



COOMANDOOK AREA SCHOOL

Striving to Make the Difference

ATTENDANCE POLICY

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Respect

Honesty

Persistence



Government of South Australia
Department for Education



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Compulsory Enrolment and Attendance at School

Attendance is IMPORTANT! Students do not learn if they are not at school and as a consequence our teaching is not as effective. It is an important role of parents to make sure their child(ren) are at school every day. The Education Act requires that children of compulsory school age be enrolled at school. A condition of that 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. Did you know that parents can be prosecuted for persistent non-attendance of students of compulsory school age? Make a difference to your child's learning by making sure they are at school, on time and ready to learn.

The Education and Children's Services Act 2019 requires that children must be enrolled in a school or approved learning program from the age of 6 years until they turn 17 years of age.

Compulsion school age

A child who is at least 6 years old but not yet 16 years of age is known as being of compulsory school age. Every child of compulsory school age is required to be enrolled at a government or non-government school and is required to fully participate in the education program arranged and approved by the enrolling school.

Compulsory education age

All young people between the ages of 16 and 17 are required to participate in an approved learning program until they turn 17 years, or until they have achieved an appropriate qualification under an approved learning program, whichever happens first. This is called compulsory education age.

Approved learning programs include:

- traditional schooling, including:
 - SACE (South Australian Certificate of Education)
 - International Baccalaureate (IB)
 - Steiner Education (Waldorf Schools) Secondary Certificate
- Vocational Education Training (VET), Technical and Further Education (TAFE) courses or accredited courses offered by registered training organisations (RTOs)
- apprenticeships or traineeships
- university degrees, diplomas or other university award courses
- other programs authorised by the Minister (or delegate)
- or a combination of the above

Attendance and absenteeism

Patterns of attendance and absence that are set up in the early years usually persist through education and life. Regular attendance at school is important to a child's learning and development.

Poor attendance may lead to learning difficulties because children who are frequently absent are likely to miss learning the basic skills needed for their future education.



When is it acceptable for children to be absent?

Lawful excuses where it is acceptable for a child to miss school include times when the:

- child is too sick to leave the house i.e. Covid or Cold/Flu
- child has an infectious illness such as gastro enteritis, chicken pox or measles
- child needs to attend medical or dental appointments that could not be made out of school hours
- school principal is provided with a genuine reason that prevents the child attending school
- child has been granted an exemption from school
- child has been sent home or suspended from school for disciplinary reasons.

If a student is absent due to reported illness for three or more consecutive days the principal can ask for a medical certificate.

Informing school about your child's absence

Parents and caregivers must notify the school of their child's absence, by phone, SMS or email. If we do not receive notification of a student's absence a follow up SMS or email will be sent to the child's parent/caregiver seeking reason for their absence. Further contact will be made if necessary, and followed up with the Department if an appropriate explanation is not given for regular or long absences. It is a LEGAL REQUIREMENT for all absences to be explained and these records are to be maintained by the school for a number of years. Attendance is also reported in the school's Annual Report each year and is an important part of a child's well-being.