Tanunda Primary School & Disability Unit

Attendance Policy

Rationale

At Tanunda Primary School we are committed to educational excellence. We work in partnership with families to provide children with learning opportunities that will provide a solid foundation for their future. Research shows that success in learning is directly proportional to regular attendance and participation in education programs. The Tanunda Primary School Attendance Policy places priority on the early identification of non-attendance and irregular attendance, and outlines practices to support regular attendance of students in our school community.

Legality

All children between the ages of 6 and 16 are required by law to attend school full time and children between 16 and 17 must participate in a full-time approved learning program (Education Act, 1972). If a child is 5 and enrols to attend school, then they must attend full time, as any other student. If a student is going to be absent from school for an extended period of time, the parent/caregiver must inform the school immediately. If a child has been ill and has seen a doctor, a certificate from the doctor will assist in accounting for the absence.

Classroom teachers are responsible for keeping an accurate and up to date roll book. Roll books are legal documents and must be an accurate reflection of a student’s attendance. All notes and slips given to a classroom teacher to account for absences must be kept with the roll book and not destroyed.

Responsibilities

Families

Parents/Caregivers must enrol their child in an education program from 6 years (the age of compulsion). Once a child is enrolled, even if it is prior to their sixth birthday, they are expected to attend school regularly. The primary responsibility of a student’s attendance rests with the parent/caregiver. Having positive parenting in relation to schooling helps children to appreciate the importance of education and learning. Good habits such as structure and routine in the mornings assist children in getting used to getting up and ready for school.

When Parents/Caregivers enrol their child at school they accept the responsibility to:

- Provide information that may assist in planning for the child’s learning; for example medical conditions, family issues, developmental milestones
- Enable their child to attend punctually and regularly. At Tanunda Primary School children are expected to arrive at school no earlier than 8:25am and no later than 8:50am
- Provide an explanation to the school whenever their child is absent via a letter, a telephone call, personal contact or a medical certificate. After three days a written explanation is required
- Apply for an exemption whenever there is a planned absence such as a family holiday
- Let the school know if an extended absence is likely and negotiate with the class teacher if work is required
- When a child is late for school it is appropriate that the parent/caregiver explains the reason for the
lateness and ensure a late slip is obtained from the front office
• Work with the school on intervention strategies to improve punctuality and attendance if required

Children

Children enrolled in school have responsibility for their attendance. The level of responsibility will be determined by the individual circumstances of the child.
Children are expected to:
• Attend school regularly
• Be punctual
• Collect a late slip from the office if arriving after the 8:50am bell
• Engage appropriately in the education program

Teachers

Staff are responsible for supporting the agreed attendance improvement processes for the site and will:
• Provide a relevant and dynamic learning program that seeks to engage all children and offers opportunity for success, thus encouraging regular attendance
• Record attendances/absences according to DECD requirements
• Contribute to the analysis of attendance trends and the development and implementation of school Attendance Improvement Plan
• Make contact with the family on the third day of absence if communication from the family has not been received
• Document any strategies/interventions to improve attendance and include these in the child’s file
• Advise the Leadership Team of frequent or prolonged absences
• Work with Leadership Team and families to develop a Student Attendance Improvement Plan (See Appendix 1)
• Co-ordinate the collection of work for students who are unable to attend school for acceptable reasons and for whom work is requested
• Make Mandatory Notifications as appropriate

Leadership Team

The Leadership Team are responsible for developing and supporting the site attendance improvement processes.
The Leadership Team will:
• Ensure that absence data is processed according to DECD guidelines
• Ensure that the appropriate follow up has been completed before a letter regarding the absence of a student is sent home to families (See Appendix 2)
• Document interventions, strategies, home visits, phone calls and include them in the child’s file
• Work with teachers and families to develop an individual Student Attendance Improvement Plan
• Work with teachers and families to determine underlying causes of frequent absenteeism and/or late arrival
• Refer to an Attendance Counsellor on an ED171 form if attendance issues are not resolved
Attendance Flowchart

- Roll Books filled out and sent to the Office
  - Attendance Data entered into EDSAS
    - Any unexplained absence requires a note home to parents, asking for an explanation. Teachers record actions taken
      - Reason for absence provided
        - Teacher records reason in roll book along with a copy of the note explaining the absence
          - EDSAS updated to reflect the reason
            - Three or more 'unexplained' absences classroom teacher will phone family and this action is recorded in EDSAS
              - No response or explanation given and 10 unexplained absences in a term OR concerning patterns of absences the teacher needs to alert the Leadership Team
                - Leadership Team will follow up with the family and the SAC from regional office

References

This policy was developed in line with DECD attendance policies, with reference to:

DECD Attendance Policy

DECD Attendance Requirements

DECD Attendance Recording Procedures

Barossa Regional Support Services Attendance Information

Education Act 1972 (Amended August 2002)

Principal: Michelle Barnes  
Chairperson Governing Council: Bryce Wood  
Date: 30th November 2016  
Signature:  
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