



Wasleys Primary School

Attendance Policy

Attendance at school is recognised as an important indicator of student wellbeing and engagement. At Wasleys Primary School we believe students need to attend school regularly to enable them to participate fully and gain maximum benefit from schooling. Regular and on time attendance supports students to gain full advantage from learning opportunities and reach their full potential. Successful students are well organised and start the day on time.

Research shows that students who are absent for more than 10 days per year are disadvantaged both educationally and socially. Some of the effects experienced by these students include:

- Gaps in knowledge and understanding resulting in missing basic concepts.
- Loss of opportunities for play activities which improve social emotional and cognitive development.
- Inability to maintain friendships, sometimes resulting in isolation.
- Loss of self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Increased likelihood of leaving school early.

Close monitoring of school attendance enables us to identify students at risk and provide early implementation of intervention strategies.

From 2014, South Australia has had the same first day of school for all children – the beginning of Term One. Having the same first day of school ensures that every child is guaranteed four terms of Reception before they go on to the rest of their primary schooling.

Where a child turns five before May 1, they will start school on the first day of Term One of that year.

Where a child turns five on or after May 1 they will start school on the first day of Term One the following year. From 2014 the minimum age for starting school is four years and eight months.

A child who is at least six years old, irrespective of distance from the school, is required to be enrolled at a registered government or non-government school and must attend the school on every day instruction is provided, unless the Minister has granted an exemption from school attendance.

Children under six years of age are required to attend school for the entire day school is open for instruction once enrolled.

The primary responsibility for meeting this legal requirement rests with the parent/caregiver. The responsibility for enforcing school attendance is with the Department of Education and Child Development. (DECD) Therefore DECD has a legal responsibility to record and monitor attendance and take appropriate action to rectify problems of non-attendance.

Parent/Carers Responsibilities

Parents/caregivers are responsible for getting their children to and from school:

- Children must arrive at school between 8:35am and 8:55am.
- Children must attend school on every day when instruction is offered unless the school receives a valid reason for being absent.
- Parents/caregivers must provide the school with an explanation for student's non-attendance.
- A diary note, letter, phone call or medical certificate is required for each day of absence. A written explanation is required after 3 days absence. Parents are asked to phone the school by 9:00 if a student is to be absent.
- When a student is late for school (after 8.55 a.m.) it is a requirement that the child reports to the front office to sign in. Younger students will need to have a parent accompany them.

- Parents/caregivers wishing to collect students for an early departure must also report to the front office with an explanation and sign their child out. Should they return the child to school after some time out, Eg. A dentist's visit, the student needs to be signed back into the school at the front office.
- Parents/caregivers are required to let the school know if an extended absence is likely or if the teacher needs to arrange for learning at home. Holiday absence for up to 12 months is approved by the Principal and applications can be made on an ED 175 form available from the office.

Teachers' Responsibilities

WPS has a duty of care to their students while they are at school. Classroom teachers are responsible for marking student's daily attendance and keeping a record of this in their Roll book. The information is then collated and put into a database which is monitored by the Department for Education and Child Development (DECD). Teachers are issued with an attendance record folder to record student absence:

- Students not present in class by 8:55 am are to be recorded as absent if no prior information has been provided.
- Any student arriving after 8.55 am is to report to the front office to sign in and take a late notice to the teacher so changes can be made to the Roll book.
- Classroom teachers are responsible for keeping an accurate 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 in the Roll book
- When a student is absent with no explanation provided by the parent or caregiver the classroom teacher will phone or send a note home requesting an explanation.
- Teachers should notify leadership of concerns re frequent or habitual student attendance.

Principal's Responsibilities

Monitor all attendance across the school:

- Ensure that the EDSAS register is accurately completed.
- Complete letters regarding absence of a student and send home to the student's family.
- Document interventions, strategies, home visits, phone calls and include in the student's file.
- Provide information in the newsletter and school information packages relating to attendance.
- Ensure new parents understand the school's attendance procedures.
- Review student attendance at the end of each term.
- Keep documentation of all attendance and actions taken as required.
- Review the reasons for absence of students who have frequent family or social explanations and discuss this with the parent/caregiver.
- Refer to a DECD Attendance Counsellor using an ED171 form or relevant support service if attendance issues are not resolved.
- Work towards achieving set DECD targets for Wasleys Primary School by implementing the Attendance Policy effectively.

WPS START TIME/FINISH TIME

8:35 am	Staff on duty in yard
8:55 am	The school day commences
3:10 pm	Dismissal