

## Redwood Park School Attendance Policy

### RATIONALE

The Education Act 1972 requires that children of compulsory school age be enrolled at school. The Compulsory Education Legislation requires children of up to the age of 17 years participate in a fulltime approved learning program. A condition of enrolment is that a student is required to fully participate in the education program arranged and approved by the enrolling school. Such participation is to include engagement and attendance as required by the program.

If students miss the basic skills taught in the early years of schooling they often experience learning difficulties later. Research indicates:

- Irregular attendance in the early years can lead to poor patterns of attendance in primary years
- Poor attendance makes it difficult for students to form positive relationships with their peers
- There is a direct correlation between attendance and achievement

We are committed to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for all students which addresses their education needs. We expect students to be at school all day, every school day unless they are too unwell to attend.

This means that students will be in class ready to start learning at 8.55am and remain until 3.05pm.

Our attendance policy aims to ensure that students are reaching their full potential by attending school all day, every day. When this is not possible, our attendance policy sets out procedures to minimise the impact of non-attendance. It is important that students, staff and parents / carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school.

### EVERY DAY COUNTS

We are committed to assisting our community to understand the impact poor attendance has on learning and will therefore work to develop an understanding about the impact with information like the following:

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

### Redwood Park School

- is committed to promoting the message that every day counts
- believes all children should be enrolled at school and attend all day, every school day unless they are too unwell to attend
- monitors, communicates and implements strategies to improve regular school attendance
- believes truanting can place a student in unsafe situations and impact on their future employability and life choices
- believes that attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community

### AIMS

Redwood Park School has developed the Attendance and Lateness Policy with the aim to:

- Improve student access and participation
- Improve student achievement and success
- Develop lifelong positive routines and practices
- Intervene early if the need arises
- Provide support for students, parents/caregivers and teachers
- Maximise learning opportunities by ensuring student absenteeism is kept to a minimum





- Ensure that the maintenance and approach towards regular school attendance is the responsibility of all in the school community including and not limited to staff, parents/carers and students
- Put in place agreed processes for managing students' absences within the school

## RESPONSIBILITIES

### Principals

Principals and preschool directors are responsible for ensuring that the attendance of all children and students is maximised and will:

- Develop and implement the site's Attendance Improvement Plan
- Ensure the maintenance of attendance records
- Ensure intervention is documented
- Monitor and analyse attendance data and report to the school community through the site's annual report
- Ensure procedures, including parent/caregiver notification and home visits, are in place to follow up non-attendance
- Ensure intervention in preschools and schools occurs after 10 days of accumulated absence or sooner if the child or student has a poor attendance record
- Make referral to, and seek support from, agencies and support services when a learner's pattern of attendance becomes irregular
- Ensure that the analysis of data is used effectively to inform action at the site with the involvement of the preschool's or school's community
- Remain engaged with the family throughout the referral and case management process undertaken by DfE Support Services
- Ensure that notifications about suspicions of neglect and/abuse are made in addition to a referral to Regional Support Services.

### Staff

Staff in preschool and school sites are responsible for supporting the agreed attendance improvement processes for the site and will:

- Provide a relevant and dynamic learning program that seeks to engage all children and students and offers opportunity for success, thus encouraging regular attendance
- Record attendances/absences according to DfE requirements
- Contribute to the analysis of attendance trends and the development and implementation of preschool and school Attendance Improvement Plans
- Implement preschool and school procedures, including parent/caregiver notification, to follow up non-attendance
- Work with parents/caregivers and government agencies to support learners' regular attendance in the education program
- Refer all students, under compulsion, with unsatisfactory attendance to student attendance counsellors (form ED171— Report of Unsatisfactory Attendance or Single Referral form) if the actions above have proved unsuccessful
- Liaise with the student, the family, any involved agencies and the student attendance counsellor once a referral is made.
- Make Mandatory Notifications as appropriate, document and store as per DfE procedures

### Parents/Caregivers

Parents/caregivers must enrol their child in an education program from 6 years (the age of compulsion).

When they enrol their child in a preschool or school they accept the responsibility to:

- Provide information to the preschool or school that may assist planning for the child's learning; for example, medical conditions, developmental milestones and family issues





- Enable their child to attend punctually and regularly on every day the education program is offered and to comply with the education program being offered
- Provide an explanation to the preschool or school whenever their child is absent. Apply for an exemption whenever their child is removed from the school
- Work with the preschool or school on intervention strategies to improve attendance
- Discuss with the principal/director any suspicions of neglect and/or abuse that may require a mandatory notification.

### Children and Students

Children and students enrolled in a preschool or school site have responsibility for their attendance. The level of responsibility will be determined by the individual circumstances of the child.

The expectations are that they:

- Attend preschool, school or other educational program as negotiated regularly on every day the program is offered
- Be punctual in arriving at preschool, school or the educational program and for all associated lessons and activities
- Engage appropriately in the education program as negotiated

### ABSENCE NOTIFICATIONS

It is a legal requirement for parents / carers to notify a school of the reason for any absence as soon as it is possible. Notifications cannot be given by any other person unless there is a formal arrangement with the school.

Notifications can be made via the following methods:

- Your child's diary / Seasaw
- Emailing the school at [dl.1090\\_info@schools.sa.edu.au](mailto:dl.1090_info@schools.sa.edu.au)
- Phoning the school on 82638333
- Leaving a message on the answering machine any time before 8:00am or after 4pm
- SkoolBag e-form

**Please note:** we are not able to assume a child's illness. For example, if a parent rings the school on Monday to say their child is sick, we cannot assume they are sick on Tuesday if they are not at school. We would need a further communication from the parent on Tuesday. Alternatively, if the parent knows on Monday that their child will not be at school Tuesday, they can let us know when they contact us on Monday.

### RESPONSE TO ABSENCES

When a student is absent without explanation for 3 days we will follow this process:

- Ring the parent to discuss the non-attendance
- Email the parent to ask for an explanation
- If there is no response to an email or phone call, a report to Department for Child Protection may be made and we will refer the matter to the Department for Education Attendance Officer.

When a pattern of absences has been identified or if a child has 10 or more absences without valid reason we will follow this process:

- Send a letter to the parents asking them to meet with the Assistant Principal, Wellbeing and Inclusion
- The Assistant Principal, Wellbeing and Inclusion, will meet with the parents to form an agreement on how to improve the attendance
- If attendance does not improve a referral to the Department for Education Attendance Officer will be made.

If you have any questions regarding attendance or this policy please contact Redwood Park School on 82638333.

As per DfE Guidelines:

<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/policies/shared/attendance-policy.pdf>

