



## Westbourne Park Primary School

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# Attendance Policy

## INTRODUCTION

Westbourne Park Primary School is committed to educational excellence. Parents/caregivers and the school work in partnership to provide children and students with learning opportunities that will provide a solid foundation for the future.

Students need to maximise attendance at school to gain optimum benefit from education. Ensuring regular attendance at school is a shared responsibility between parents/caregivers and the school.

Research shows that success in learning is directly proportional to regular attendance and participation in education programs.

The Education Act 1972 (the Act) provides for compulsory attendance of any child required to be enrolled at the school for which she or he has been enrolled on every day, and for such parts of every day, as instruction is provided at the school for the child (subsection 76(1)) between the ages of 6 and 16 years.

## RATIONALE

The Department for Education is accountable to the community, through the Minister for Education, for ensuring appropriate attendance in government educational programs.

This policy is based on the Department for Education Attendance policy which has the following principles:

- Society has a responsibility to prepare young people for successful participation in learning and the broader community.
- Families, society, peers and educators and other significant adults influence the life choices of young people.
- Attendance has benefits and consequences that increase or decrease life choices.
- Individuals are able to accept responsibility for their participation in educational programs according to their level of development.
- Continuity of relationships and learning in an educational program is dependent upon attendance.
- Attendance is a shared responsibility between the staff of preschools and schools, parents/caregivers, children and students, and members of the wider community.
- Participation in educational programs fosters the development of personal and social skills.
- Attendance is critically linked to the quality of the curriculum, teaching and learning and the development of relationships, which then foster improved learning outcomes and increased wellbeing for individuals and groups.

Early identification of, and intervention in, poor attendance is known to improve child and student learning outcomes. Students who have patterns of poor attendance are at risk, as they may not achieve their potential in educational and social development.

This means that these students may:

- be socially isolated
- place themselves at risk of personal harm during times of absence
- have reduced life choices
- be more likely to be involved in socially unacceptable and/or illegal activities.

Research has shown that once students have begun to absent themselves from school, and the initial cause of this remains undetected or unexplored, it is likely that the pattern of absence will continue and escalate through the student's subsequent school career. Late arrival at school through the primary years is often related to non-attendance during secondary school.

## POLICY STATEMENT

Westbourne Park Primary School, in partnership with our community, will provide an educational program that promotes attendance and engagement for all children and students.

Educators will actively intervene when attendance and engagement patterns indicate that learners are at risk of not realising their educational and social development potential.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

### Responsibilities of The Principal

The Principal (with the support of the Leadership Team) is 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 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 school community
- Remain engaged with the family throughout the referral and case management process undertaken by Department for Education Support Services
- Ensure that notifications about suspicions of neglect and/abuse are made in addition to a referral to Regional Support Services.

## Responsibilities of teachers

- 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 daily on the class roll sheet, signing at the bottom of the relevant day after the roll has been called. This is sent to the front office by 9:05am
- Work with parents/caregivers and government agencies to support learners' regular attendance in the education program
- Refer to the Leadership Team if there are any concerns about a student
- Liaise with the student, the family, any involved agencies once a referral is made.

## Responsibilities of parents/caregivers

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

- Provide information to the 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. Classes start at 8:50am and there is an expectation that students are organised and ready to begin the day.
- Provide an explanation to the school whenever their child is absent. This can be done through a phone call, email or a notification through the school app
- Apply for an exemption whenever their child is removed from the school. This is done on an exemption form (ED175), available from the front office
- If a student has to leave before the end of the day, they must be signed out at the front office
- If a student returns to school they are signed back in through the front office
- Students who arrive late must inform the front office of their arrival.

## Responsibilities of front office staff

- Collect roll sheets and follow up any unexplained absences by phoning the parents/caregivers
- Enter attendance data into EDSAS
- Ensure roll sheets are in teacher's pigeonholes ready for the next day
- Direct families to the sign in and out book as appropriate

## Responsibilities of students

Students 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 school every day
- Be punctual and be a self manager, organised to begin class at 8:50am