent lateness promptly to the Principal.
- alert the Principal if a student's attendance is of concern.

**The Principal will:**

- monitor class rolls to ensure that they are maintained appropriately by class teachers.
- ensure that parents and students are regularly informed of attendance requirements through the Newsletter
- investigate cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences from school and implement appropriate intervention strategies.
- students are enrolled in line with the requirements set out in The Enrolment of Students in Government Schools: A Summary and Consolidation of Policy (1997).
- attendance records are maintained in an approved format and are an accurate record of the attendance of students.
- all attendance records including details of transfers and exemptions are accessible as required.
- the School Education Director is informed of any attendance problems and issues including students for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue.
- attendance records are maintained in an approved format and are an accurate record of the attendance of students.
- school staff are provided with information on attendance requirements and their obligation to monitor and promote regular attendance during Staff Meetings.

**The Principal may grant:**

- sick leave to students whose absences are satisfactorily explained as being due to illness.
- leave to students of compulsory school age totaling not more than 15 days per school year in addition to sick leave.
- an exemption from school attendance for periods totaling up to 50 days in a 12 month period for any one student due to family commitments.
- part-day exemptions from school for periods totaling up to 50 days in a twelve month period (Guidelines for Exemption from School 2009 Statements 1.3.2 and 1.3.3).
- in exceptional circumstances, the Principal may grant additional leave for brief periods of time. Additional leave for students not of compulsory school age may be granted at the discretion of the Principal.
- Home School Liaison Officers and other regional attendance personnel will conduct regular audits of School Attendance and provide support to the school in the area of attendance.

**School Attendance Records Requirements**

The school attendance records will include:

- a Register of Admission to be retained permanently.
- notes and records of verbal explanations for absences from parents, retained for two years from the date of receipt.
- an Attendance Register to be retained for three years.
- the student's record card listing the number of absences each year to be retained for seven years after the student has left.
- Where a student has an accident necessitating an accident report, all attendance records should be retained until the year the student reaches the age of 25 years.

**Attendance Registers (rolls)**

- Attendance registers must be maintained on all days that the school is open for instruction, including school sports days, swimming carnivals, excursions and similar events.
- The exception method (marking absences only) will be used. Only the codes listed in the support document Student Attendance in Government Schools- Attendance Register Codes will be used.
- School attendance will be recorded at the beginning of each school day.
- Students involved in off-site activities organised by the school or Department of Education and Communities are marked as being on official school business (B). For example where the principal approves the student leaving the school site to undertake: school sport (regional and state carnivals), school excursions etc.
- Rolls must not be removed from the school premises unless removal is warranted by exceptional circumstances such as fire or flood.
- At the end of each school year the Principal will ensure that the attendance register and attached special circumstance registers are preserved as a complete record of students absences for that year.

**Justified reasons for being absent from school:**

Parents are responsible for giving a verbal and written reason for their children being absent from school. Justified reasons for absences may include the student:

- having an unavoidable medical or dental appointment (preferably, these should be made after school or during holidays).
- being required to attend a recognised religious holiday.
- being required to attend an exceptional or urgent family circumstance (such as attending a funeral).
- being sick, or having an infectious disease. The school is to be notified of infectious diseases such as whooping cough or chicken pox. If students are away for more than two days a medical certificate is required.

**Absences for reasons such as some of the following may not be justified:**

- Shopping
- Sleeping in
- Working around the house
- Minding younger siblings and other children
- Minor family events such as birthdays
- Hair cut

It is important to realise that parents (including carers) may be prosecuted if children have recurring unjustified absences from school.