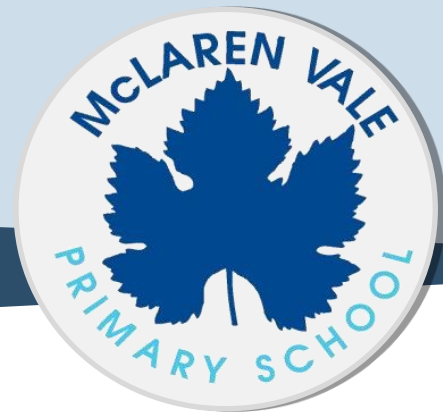


STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY



PURPOSE:

Research shows that attendance at school all day and every day positively affects learning, wellbeing, employment and life outcomes for children and young people. Learning is cumulative and it is disrupted if students often miss school.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND THE LAW:

Attendance at school is compulsory. The Education and Children's Services Act 2019 states that all children must attend school from 6 until they turn 17. This could be in a school or an approved learning program. Parents or legal guardians (carers) can be prosecuted if they do not make sure their child goes to school. This can mean being fined or getting a criminal conviction.

THE DEPARTMENT'S ATTENDANCE POLICY:

The South Australian Department for Education's [Attendance Policy](https://www.education.sa.gov.au/doc/attendance-policy) <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/doc/attendance-policy> guides the responsibilities of the whole school community to make sure that children and young people attend school. This includes school staff, parents, carers and students. Schools work with their community to develop positive attendance habits. This starts from the earliest years. They do this when they provide a safe, inclusive and culturally respectful environment. They use effective and consistent local practices to monitor and manage absences.

STUDENTS AT RISK FROM MISSING SCHOOL:

Students can be away from school for many reasons. Schools use categories to identify children and young people at risk. We make sure that appropriate follow up and support is provided.

- **Habitual non-attendance:** a student has 5 to 9 days absent in a term for any reason
- **Chronic non-attendance:** a student has 10 or more days absent in a term for any reason.

HOW WE IMPLEMENT THE DEPARTMENT'S ATTENDANCE POLICY:

At McLaren Vale Primary School our attendance practices align with the department's attendance policy. We support student attendance when we:

- promote the importance of education from the earliest years of life and throughout school
- assess patterns of non-attendance and develop ways to address this
- actively engage and include all children, young people and their families
- provide support to address the barriers to attendance, learning and wellbeing
- monitor attendance to make sure progress is documented and supports are in place
- evaluate the need for further or ongoing support and referral for additional support.

We use data to create our attendance improvement plans. This is in partnership with our community. Our plan includes the actions we will take to make sure all students can attend school.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY



MCLAREN VALE PRIMARY SCHOOL'S ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS:

School starts at 8.50am each day and finishes at 3.05pm. A parent/caregiver must provide an explanation if their child is late or has to leave early. All students must give this to Student Services located in the front office when they sign in or out.

ATTENDANCE RESPONSIBILITIES:

Everyone has a role to make sure students attend school all day, every day.

Students

- Attend school every day the school is open unless they are ill or have an approved exemption
- Arrive at school and to all lessons and activities on time
- Participate positively in all learning activities.

Note: a student's age and circumstances affect the level of responsibility.

Parents and carers

- Make sure their child attends school every day the school is open, unless they are ill or have an approved exemption
- Be responsible for their child's travel to and from school
- Make sure their child arrives at school on time, between 8.30am and 8.50am
- Provide their child's school with up-to-date contact details
- Provide a reason to the school if their child is absent, late or leaving early. If arriving after 8.50am ensure your child reports to Student Services and collects a late slip to give to the classroom teacher. Early departures require the child to be signed out by a parent/carer at Student Services
- Provide a medical certificate or written explanation if their child is ill for 3 or more days in a row
- If planning to take three or more consecutive days absence for family travel, an exemption form must be completed for Principal's approval. Forms available at Student Services
- Monitor their child's attendance and classwork. Help their child to meet deadlines and catch up if needed. Work with the school on intervention strategies to improve attendance.

Teachers and leadership team

- Make sure all parents and carers are aware of attendance expectations, policies and procedures
- Accurately record each absence, late arrival or early departure with the appropriate code
- Contact parents or carers if there is no explanation for an absence, or a pattern of absences
- Document contact with parents and carers about absences, including attempts to contact
- Request a medical certificate from parents or carers if needed
- Consult with the local Student Support Services if needed. For example Social Work, Truancy
- Make notifications about chronic non-attendance (via the Child Abuse Report Line – [CARL](https://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse) <https://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse>) guided by Responding to Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care (RAN <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/working-us/responding-abuse-and-neglect-training/ran-ec-child-protection-training>) training and the [Mandatory Reporting Guide](https://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0008/107099/mandatiry-reporting-guide.pdf) (https://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0008/107099/mandatiry-reporting-guide.pdf)
- Record student attendance/late arrival (after 8.50am) daily via Sentral with all data collated by 9.30am
- Alert families of a child's non-attendance with notification via the text message system.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY



AUTHORISATION OF EXEMPTIONS:

In some circumstances, the principal has authority to approve an exemption from school. This can be for up to 1 month. It can also be for up to 12 months for a family holiday. Before asking for an exemption, families should talk to a site leader. Students must attend school until an exemption is approved.

Our school requires an exemption for absences more than 3 school days in a row. This does not include illness. Parents or carers must apply in writing. The principal will advise them in writing of their decision. A copy is kept in the student record folder. Forms are available from Student Services.

Exemptions of more than 1 month (excluding holidays) must be approved by the department's central office.

Note: Exemptions are counted as student absences from school.

Policy developed and implemented October 2020