



Attendance Policy 2017

At Tailem Bend Primary School, we believe that an education setting should provide a safe, supportive and caring learning environment for all. We believe that students need to attend school regularly in order to participate fully and gain maximum benefit from schooling. Regular attendance enables children to access a full education, enabling them to reach their full potential. School staff should set an example for all students, encouraging and emphasising the importance of attendance and punctuality.

Students who miss days from school: -

- are socially and academically disadvantaged.
- miss opportunities for play activities – these help social and emotional development.
- fail to develop an appreciation of important life skills such as punctuality and regular attendance.
- can become isolated, teased and bullied because of an inability to maintain friendships.
- lack self-esteem and self-confidence.
- are likely to leave school at an early age.
- suffer from a lack of continuity and familiarity.
- are unable to grasp basic concepts due to gaps in knowledge and learning.

Research shows that there is a direct correlation between attendance and achievement. Missing one day a week at school per year means missing eight weeks of schooling.

Monitoring of student attendance enables identification of students at risk and the early implementation of intervention strategies. We believe that a proactive approach involving early detection and the assessment of the causes of school non-attendance is vital.

Student attendance is everyone's business.

Responsibilities for parents

Parents/caregivers are responsible for getting their children to and from school

- children should attend school 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.** Usually this comprises a note or a phone call from a parent/caregiver or a medical certificate.
- **Children should arrive at school between 8:30 and 8:50am**
- When a student is late for school (**arriving after 8:55am**), **it is a requirement that a parent/caregiver sign the student in at the front office with a reason for the lateness -**
- Parents/caregivers must let the school know if an extended absence is likely or if the teacher needs to arrange work to be sent home for the student.

Responsibilities for staff

- Monitor each child's attendance
- Record absence and reason for absence in attendance book each day and send to the front office by 10am each day.
- If a child returns to school without an explanation for their absence, then stick a "request for absence explanation" slip into the child's communication book.
- If a child is absent and a parent makes phone contact with the school, a message taken by admin will be enough for the explanation. When a parent calls the school, admin staff will take a message on the form "student absence – phone message" and will be placed in the child's teachers' pigeonhole. This slip must be stored in the back of the roll book.
- All absence explanations must be endorsed, dated and stored in the pocket in the back of roll book.
- By the end of the fortnight, there should be no unexplained absences.

*If a child is absent from school for **two days** without an explanation:*

Step 1 – Class teacher to make telephone contact with parent. Keep a record of the date and time of call and notify the school counsellor of conversation outcome

Step 2 – If child does not return to school, the school counsellor will make contact with the parents.

Step 3 – If no response, the school counsellor will send a letter to arrange a meeting with parents (includes a copy of EDSAS printout).

Step 4 – if still no response, inform the school counsellor. An attendance referral will be sent electronically to the District Attendance Counsellor (no parent signature required).

Chronic Absences/Lates (5 or more days absent or late per term)

- Regardless of reasons, if there is any child in your class, the school counsellor needs to be informed.
- The school counsellor will follow up and investigate patterns
- Students who are identified will be highlighted on the roll lists and a list of names will be kept in front of the roll books.
- If an identified "chronic absent" child is absent, a slip will need to be filled out and placed in school counsellors pigeon hole for following up as soon as possible (phone calls, letter to parents, home visit etc).

The likelihood of success in learning is strongly linked to regular attendance and appropriate participation in educational programmes. It is crucial that children develop habits of regular, punctual attendance at an early age.

If attendance is an issue for your child please discuss your concerns with –

- Your child's teacher
- The School Counsellor
- The Principal

January 2017