

**ELIZABETH EAST PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

*Reviewed by Beth Metters (Attendance Counsellor) and Helen Tunney (Principal) 2013*

**Rationale.**

At Elizabeth East Primary School we know schools should provide a safe, success orientated and caring environment. We know that students need to attend school regularly in order to participate fully and gain maximum benefit from schooling. Regular attendance enables children to access a full education, enabling them to reach their full potential. School staff should set an example for students, encouraging and emphasising attendance and punctuality.

**Aim.**

Our aim is to ensure all children can access equitable educational outcomes. Monitoring of school attendance enables identification of students at risk and the early implementation of attendance intervention strategies. We believe the early detection and assessment of the causes of school non-attendance and the provision of organisational structures, which are responsive to the needs of students, is vital.

**All members of the school community are expected to meet the requirements of attendance and work to the best of their ability and skill as consistently as possible. Student attendance is everyone's business.**

**Implementation.**

**General.**

A child who is at least six years old but not yet sixteen is of compulsory school age, irrespective of the distance from the school or whether the student has a disability or not. These students are required to be enrolled at a registered or non-government school and must attend school on every day instruction is provided at the school for the child, unless the Minister has granted an exemption from school attendance.

Once a 5 year old is enrolled at school they are required to attend according to the fore mentioned implementation strategy.

**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). The department therefore has a legal responsibility to record and monitor attendance and take appropriate action to rectify problems of non-attendance.**

**Responsibilities.**

**Parent's Responsibilities.**

- Parents/ Caregivers are responsible for getting their children to and from school and ensuring that they attend on time every day.
- Children must arrive at school between 8.30am and 8.50am. Late students (those arriving after the roll book has been sent) must report to the Front Office.
- Children must attend school on every day when instruction is offered unless the school receives a valid reason for being absent (eg illness).

- Parents/caregivers must provide the school with an appropriate explanation for the student's non-attendance. Usually this means a written explanation or a telephone call to the school OR a face to face meeting with a staff member (Senior Staff, Front Office Staff or Class Teacher). A Medical Certificate is also acceptable.
- For acceptable absences, work may be set for the student with the expectation it will be completed.
- Parents collecting students early or students leaving early must notify the Front Office and sign the child out.
- When a student is late for school or collected early, it is appropriate that the parent/caregiver explains the reason for lateness or early collection.
- Parents/caregivers must let the school know if an extended absence is likely or if the school needs to arrange work at home for students.
- Parents/ Caregivers who require an exemption from schooling for their student/s for an extended period (in excess of one week) of time need to make a written request well in advance.
- When there are issues about attendance it is a requirement that the parent works with the school in order to resolve the issues. Issues are only resolved when a child attends regularly, all the time.

#### The Class Teacher's Responsibilities.

- Record student absences and the reasons for absence in the Roll Book daily.
- Follow up with parents to obtain reasons for each day of absence or lateness and updates the roll book accordingly.
- Inform the Principal daily if any student identified as 'Wave 3 Attendance' is absent via the "pink note".
- Coordinates the collection of work for students who are unable to attend school for acceptable reasons and for whom work is requested.
- Keeps records of notes, phone calls and conversations regarding lateness/attendance.

#### Front Office Responsibilities.

- Enters attendance information into EDSAS daily.
- Provides a weekly print out of attendance to the Principal.

#### Principal's Responsibilities.

- Compiles and keeps a list of students with an absence rate of 20% or greater. These students are identified as 'Wave 3 Attendance'.
- Writes to the families of newly identified students.
- Contacts the family every day an identified student is absent.
- Meets with the Student Attendance Counsellor fortnightly to discuss students on the 'Wave 3 Attendance' list.
- Where appropriate, conducts joint home visits with the Student Attendance Counsellor.
- Makes a referral to the Student Attendance Counsellor when no improvement to attendance is evident.
- Attends joint family meetings with the Student Attendance Counsellor to develop Attendance Improvement Plans.
- Document interventions, strategies, home visits, phone calls and include in the student's EDSAS file.
- Processes applications for exemption from school attendance. Principals have delegated authority from the Minister to approve applications for temporary exemption from school attendance for periods of up to 12 months for extended family holidays or a maximum of one calendar month for any other reason. Parents/caregivers should apply in writing and principals should also advise approvals and non-

approvals on school letterhead. Copies of such advices are to be retained in school files, together with applications and are to be made available to appropriate department officers as required.

Student Attendance Counsellor may.

- Write to or ring the family.
- Invite the family in for a school meeting to develop an Attendance Improvement Plan.
- Where these strategies do not work and absence from school is very high, work individually with families through phone calls, home visits and letters.
- Meet regularly with the Principal to support full school attendance by every student
- Provide advice and support to the school in the interests of full student attendance