

Attendance Policy and Procedure

Attendance for learning, success and wellbeing

At Avenues College we believe that all students have the right to a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment. We foster positive relationships and partnerships that complement our College values of **Courage, Creativity, Resilience and Respect**.

Purpose

Every day matters in the school life of a child or young person. Each day of attendance has a positive effect on their learning and social development and future success. Regular attendance at school contributes to a community that is well educated, healthier, employed, financially independent and more empowered.

Research from around the world has demonstrated a clear link between improved literacy and numeracy outcomes and attendance at preschool and school.

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.

Children and young people who do not attend school regularly 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.

It is crucial that children and young people feel accepted, valued, safe and respected in their lives, so by identifying attendance problems early, we can help support your efforts to get your child to school every day.

Ensuring regular preschool or school attendance is a shared responsibility between parents/carers and the College. If you are concerned about your child's attendance and wellbeing, please let the College know so that we can work together to provide advice and support.

In developing this Policy and Procedure we have taken into account the diverse nature of the College to ensure that no child or young person is disadvantaged. These include economic, personal, social and cultural factors affecting children, young people and their families.

Objectives

This policy is written to support the Department for Education's key actions on attendance to:

- promote the importance of education from the earliest years of life and throughout the schooling years;
- actively engage children, young people and their families in education and development opportunities;
- address barriers to attendance, learning and wellbeing to support children and young people be physically present and engaged in their learning.

The Department for Education has the following classifications for attendance issues:

- 5 or more days for any reason in a term, this is classified as having habitual non-attendance issues (average of 1 day per fortnight)
- 10 or more days for any reason in a term, this is classified as having chronic non-attendance issues (average of 1 day a week).

Please note: It is a requirement of the Department for Education that accurate records of absences and explanations of the absences are kept by the College.

Aims

- To maximise learning, wellbeing and educational outcomes for children and young people.
- To ensure Department for Education attendance requirements are met.

Responsibilities

Student:

- Attend school regularly and arrive at school punctually.
- Engage appropriately in the education program.

Parent/Carer:

- Ensure regular and punctual attendance at the College.
- Provide the College with any relevant information that may assist in planning for a child or young person's learning e.g. medical conditions, family issues.
- Contact the College if the child or young person is going to be absent, arrive late or leave early at any time and the reason for it.
- A written explanation is required after 3 days of non-attendance. A medical certificate must be presented to the College for reported illness for 3 or more consecutive days (R-12 students).
- Apply for an exemption (ED175 form) when a child or young person is removed from school e.g. family holiday (R-12 students).
- Work with the College on intervention strategies to improve attendance, late arrivals, and early dismissals.

It is deemed acceptable for a child or young person to miss preschool or school when:

- they are too sick to leave the house
- they have an infectious illness
- they need to attend medical or dental appointments that could not be made out of College hours
- they have been granted an exemption from school e.g. Family holiday
- they have been sent home or suspended from school for disciplinary reasons
- the College principal is given a genuine reason that prevents the child or young person from attending school.

Please note: If a valid mobile number is provided, parents/carers will receive notification of unexplained attendance via SMS for years 8-12 students.

College staff responsibilities:

- Provide a relevant and dynamic learning program providing opportunities for success to engage children and young people and encourage regular attendance.
- Contribute to the development and implementation of the College Attendance Improvement Plan.
- Record attendance/absences according to the Department's requirements i.e. accurately complete Care Group/classroom/subject rolls each day using the codes indicated.
- Attach a copy of all notes regarding lateness/absences to Care Group/classroom/subject teacher attendance rolls via roll book or Daymap.
- Follow up and document all unexplained absences, lateness and truancy with note or phone call home. Update rolls with explanation for absence via roll book or Daymap and ensure that the absence code reflects the notification from the parent/carer.
- Report any concerns about attendance/lateness i.e. student absent without reasonable explanation for 3 consecutive days or ongoing irregular attendance/lateness/truancy to the B-12 Wellbeing team/Leadership Executive team.
- Work with parents/ carers and Support Services to support regular attendance.
- Work is provided home or uploaded to Google classroom or Daymap for the child or young person to access as negotiated.
- Award individual students for excellent attendance.

Dean of Wellbeing, Students and Engagement B - 12 responsibilities:

- Ensure that analysis of data is used effectively to inform Avenues College Attendance Improvement Plan and that the Attendance Procedure is implemented and monitored.
- Monitor and analyse data to target specific cohorts, support individuals and work with teams to support chronic non-attenders and vulnerable children and young people and families.
- Induct all staff on attendance procedures.
- Ensure that notifications about suspicions of neglect and abuse are made in addition to any referral to the Department's Attendance and Engagement Social Worker (Truancy).
- Award individual students for excellent attendance.
- Ensure members of the ***B - 12 Wellbeing team** are:
 - supporting children and young people who are absent for ten days or more or have a continued pattern of absenteeism and develop a Student Attendance Plan
 - following up non-attendance referrals from Care Group/classroom/subject teacher
 - recording all communications (e.g. home visits, phone calls, meetings, emails, letters, SAPOL welfare checks, (Avenues College Attendance Matters Information Sheets), strategies and interventions (e.g. alternative timetable) on EDSAS (R-12) and Daymap (8-12)
 - contacting the Department's Attendance and Engagement Social Worker (Truancy) for a pre-referral discussion for ongoing absenteeism, lateness and truancy
 - completing attendance referral as advised by the Department's Attendance and Engagement Social Worker (Truancy)
 - maintaining contact with Department's Attendance and Engagement Social Worker (Truancy), families and Care Group/classroom/subject teacher throughout referral and case management process and document actions.

***B - 12 Wellbeing team comprises of:**

Dean of Wellbeing, Students and Engagement B-12
Community Development Coordinator, Children's Centre
Student Wellbeing leaders R - 7, 8 - 12
Learning Support B - 12
Centre of Deaf Education 8 - 12
English as Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) R – 7, 8 - 12
Aboriginal Education Teachers R - 7, 8 - 12
Aboriginal Community Education Officer (ACEO) R - 12
Aboriginal Secondary Education Transition Officer (ASETO) 8 - 12
APAS Tutor
Pastoral Care Worker 8 - 12

***Leadership Executive team responsibilities:**

- Contribute to the development and implementation of Avenues College Attendance Improvement Plan.
- Ensure attendance records are documented, updated and maintained in accordance with Department guidelines (e.g. follow up unmarked rolls).
- Monitor and analyse attendance data and report to school community through site Annual Report.
- Support the B - 12 Wellbeing Team with attendance strategies and interventions.
- Contact the Department's Attendance and Engagement Social Worker (Truancy) for a pre-referral discussion for ongoing absenteeism, lateness and truancy.
- Complete attendance referral as advised by the Department's Attendance and Engagement Social Worker (Truancy).
- Maintain contact with Department's Attendance and Engagement Social Worker (Truancy), families and Care Group/classroom/subject teacher throughout referral and case management process and document actions.
- Award individual students for excellent attendance.

***Leadership Executive team comprises of:**

Avenues College Principal
Head of Early Years
Head of Primary years
Head of Secondary Years
Dean of Wellbeing, Students and Engagement B - 12

For more information and resources to help address attendance concerns:

Contact the College at 8261 2733 or visit: <https://www.avenuescollege.sa.edu.au>

Avenues College Attendance Matters Information Sheet – Preschool, R-12

Department for Education Attendance Policy

<https://edi.sa.edu.au/library/document-library/controlled-policies/attendance-policy.pdf>

Attendance Matters in preschools and schools, Attendance for learning, success and wellbeing 2018 – 2021

<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/sites/g/files/net691/f/attendance-strategy-government-preschools-schools.pdf>

International Education Services

<https://www.internationalstudents.sa.edu.au/en/>

Department for Education Protective Practices

<https://edi.sa.edu.au/library/document-library/controlled-guidelines/protective-practices-staff-interactions-children-young-people.pdf>

Department for Education Exemption from attending school

<https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/education-and-learning/schools/school-life/exemption-from-attending-school>

Parent Hotline: 1300 364 100 [parenting and child health website](#).