



**Stradbroke School**  
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## Attendance Policy

### **Why attendance matters**

Research shows that attendance at school **all day, every day** has a positive effect on 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. Under the *Education and Children's Services Act 2019*, all children must attend school from 6 until they turn 17. This includes school or an approved learning program.

Parents and carers are legally responsible for making sure their child attends. Failure to do so may result in prosecution, fines, or a criminal conviction.

### **The Department for Education'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 promote positive attendance by:

- providing a safe, inclusive, and culturally respectful environment
- building positive attendance habits from the earliest years
- using consistent processes to monitor and manage absences.

### **Students at risk from missing school**

Students may miss school for a range of reasons. To support them, schools monitor patterns of absence:

- Habitual non-attendance – 5 to 9 days absent in a term (for any reason)
- Chronic non-attendance – 10 or more days absent in a term (for any reason)

Appropriate follow-up and supports are provided to address barriers and re-engage students.

### **Our Attendance Approach**

At Stradbroke School our attendance practices align with the Department's attendance policy.

We support attendance when we:

- promote the importance of education from the earliest years and throughout school
- monitor and analyse patterns of non-attendance
- engage students and families positively and inclusively
- provide support to address barriers to attendance, learning, and wellbeing
- document progress and ensure supports are in place
- evaluate the need for further support and referrals

Stradbroke school uses data to create our attendance and improvement plans in partnership with our community. Our plan includes actions we will take to make sure all students can attend school.

### **Attendance expectations at Stradbroke**

The school day begins at 8.50 am and finishes at 3.10 pm.

A parent or carer must provide an explanation if their child is late or has to leave early. All students must give this to their teacher or the front office when they sign in or out.



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### Roles and Responsibilities

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

#### **Students**

- Attend school every day 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.
- Report to the front office if they arrive late or leave early.

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

#### **Parents and carers**

- Ensure 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 8.30 am and 8.50 am.
- Provide their child's school with up-to-date contact details.
- Provide a reason to the school if their child is absent, late or leaving early. The same day if possible.
- Provide a medical certificate or written explanation if their child is ill for 3 or more days in a row.
- Schedule appointments outside of school hours if possible.
- Monitor their child's attendance and support their child to catch up on missed learning.

#### **Teachers and leadership team**

- Communicate attendance expectations to parents and carers.
- 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 if needed. 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.
- Ensure daily absence and late arrival information is provided promptly to the front office.
- Contact parents on the day of an absence (e.g. via text message)

### Exemptions

In some circumstances, the principal has authority to approve an exemption from school. This can be for up to 1 month. It can also be for up to 12 months for a family holiday.

Before asking for an exemption, families should talk to a site leader. Students must attend school until an exemption is approved.

Our school requires an exemption for absences more than 3 school days in a row. This does not include illness.

Parents or carers must apply in writing. The principal will advise them in writing of their decision. A copy is kept in the student record folder. Forms are available from the front office.

Exemptions of more than 1 month (excluding holidays) must be approved by the Department's central office.

**'At Stradbroke School, every day counts. Regular attendance builds strong learning, strong friendships and a strong future.'**

### References

*Education and Children's Services Act, 2019*

*Department for Education Attendance Policy, April, 2025*

*(Updated: September, 2025)*



Government  
of South Australia  
Department for Education

