

Denmark Primary School



EVERYDAY COUNTS

ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES



Be Respectful
Be Your Best
Be Resilient
Be Safe and Caring

STUDENT ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

It is required by law that students attend school.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Department of Education's monitor the attendance of all students enrolled in school, identifies students with attendance issues and supports schools to restore regular attendance.

Where a student is enrolled in a public school, the School Education Act 1999 requires that the student attends the school on site or an educational program of the school elsewhere as directed by the Principal.

The parents of a child who is enrolled in a school are responsible under the Act for ensuring their child is attending on a daily basis. Parents or other responsible persons will be asked to provide an acceptable explanation for any absence to the classroom teacher, or Principal.

Pre-primary is compulsory full-time education.





WHAT ARE PARENTS' OR CAREGIVERS' RESPONSIBILITIES IN PROMOTING STUDENT ATTENDANCE?

The parents of children enrolled in Denmark Primary School are responsible under the Act for ensuring their child/children attend on a daily basis.

- There are times when circumstances such as illness, family holidays or cultural events prevent a child from attending school but it is the responsibility of the parents or legal guardians of a child to ensure that these absences are kept to the minimum possible.
- When a child has been absent from school, a note must be sent, or a phone-call made to the school to explain the reason for the absence.
- In the case of extended absences because of sickness, the explanatory note should also be accompanied by a doctor's certificate.
- If children are going to be away for a prolonged period of school for reasons other than sickness the parent should inform the class teacher or school office personnel in advance.

WHAT ARE THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSIBILITIES IN PROMOTING STUDENT ATTENDANCE?

At Denmark Primary School we are responsible for maintaining a supportive learning environment and an engaging and relevant curriculum to create conditions conducive to regular school attendance by all our students. We maintain this supportive and welcoming learning environment by:

- Applying a consistent and fair *Behaviour Management* program that recognises appropriate behaviour to ensure that our school is safe and welcoming place for all our students.
- Putting in place an interesting and engaging curriculum that addresses the outcomes from the WA Curriculum.
- Putting in place differentiated learning programs in the areas of language and maths so that children can progress at their individual levels and to their potential.
- Providing students with extra curricula activities in academic areas, sport, the Arts and leadership through inter school academic and sporting events, camps, incursions and excursions.





WHAT WILL THE SCHOOL DO TO ADDRESS POOR ATTENDANCE?

- If no explanation, written or verbal by a parent after their child's absence a letter will be sent home requesting that a reason is given for the absence.
- If the child has frequent and ongoing absences where their attendance falls below 80% in a term, authorised or unauthorised, the school will request a parent meeting so that the school and parents can work together to establish a regular attendance pattern for that child.
- In extreme cases, where the child's attendance is less than 70% in a term and poor attendance is an ongoing issue, parents will be asked to sign a documented plan Responsible Parenting Agreement that states what actions are required on behalf of the school and parents to restore a normal attendance pattern. At this stage the Dept of Communities: Child Protection and Family Services may also be involved.
- If a Responsible Parenting Agreement is put in place but not adhered to by the parents, and the child's attendance does not improve to acceptable levels of 90% or higher, then the parents will be asked to attend an Attendance Panel comprised of community members and representatives from other government agencies who will attempt to find a solution to the non-attendance.
- The Attendance Panel may, in some cases recommend prosecution.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES:

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Attendance matters to achievement. Research proves conclusively that:

- Any absence from school has a negative effect on a child's achievement
- The higher the absence rate; the greater the negative effect on a child's achievement.
- The effect of attendance of achievement is also cumulative. That is, the achievement of students reflects not only their absences in that year, but also absences in the preceding 2-3 years as well.
- All absences negatively affect a student's achievement, but unauthorised absences have a greater negative impact than those absences which are authorised.
- It is important to create good attendance habits in the early years of school, starting in Kindergarten, because poor attendance patterns in a child's early years of schooling tend to lead to an ongoing pattern of poor attendance across his/her school career.
- NAPLAN achievement in any given year is influenced by the number of absences of a student in that year.

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