

Grange Primary School

ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

CONTEXT / BELIEF STATEMENT

At Grange Primary School we believe that students need to attend school regularly in order to participate fully and gain maximum benefit from schooling. Regular and on time attendance enables children to access a full education, enabling them to reach their full potential. School staff should set an example for students, encouraging and emphasising attendance and punctuality. Successful students are well organised and start the day on time. Research shows that students who are absent for more than 10 days per year are disadvantaged both educationally and socially.

Some of the effects experienced by these students include:

- ⇒ Gaps in knowledge and understanding resulting in missing basic concepts.
- ⇒ Lack of continuity and familiarity resulting in them feeling less secure within the school environment.
- ⇒ Loss of opportunities for play activities which improve social emotional and cognitive development
- ⇒ Missing out on learning important basics such as class rules and behaviour norms.
- ⇒ Belief that punctuality and attendance are unimportant
- ⇒ Inability to maintain friendships resulting in isolation and possibly teasing.
- ⇒ Loss of self esteem and self confidence.
- ⇒ Increased likelihood of leaving school early.

Monitoring of school attendance enables identification of students at risk, as does the early implementation of intervention strategies. All school staff and parents / carers have a responsibility for the detection and assessment of the causes of school non-attendance. All members of the school community are expected to meet the requirements of attendance and work to the best of their ability to keep attendance for all students as close as possible to 100%. Student attendance is everyone's business.

RESPONSIBILITIES

A child who is at least six years old but not yet sixteen is of compulsory school age irrespective of distance from the school or whether the student has a disability or not. Students are required to be enrolled at a registered Government or non-Government school and must attend on every day of instruction is provided at school for the child, unless the Minister has granted an exemption from school attendance. (Children under six years of age and not under compulsion are required to attend school for the entire day school is open for instruction once enrolled.) The primary responsibility for meeting this legal requirement rests with the parent/carer. The responsibility for ensuring school attendance is with the Department for Education (Dfe). Therefore, Dfe has a legal responsibility to record and monitor attendance and take appropriate action to rectify problems of non-attendance.

PARENTS / CARERS RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents/caregivers are responsible for getting their children to and from school:

- ⇒ Children must arrive at school between 8:30am and 8:45am.
- ⇒ Children must attend school on every day when instruction is offered unless the school receives a valid reason for being absent (eg. illness)
- ⇒ Parents/caregivers must provide the school with an appropriate explanation for the student's nonattendance. A diary note, letter, phone call or medical certificate is required for each day of absence. A written explanation is required after 3 days absence. Parents are asked to phone the school by 9:00 if a student is to be absent.
- ⇒ When a student is late for school (after 8.50 a.m.) it is a requirement that the child reports to the front office to sign the late register. Younger students will need to have a parent accompany them.
- ⇒ Parents/caregivers are required to let the school know if an extended absence is likely or if the teacher needs to arrange for learning at home. Holiday absence for up to 12 months is approved by the Principal-application is undertaken on ED 175 form available from the office.

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The banner features a stylized landscape with a blue sky, white clouds, a yellow sun, and a green field. The text is centered in a dark blue font.

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Teachers' Responsibilities

Teachers are issued with an attendance record folder to record student absence:

- ⇒ All class roll books need to be sent to the front office daily at 9.00 am via class monitors.
- ⇒ Students not present in class by 8:50 am are to be recorded as absent, if no prior information has been provided.
- ⇒ Any student arriving after 8.50 am is to report to the front office and fill in the late register
- ⇒ Teachers need to check with late students that they have reported to the front office
- ⇒ Office staff will check all roll books daily for any absences not accounted for. Absences will be cross referenced with the late register and with any phone calls from families who have notified the school about their child's absence. Office staff will then phone families of students unaccounted for, and record that contact has been made. Roll books will be placed in teacher pigeonholes for collection at recess time
- ⇒ As the attendance record folder is a legal document, absence records may be called upon in the case of court action.
- ⇒ Teachers should notify leadership of concerns re student attendance (See Appendix A) Habitual non-attendance: Where a student has 5 or more absences per term (average of 1 day per fortnight).

Principal's / Leadership's Responsibilities

- ⇒ Ensure that the EDSAS register is accurately completed
- ⇒ The Leadership team will complete the letter regarding the absence of a student and send home to the student's family (Appendix B)
- ⇒ The leadership team will document interventions, strategies, home visits, phone calls and include in the student's file [prepare appendix C]
- ⇒ The leadership team will refer to a DECD Attendance Counsellor using an ED171 form or relevant support service (eg Indigenous support services) if attendance issues are not resolved
- ⇒ The principal has the delegated authority from the Minister to approve applications for temporary exemption from school attendance for periods of up to 12 months. Parents/caregivers should apply in writing and the principal 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 DECD officers as required.