



# SADDLEWORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

## **DECD Regulations:**

A child who is at least 6 years old but not yet 16, is of compulsory school age. Every child of compulsory school age, irrespective of distance from school or whether the student has a disability or not, is required to be enrolled at a government or non-government school and must attend school. Every day instruction is provided at the school unless the Minister or delegate has granted an exemption from school attendance.

Once they have been enrolled, children are required to attend school for an entire day that school is open for instruction.

## **Belief Statement:**

Student attendance can significantly impact on student success. Students who have poor attendance patterns are at risk of not achieving their full potential, educationally, emotionally or socially and can therefore be disadvantaged in future choices. Family/caregiver support in maintaining regular and punctual attendance is essential. We believe that in the case of poor attendance/punctuality extra support and intervention may be required to ensure that the student has the best opportunity for success in later life.

## **Requirements:**

- The primary responsibility for meeting the attendance requirements rests with the parent/caregiver.
- The responsibility for enforcing school attendance is with DECD.

## **Student and Family Responsibilities:**

- Students should attend school every day unless the school receives a valid reason for being absent. Lawful excuses for absence include illness, danger of being affected by an infectious or contagious disease, hospitalisation, events of cultural significance (births, deaths, and related ceremonies), other events approved by the school Governing Council and any other unavoidable and sufficient cause.
- Saddleworth Primary School has a number of ways to notify the school of a child's absence and this should be done as early as possible by:
  1. calling the Front Office on 88474227
  2. sending an SMS to 0428 117 880
  3. notifying and filling out the 'forms' section 'absentee form' via the School Stream app
  4. filling out the absentee slips provided at the beginning of the year and bringing it to the school
  5. sending a note via student communication book/diary
  6. emailing the school at [dl.0389.info@schools.sa.edu.au](mailto:dl.0389.info@schools.sa.edu.au).

Your child's absence will be recorded as unexplained if we are not notified and this is recorded onto EDSAS and in student files.

- Absenteeism due to illness will be monitored. If a student is absent for three or more consecutive days, a medical certificate is required.
- When a student is absent for ten or more days in any term, a health care plan may be required from the treating health professional that can guide appropriate school responses in the case of illness.
- Extended absences due to family reasons will be monitored. Valid absences for family reasons include days of cultural significance and any other unavoidable, significant cause.
- A pattern of regular non-attendance due to family reasons may indicate the need for intervention by the school and/or a DECD attendance counsellor.
- Students need to arrive at school between 8:30am and 8:55am. There is no staff on duty before 8:30am, and school's duty of care does not commence until 8.30.
- Students need to arrive to school on time. If they arrive late, parents need to present to the Front Office and sign students in. Parents/caregivers are required to provide an explanation for their child(ren)'s lateness.
- Parents/caregivers picking their child/ren up before 3:30pm need to provide a reason for their child leaving early and sign them out at the Front Office.
- Children need to have left the school grounds by 3:35pm, when the school's duty of care ceases.
- If a pattern of late arrivals/early departures become apparent this may require follow up by the school.
- Families are required to inform the school of extended absences. Any absence over 5 days requires an exemption that is to be approved by the Principal for up to 4 weeks. Exemptions of more than 4 weeks need to be approved by the Educational Director. Parents/caregivers need to give adequate notice of exemptions and requests for student work.

#### **Teacher Responsibilities (including TRT)**

- Provide a relevant and differentiated learning programme that seeks to engage all students and offers opportunity for success, thus encouraging regular attendance.
- To encourage students to attend regularly and speak to parents whenever possible.
- Record student attendance using the appropriate codes each day in the roll folders.
- Roll Folders need to be sent to the Front Office by 9:15am each day.

- Class teachers need to follow up on all unexplained absences and update Roll Folder using information received from the Front Office. Teachers need to check student's Communication Book or Diaries to see if a reason for absence has been given. This needs to be recorded with the appropriate code and in the correct columns.
- If no explanation for student absence is given by the family, teachers need to write a note on the **attendance labels** in the student's communication book or diary and check for a response. This needs to be checked the following day and any reason for absence needs to be recorded in the roll folder.
- Teachers can speak to the Aboriginal Education Worker and Principal to seek guidance when making contact with Aboriginal families in order to gather any known pertinent family information that may relate to the student's absence before making contact with the family.
- Teachers can request that Front Office Administration Staff call parent/caregivers regarding absences if support is required for translation or cultural reasons.
- If a student is absent for three consecutive days without explanation, and attempts made by the teacher to make contact with the family have been unsuccessful, teachers need to notify the Principal or a staff member in a leadership role.
- Teachers are to keep all correspondence from families regarding absences and document any contact/attempted contact with families/caregivers in the roll folder.
- Complete the Roll Verification each fortnight. Please note any changes and initial these changes.
- Make Mandatory Notifications as appropriate.

#### **Front Office Responsibilities**

- Check SMS, Schoolstream notifications by 10am.
- Record all roll book data accurately onto EDSAS.
- Inform class teachers of any parent contact about absence, lateness or early departure.
- Phone families after 3 days of unexplained absence.
- Provide teachers with the attendance summary at the end of each term so this can be signed and verified.

#### **Principal and/or Leadership Responsibilities**

- To regularly promote good attendance/punctuality through the school newsletter.
- Ensure that the EDSAS Roll is accurately completed by confirming teachers are using the correct absence coding and recording correspondence with families.

- Have a pre-referral discussion with the Student Attendance Counsellor if attendance issues are not resolved after action by the school.
- Co-ordinate and document all interventions, strategies, home visits, phone calls, SMS via the roll book folders. Should a student transfer to a different school the documentation is to be placed in the student's file for transfer.
- Liaise with appropriate support service (internal and external) to determine the best intervention option for each family.
- Facilitate regular meetings regarding students with attendance concerns involving the class teacher and other support staff as required.
- Principals have delegated authority from the Minister to approve application for temporary exemption from school attendance for periods of up to one calendar month. Parents/caregivers should apply in writing and principals should also advise approvals and non-approvals on school letterhead. Copies of such advices are to be retained in school files, together with applications, and are to be made available to appropriate department officers as required.
- All applications for temporary exemptions and permanent exemptions are to be sent out on form ED175 and approved by the Principal and placed in student files.

**Review:**

- This policy began in June 2016
- Reviewed: 14/5/18
- To be reviewed: May 2021

**Supporting Documents:**

- Attendance label which goes in student's communication book or diary.
- Attendance Notification Letter to families.
- Attendance Term Letter to all families for absences over 5 days per term.
- Saddleworth Primary School Flow Chart.