



SALISBURY HEIGHTS PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY



Related policies, procedures, guidelines, standards, frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Education Act 1972- Department for Education Attendance Policy
Approved by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Governing Council
Approval date:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 17/5/23
Review date:	



Salisbury Heights Attendance policy

Excellence and Care

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.

School attendance and the law

Attendance at school is compulsory. The Education Act 1972 states that all children must attend school from the age of 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](#) guides the responsibilities of the whole school community to make sure 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. This might be about their learning or wellbeing. We make sure appropriate follow up and support is provided.

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

How we implement the department's attendance policy

At Salisbury Heights 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.



Salisbury Heights attendance expectations

School starts at 8.50 am each day and finishes at 3.00 pm.

A parent or carer must provide an explanation if their child arrives after 9.00am or has to leave early via Seesaw, email, phone call or in person. All students or parents must attend the front office when they sign in or out between 9.00am and 3.00pm.

Attendance responsibilities

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

Students will:

- attend school every day the school is open unless they are ill or have an approved exemption
- arrive at school and attend all lessons and activities on time
- participate positively in all learning activities
- report to the front office if they:
 - arrive after 9.00am or need to leave early
 - leave school due to illness (a parent will be contacted to collect their child).

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

Parents and carers will:

- ensure their child attends school every day the school is open, unless he/she is ill or have an approved exemption
- be responsible for their child's travel to and from school
- provide their child's school with up-to-date contact details for parents and emergency contacts
- ensure their child arrives at school on time, no earlier than 8.35am and no later than 8.50 am
- ensure their child is collected from school at 3.00pm or is enrolled in out of school hours care (OSHC)
- communicate with the class teacher in advance if there are any changes to normal pick up arrangements
- let the class teacher know in advance if their child is going to be away for a planned absence
- provide a reason to the school, the same day if possible, if their child is absent, late or leaving early. Parents are expected to communicate via the best classroom communication method about absences— phone call, Seesaw, in person
- provide a medical certificate if their child is ill for 3 or more consecutive days
- fill in an exemption form with the front office if they are going away for an extended period of time and make appointments outside of school hours if possible. For example dentists or National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) providers
- monitor their child's attendance and classwork. Help their child to meet deadlines and catch up missed learning if needed

Teachers will:

- ensure all parents and carers are aware of attendance expectations, policies and procedures
- accurately record each absence with the appropriate code on Sentral
- make contact by the best classroom communication method with the parent the day of/ after a student has been away - phone call, Seesaw, in person. If contact is made, record this on Seesaw using the appropriate code. If an effort is made but no actual contact is made, record that in the comment section on Sentral
- monitor students' absences and raise any concerns with leaders



- request a medical certificate from parents if needed (3 or more days absence)
- teacher to let ACEO know if student absence concern is an ATSI student
- teacher to check sibling's attendance via Sentral if needed
- communicate with Leaders for ongoing attendance concerns who will then consult with the department truancy team
- make notifications about chronic non-attendance (via the [Child Abuse Report Line – CARL](#)) guided by Responding to Abuse and Neglect — Education and Care ([RAN-EC](#)) training and the [Mandatory Reporting Guide](#)
- teacher to notify Leaders/ Aboriginal Community Education Officers (ACEO) if a student hasn't been sighted for 2 weeks, a home visit will be conducted by Leaders/ Aboriginal Community Education Officers (ACEO)

Leaders will:

- monitor attendance through Sentral and forward on to class teachers and ACEO when needed
- set up meetings with families to discuss ongoing attendance concerns
- conduct home visits to families if a student has not been sighted for 2 weeks
- document on Sentral all attempts made to contact families
- make mandatory notifications about chronic non-attendance (via the [Child Abuse Report Line – CARL](#)) guided by Responding to Abuse and Neglect — Education and Care ([RAN-EC](#)) training and the [Mandatory Reporting Guide](#)
- send attendance letter to families when a student is absent for 10 or more days in a 10 week period
- consult with/refer to the department's truancy team when needed
- phone SAPOL and request a welfare check if there are further concerns for the student's safety and wellbeing

Authority for exemption

In some circumstances the principal has the 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 and where possible overseas or interstate holidays should be scheduled during school holidays. Students must attend school until an exemption is approved.

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. Exemptions are still counted as student absences from school.



Monitoring Attendance Process

