



Morphett Vale Primary School: Attendance Policy

At Morphett Vale Primary School, we believe that:

Every day matters in the school life of a child or young person. Each day of attendance has a positive effect on their development and future success.

As early as preschool, regular absence can be a predictor of later attendance patterns. Even missing one day a week of school from reception to year 10 adds up to missing 2 years and 1 term of schooling.

Long-term studies have shown that not completing school can be linked with poor physical and mental health, poverty and involvement with the criminal justice system.

Children and young people who do not attend school regularly also miss out on planned learning experiences, sequences of instruction and class participation. The impact of this loss is compounded with each absence. It is also more difficult for them to build positive relationships with others.

Long-term studies have shown that not completing school can be linked with poor life outcomes including, poor physical and mental health, poverty and involvement with the criminal justice system.

In contrast, regular attendance at school contributes to opportunities for success, including a population that is better educated and healthier, with improved job choices, financial independence and higher overall wellbeing.

Due to a range of factors, including systemic barriers and life circumstances, Aboriginal children are absent from school about twice as much as non-Aboriginal children. The department will work with Aboriginal families and communities to reduce these barriers and support attendance.

At Morphett Vale Primary School:

Our school day times are **8.50am – 3.00pm**.

Staff are on duty from 8.30am for students to begin arriving at school. Students must not arrive before 8:30am. If a student does arrive before 8:30am, they are required to wait in the front office lobby.

Teachers are again on duty until 3.20pm.

- If a child is arriving **late**, they must report in through the front office.
- If a child is **absent** please let the school know that morning and send a written note to the teacher when your child returns.



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Student attendance has 3 categories:

Chronic non-attendance (with additional risk factors) 10+ days absent per term: The school will refer to support services. Multiple agencies may be involved: case management / support team around-the-child approach, individualised and intensive support provided, coordinated interagency collaboration, statutory options assessed.

Habitual and chronic non-attendance (unexplained) 5–10+ days absent per term: Data is monitored and patterns identified, barriers to attendance determined and addressed, parent involvement, educational needs identified, referral to support services considered.

Habitual and chronic non-attendance (all absences) (5-10+ days absent per term): School will contact parents about our concerns, identify any issues causing the absences and provide support where possible.

Shared Responsibility

Ensuring regular attendance at preschool and school is a shared responsibility between parents/caregivers, preschools and schools.

If a parent / caregiver is having problems with their child's school attendance, they should first contact their school to talk about it and ask for help.

If your child misses too much school, the school will contact you to work through ways to address the problem.

Role of Schools

- To identify attendance problems early, to help support parents / caregivers efforts in regular student attendance
- Any barriers to attendance, learning and wellbeing must be investigated so that children and young people can be present and engaged in their learning.

It is acceptable for a child to miss school when:

- they are too sick to leave the house
- they have an infectious illness such as gastroenteritis, chicken pox or measles
- they need to attend medical or dental appointments that could not be made out of school hours
- they have been granted an exemption from school
- they have been sent home or suspended for disciplinary reasons
- a genuine reason that prevents the child from attending school is provided



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If a student is absent due to reported illness for 3 or more consecutive days, the school will ask for a medical certificate.

Informing school about absence

Parents / Caregivers need to notify the school of a child's absence and the reason for it. If they cannot do this in advance, a message on SkoolBag, phone on the day or a note covering the days missed when the child returns is acceptable.

To Be Reviewed: Term Two, 2019