

Sandy Creek Primary School



SANDY CREEK
Primary School

RESPONSIBILITY RESPECT EXCELLENCE

Attendance Policy

Current as of: June 2017
To be Reviewed: June 2020

Core Beliefs

At Sandy Creek Primary School provide children from Reception to Year 7 with their primary education. We believe that regular attendance at school from Reception on provides children with the best start and that this prepares them for secondary education and for lifelong learning and responsible participation in the wider community throughout their lives.

- We believe that students need to attend school regularly in order to participate fully, gain maximum benefit from their schooling and reach their potential.
- We monitor school attendance in order to identify students at risk.
- We believe that the early detection and assessment of the causes of school non-attendance and the provision of organisational structures to support improved attendance are vital.

A child who is at least six years old but not yet sixteen is of compulsory school age, irrespective of distance from the school. A child of compulsory school age is required to be enrolled at a registered government or non-government school and must attend the school on every day instruction is provided at the 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. Students aged 16 must be in an approved learning program until they turn 17.

The primary responsibility for meeting this legal requirement rests with the parent/guardian. The responsibility for enforcing school attendance is with the Department of Education and Child Development (DECD). The department therefore has a legal responsibility to record and monitor attendance and take appropriate action to rectify problems of non-attendance.

All members of the school community are expected to meet the requirements of attendance and work to the best of their ability and skill as consistently as possible. Student attendance is everyone's business.

Parent Responsibilities

- Parents / caregivers are responsible for enabling their child to attend punctually (between 8.40 and 8.55 am) and regularly on every day the education program is offered and to comply with the education program being offered
- When a student is late for school they must report to the front office and register their arrival. The Parent/ caregiver will provide an explanation for a student's late arrival.
- Parents wishing to collect students for an early departure must also report to the front office with an explanation and sign their children out. Should they return the children to school after some time out, e.g. a dentist's visit; the students need to be signed back in to the school at the front office.
- Children must attend school on every day when instruction is offered unless the school receives a valid reason for being absent.
- Parents/caregivers must provide the school with an appropriate explanation for the student's non-attendance. This can be done via phone call, verbally to the teacher, by student diary note or by letter, preferably before 9am on the day of absence.
- Parents/caregivers must let the school know if an extended absence is likely from school and for what reason.
- Parents/caregivers must apply to the Principal for exemption from school if an absence of between 4 days and 1 month that is not due to illness will occur and to the Minister if required for more than a month.

<p style="text-align: center;">Teacher Responsibilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a relevant and dynamic learning program that seeks to engage all children and students and offers opportunity for success, thus encouraging regular attendance. • Teachers will monitor each child’s attendance. • Teachers will record absences and late arrivals and the reasons for these in the class roll book in pen. • Teachers will mark students who are absent without explanation as a “U” until they receive an appropriate explanation from the parent/ caregiver. • When a written explanation arrives for an absence the teacher will record this in the roll book, making note of the reason. • The Roll Book will be collected by 9.30am each morning • Front Office staff will ring the family of identified students who are absent without notification • Teachers will participate in writing medical plans for students who are absent for extended or regular periods due to a diagnosed illness or disability. • Teachers will write attendance plans with the families of students who have regular absences or lateness for unexplained or unacceptable reasons – habitual non-attendance (5 or more absences / term) or chronic non-attendance (10 or more absences / term). • Attendance data for each child will be reported to families each semester in their Report Cards. • Teachers will check roll book entries printed from EDSAS at the end of each term to verify that they are correct.
<p style="text-align: center;">Leadership Responsibilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor overall attendance within the school. • Ensure that the EDSAS roll is accurately completed. • Contact parents where explanations for absences are not forthcoming. • Provide information in the newsletter and Parent Handbook relating to attendance. • Ensure that new parents receive a copy of the school handbook. • Review student attendance at the end of each term and review the reasons for absence of students who record family or social explanations frequently and discuss this with the parents if those reasons seem unacceptable. • Review student attendance each term and arrange to meet with parents of any students who have been absent for more than 5 days in two consecutive terms to discuss ways to improve attendance. • To refer any student who is absent for 5 or more days on three consecutive terms, without adequate evidence of good reason, to the Attendance Counsellor • To refer any student who is absent for more than 10 unexplained days to the Attendance Counsellor, immediately they reach that mark. • Principals have a delegated authority from the Minister to approve applications for temporary exemption from school attendance for periods of up to one calendar month. Parents/caregivers should apply in writing and principals 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 department officers as required. • Keep documentation of all attendance and actions taken when issues around attendance arise.
<p style="text-align: center;">Steps for Non-Attendance and Unexplained Absences</p>	<pre> graph TD A[Student absent for 3 days without explanation] --> B[Teacher/SSO contacts parent/caregiver] B --> C[Teacher notifies Principal] C --> D[Principal continues to monitor student attendance] D --> E[Further unexplained absences, Principal sends home a letter and/or meets with family] E --> F[Further unexplained absences, Principal notifies Attendance Counsellor] F --> D </pre>