



Attendance & Absence Policy

Compulsory enrolment and attendance at school

The South Australian Government has identified improved attendance as a priority for the Department for Education DfE. 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.

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

Absences

Acceptable reasons for student absences:

- Alternate program of study or work (*arranged with/by the school*)
- Illness (*including travel for surgery*)
- Family reasons (*funerals, unavoidable family travel*)

Please inform the school of any absences via one of the following methods:

- SEQTA Engage: send a *Direqt* message
- Phone: (08) 8683 6090
- Email: dl.0791_info@schools.sa.edu.au

NOTE: For absences of three days or more, an **Exemption Form** is required; these are available from the Front Office.

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.
- Attending school provides opportunities for socialising with your friends and will help you to maintain relationships over a length of time.

Attendance & Absences

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 less than 12 months.

Did you know?

- If a child is absent 5 days every term this means that child would have missed half a year of school by the time he/she finishes Year 12.
- Research shows that one day missed takes four days of effort to catch up.

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 (PLHS platform) every lesson and is imported into EDSAS (DfE platform) for 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?

1. Students are expected to be at school by 8.40am and to punctually attend all lessons.
2. If they arrive before 8.50am go directly to Dharna Group. If students arrive after 8.50am they need to sign in at the Student Services and go to lesson.
3. If you know your child is going to be absent please contact the school by 9.30am daily – phone 8683 6000.
4. A doctor's certificate will be required for absences of 3 or more consecutive days when your child is ill.
5. If student leaving early for appointment, contact the school by phone 8683 6000.
6. All students who miss scheduled lessons must sign in or out otherwise they will have unexplained absences recorded. This includes leaving the school grounds at lunchtime.

Monitoring Attendance

- Parents/Caregivers will be able to access attendance through SEQTA Engage – phone 8683 6000 to receive your logon and password.
- To improve our attendance procedures, we will be informing parents/caregivers about any unexplained absences for their child via a phone message.

Attendance & Absences

- 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 DfE attendance officer.
- On request – SEQTA correspondence to parents.

Consequences for non-attendance

- Follow up by Dharna group teacher or AP's could lead to further consequences as outlined in the Student Behaviour Management (SBM) policy.
- Agency referral may be made to DfE.