

# Northfield Primary School



## Attendance Policy

### Overview

Northfield Primary School is at the leading edge of educational practice. We work in partnership with families to provide children with learning opportunities that will provide a solid foundation for their future. Research shows that success in learning is directly proportional to regular attendance and participation in education programs. The Northfield Primary School's Attendance Policy places priority on the early identification of non-attendance and irregular attendance, and outlines practices to support regular attendance of students in our school community.

### Scope

#### School attendance and the law

Attendance at school is compulsory. The Education and Children's Services Act 2019 states that parents have a responsibility to ensure their child/ren attend school from the age of 6 until they turn 17. It also requires that a child must attend the school at which they are enrolled on every day the school is open and at all school activities the school requires the child to attend. If a child or young person does not attend, without a 'prescribed reason' for their non-attendance or an approved exemption, their parents may be guilty of an offence.

#### Students at risk from missing school

If your child misses.....	That equals...	Over 13 years of schooling, that is:
1 day per fortnight	20 days / 4 weeks per year	Nearly 1.5 years
1 day per week	40 days / 8 weeks per year	Over 2.5 years
2 days per week	80 days / 16 weeks per year	Over 5 years
10 minutes late each day		2 school terms



**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

## Attendance responsibilities

### *Students will:*

- attend school every day the school is open, unless they are ill or have an approved exemption
- arrive at school by 8.50 am
- participate positively in all learning activities
- report to the front office if they arrive after 9.00am

### *Parents and carers will:*

- ensure their child attends school every day the school is open, unless they are ill or have an approved exemption
- ensure their child is at school by 8.50am and collected from school at 3.10pm (or enrolled in OSHC)
- provide their child's school with up-to-date contact details for parents and emergency contacts
- 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 via phone call, front office visit or Seesaw
- 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

### *Teachers will:*

- accurately record each absence with the appropriate code on Academy
- provide a relevant and dynamic learning program and environment that seeks to engage all children and young people and offers opportunity for success, thus encouraging regular attendance
- use trauma informed practices (TIP) to ensure that children develop a sense of belonging and feel welcomed (see Berry Street Manuals)
- make contact by the best classroom communication method with the parent the day of/ after a student has been away- phone call, Seesaw, Email, making notes or changes on Academy
- communicate with the Wellbeing Leader if there are 3 or more consecutive days unexplained absence or ongoing attendance concerns via Forms
- make mandatory notifications about chronic non-attendance (10 or more days in a term)

### *Leaders will:*

- follow up unexplained absences of more than 3 days
- 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 and there has been no response from family and emergency contact phone calls
- document on EDSAS under 'anecdotal,' all attempts made to contact families
- make mandatory notifications about chronic non-attendance (10 or more days in a term)
- send attendance letter to families when a pattern emerges and the family are not responding to phone calls
- consult with/refer to the department's social work duty line truancy team as needed
- phone SAPOL and request a welfare check if there are further concerns for the student's safety and wellbeing
- (Principal) use delegated authority from the Minister to approve applications for temporary exemption from school attendance for periods up to one calendar month and forward all applications exceeding one calendar month to the District Office

## 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. 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.

### **Reference Information**

This Policy has been implemented by Northfield Primary School in line with the Department for Education's, 'Attendance Policy'.

*Review date: August 2024*



## STUDENT ATTENDANCE NOTIFICATION

Dear

As part of our duty of care, schools become concerned when students are frequently late or absent. Our records indicate that \_\_\_\_\_ has:

- been absent on days to date.
- has \_\_\_\_\_ unexplained absences.
- developed a pattern of absences.
- arrived late on \_\_\_\_\_ occasions this (term/year to date).

We understand that this may also be a concern to you because time away from school amounts to lost opportunities for learning. This severely disadvantages your child. There are strong links between poorer health, wealth and happiness outcomes for students who miss significant days of school.

Furthermore, attendance at school is compulsory. The Education and Children's Services Act 2019 states that parents have a responsibility to ensure their child/ren attend school from the age of 6 until they turn 17. It also requires that a child must attend the school at which they are enrolled on every day the school is open and at all school activities the school requires the child to attend. If a child or young person does not attend, without a 'prescribed reason' for their non-attendance or an approved exemption, their parents may be guilty of an offence.

You may be having some difficulty getting your child to school or there may be some particular reason for the absences with which we may be able to assist.

Could you please:

- Telephone the school if a problem exists requiring our assistance.
- Inform the school by telephone or note, each time that the child is absent from school.
- Make an appointment to meet with.

We thank you for your assistance,

Natasha Ibrahim

Wellbeing and Engagement Leader