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# Attendance Policy

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## Compulsory enrolment and attendance at school

The South Australian Government has identified improved attendance as a priority for the Department of Education and Child Development (DECD) schools. A child who is between 6 and 17 years must be enrolled and attend school regularly unless the Minister has granted an exemption from school. Under the Education Act of South Australia, parents and / or caregivers are held responsible for the regular attendance of all children in their care.

**The Department therefore has a legal responsibility to record and monitor attendance and take appropriate action to rectify problems of non-attendance.**

## Why regular attendance is Important

A message to students

- The more you attend, the more you will learn and the greater likelihood of you being successful.
- Getting the maximum benefit from school will improve your options for your future life.
- Attending school regularly will develop skills and attitudes such as: self-discipline; punctuality; and improved time-management.
- You will learn and practice the necessary social skills to live and work successfully with others.
- You will be safer at school.
- People will be more positive about you if you have a good attendance record.
- Attending school provides opportunities for socialising with your friends and will help you to maintain relationships over a length of time

## Does my child have to attend school every day? Yes, unless..

- You have provided the school with an acceptable reason preventing your child's attendance, such as:
- Your child is too sick to attend;
- Your child has an infectious disease such as chicken pox, mumps, measles, head lice or impetigo (cold sore virus);
- Your child is incapacitated by injury preventing movement around the school;
- Your child is accompanying you on a family holiday which cannot be arranged in school vacation time. An exemption from school form will need to be completed (please contact the front office). Approval from the Principal can be given for a period of up to four weeks.

## Did you know?

- If you are absent 5 days every term this means that you would have missed half a year of school by the time you have finished Year 12.
- Research shows that one day missed takes four days of effort to catch up.

## Attendance Policy, continued

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Under the law, Centrelink has access to school attendance records and can reclaim monies paid if a student is receiving an allowance and has more than five unexplained absences per term.

### Recording student attendance

Attendance is recorded in SEQTA every lesson and is imported into EDSAS for DECD/Centrelink purposes. Specific codes are used to identify the different reasons why students may be absent.

### What do I do if my child is absent, late or needs to leave school early?

- Students are expected to be at school by 8.45am and to punctually attend all lessons.
- If late, students need to sign in at the Student Services
- Whenever your child is absent from school and we do not know why, the school will contact you either by SMS text message or letter
- A doctor's certificate will be required for absences of 3 or more consecutive days when your child is ill
- If you know your child is going to be absent please contact the school by 9.30am daily – phone 86823677
- All students who miss scheduled lessons must sign in or out otherwise they will have unexplained absences recorded

### SMS messaging and attendance

- Parents/Caregivers will be informed by mobile phone (SMS) each time their child is away from school
- To improve our attendance procedures, we will be informing parents / caregivers about any unexplained absences for their child
- The school expects parents / caregivers to contact the school by 9.30am if they know their child to be absent
- The message will read as follows: PLHS 8.1 records show that JOHN SMITH is absent today, 99/99/99.
- The message will arrive on the phone displaying the number 0429 650 487. Parents should store this number in their mobile phone under Port Lincoln High School so that when the message arrives, the parent is aware the message is from the school
- Parents can then reply, preferably using SMS, phoning the school office – 86823677 or email [dl.0791\\_info@schools.sa.edu.au](mailto:dl.0791_info@schools.sa.edu.au)
- Where a pattern of non-attendance is identified then appropriate action will be taken which may include parent/caregiver contact, consequences for the student and/or referral to the DECD attendance officer.