



Northfield Primary School Attendance Policy

Rationale:

Under the Education Act of South Australia, parents and guardians are legally responsible for ensuring the regular school attendance of their children between the ages of 6 and 17 years. If a child enrolls at age 5 years, they are also required to attend.

If students miss the basic skills in the early years of school, they often experience difficulties later. Loss of self-esteem and self-confidence may also result.

Parent/Caregiver 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, temporary or permanent infirmity, events of cultural significance (eg. births, deaths, and related ceremonies), other events approved by the school governing council and any other unavoidable and sufficient cause.
- Absences must be explained by notes, phone calls or in person.
- Absenteeism due to illness will be monitored.
 - If a student is absent for three or more consecutive days, a medical certificate is required for explanation.
 - Where a student is absent for ten or more days in any term, a 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 for 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 an attendance counsellor.
- Children need to arrive at school by 8:55am.
- Wherever possible, dental and medical appointments should be made out of school hours.
- If a student needs to leave school before 3:10pm parents/caregivers must inform front office staff and sign the student out before collecting their child from the classroom. Parents/caregivers need to take an 'Early Dismissal Note' from the front office to give to the class teacher.
- If a child arrives at school after 9am parents/caregivers must provide a reason for their child's lateness. Students must sign in at the front office and collect a 'Late Note' to give to their class teacher.
- If a pattern of late arrivals/early departure becomes apparent this may require follow up by the school.

Teachers Responsibilities (including TRT):

- Follow the guidelines as stated in the 'School Attendance Plan'.
- Monitor each child's attendance.
- Teachers are responsible for noting student absence, lateness and early dismissal in the Roll Folder and for coding according to criteria set out on the front of the Roll Folder.
- Class teachers need to follow up all unexplained absences within three days of the absence.
- If a student is absent **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 Leadership - Attendance staff member.
- If any student has been absent for **five or more days in any one term** teachers are to inform the Leadership - Attendance staff member.
- Teachers are to keep all correspondence regarding absences from families and document any contact/attempted contact with families/caregivers in the Roll Folder.
- Teachers are to make themselves aware of the codes and their appropriate uses. (Fact sheet located in roll book). If unsure they are to approach front office staff or leadership for clarification.
- Class Teachers are to sign roll book each week.
- Roll books are a legal document and class teachers are legally responsible for ensuring their accuracy.

Front Office Responsibilities:

- Enter absence data on to EDSAS daily including the explanation provided for the absence in EDSAS footnotes (ie DF – funeral).
- Ensure that the EDSAS Roll is accurately completed by confirming teachers are using the correct absence coding and recording correspondence with families.
- Ensure that code explanation sheet is in the roll book and be available to support class teachers with code explanations if required.
- Inform Leadership of any ongoing concerns with roll accuracy and code usage.

Leadership Responsibilities:

- Leadership will support staff to follow up non-attendance as outlined in the 'School Attendance Plan'.
- Coordinate and document all interventions, strategies, home visits and phone calls. 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 services (internal and external) to determine the best intervention option for each family.
- The Leadership Team will have a pre-referral discussion with the Student Attendance Counsellor if attendance issues are not resolved after action by the school.
- Referral to the AIO will occur if attendance issues have not improved and/or attempts by the school to engage with the family have not been successful. Referral to the AIO involves pre-referral discussion with SAC/AIO. If the discussion results in a referral, the school is required to include a request for the AIO in the 'Referral Concern' section of the referral form.

Review:

This policy is to be reviewed