

Attendance Policy

The law, expectations and responsibilities



**Brighton
Secondary
School**

Research shows that attendance at school all day and every day positively affects learning, wellbeing, employment and life outcomes for children and young people. Learning is cumulative and it is disrupted if students often miss school.

School attendance and the law

Attendance at school is compulsory. The Education and Children's Services Act 2019 states that all children must attend school from 6 until they turn 17. This could be in a school or an approved learning program.

Parents or legal guardians (carers) can be prosecuted if they do not make sure their child goes to school. This can mean being fined or getting a criminal conviction.

The department's attendance policy

The South Australian Department for Education's Attendance Policy guides the responsibilities of the whole school community to make sure that children and young people attend school. This includes school staff, parents, carers and students.

Schools work with their community to develop positive attendance habits. This starts from the earliest years. They do this when they provide a safe, inclusive and culturally respectful environment. They use effective and consistent local practices to monitor and manage absences.

Students at risk from missing school

Students can be away from school for many reasons. Schools use categories to identify children and young people at risk. We make sure that appropriate follow up and support is provided.

- **Habitual non-attendance:** a student has 5 to 9 days absent in a term for any reason.
- **Chronic non-attendance:** a student has 10 or more days absent in a term for any reason

How we implement the department's attendance policy

At Brighton Secondary School our attendance practices align with the department's attendance policy.

We support student attendance when we:

- promote the importance of education from the earliest years of life and throughout school
- assess patterns of non-attendance and develop ways to address this
- actively engage and include all children, young people and their families
- provide support to address the barriers to attendance, learning and wellbeing
- monitor attendance to make sure progress is documented and supports are in place
- evaluate the need for further or ongoing support and referral for additional support.

Attendance expectations

School starts at 9.00am each day and finishes at 3.30pm except for Wednesday morning 10:10am late start. All students who arrive or leave outside of these times must provide an explanation from a parent or caregiver when signing in and out of student services.

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Attendance responsibilities

Everyone has a role to make sure students attend school all day, every day.

Students

- Attend school every day the school is open unless they are ill or have an approved exemption.
- Arrive at school and to all lessons and activities on time.
- Participate positively in all learning activities.

Note: a student's age and circumstances affect the level of responsibility.

Parents and carers

- Make sure their child attends school every day the school is open unless they are ill or have an approved exemption.
- Be responsible for their child's travel to and from school.
- Make sure their child arrives at school on time, between 8.30am and 9.00am.
- Provide their child's school with up-to-date contact details.
- Provide a medical certificate or written note (including email) when their child is absent for 3 or more days.
- Make appointments (e.g. doctor or other specialists) outside of school hours where possible.
- Monitor their child's attendance and classwork via Daymap to assist students meet deadlines and catch up as necessary.

Ancillary, Teachers and leadership team

- Make sure all parents and carers are aware of attendance expectations, policies and procedures.
- Accurately record each absence, late arrival, or early departure with the appropriate code.
- Contact parents or carers if there is no explanation for an absence, or a pattern of absences.
- Document contact with parents and carers about absences, including attempts to contact.
- Request a medical certificate from parents or carers if needed.
- Consult with the local Student Support Services for example, Social Work / Truancy.
- Make notifications about chronic non-attendance (via the Child Abuse Report Line – CARL) guided by Responding to Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care (RAN) training and the Mandatory Reporting Guide.

Authorisation of exemptions

Our school requires an exemption for any absences more than 3 days. In some circumstances, the principal has authority to approve an exemption from school for up to 1 month. Exemptions of more than 1 month (excluding holidays) must be approved by the department's central office.

Parents or carers must apply in writing using the exemption form available from the front office. The principal will advise them in writing of the decision. A copy is kept in the student record folder. Students must attend school until an exemption is approved.