

Highgate School Attendance Improvement Plan



Students must come to school every day the school is open. This is known as regular attendance.

Students are more likely to want to come to school and achieve if they feel:

- included
- valued
- respected
- supported.

Students who miss school often

The [attendance policy](#) defines the following groups of students as at risk because of how often they miss school.

- **Habitual non-attendance:** a student misses 5 to 9 school days in a term. This is for any reason.
- **Chronic non-attendance:** a student misses 10 or more days in a term. This is for any reason.

For students in these groups, we assess the level of risk to their learning and wellbeing. When a student is at risk we will talk with the family about the issues.

Our school's vision

All students have a right to an education. This gives them the best opportunity to reach their full potential.

We have a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment where students can learn and grow. Each student is engaged in their learning. Parents and carers are important partners in this process.

We keep a check on any students who might fall behind. We work with parents, carers and students to find out why someone is missing school. We provide supports that are specific to each student's needs.

How we follow up if a student misses school

This is an overview of how we follow up student absences. We might change these steps to fit in with a family's needs. A quick follow up helps us to manage risks early and reduce absences. Communication is key. Staff are able to be contacted by email, phone or via individual class communication platforms such as SeeSaw or Skoolbag.

1. If a student misses school, we record their absence. We also record the reason given by the parent or carer.
2. If we receive no reason, we follow up with the parent or carer. This is usually by phone or text (SMS).
3. If the absences continue or there are concerns raised by the absence, we keep following up. This might be by phone, email, meeting or a letter.
 - We support the family to look at any issues that stop the student from going to school.
 - If needed, we connect the family to other services. For example student support services.

Our data

At Highgate School our student attendance records help us to plan how we improve school attendance.

We routinely analyse data. We look at patterns. For example the attendance of different year levels. We also look at individual student attendance.

Reviewed May 2020



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Table 1 shows our attendance data for Terms 1, 2 and 3, 2019.

Our attendance rate has increased since 2018. This might be due to less students taking overseas holidays.

Table 1: School attendance data Term 1,2 and 3

Year level	2016	2017	2018	2019
Reception	96.5%	95.6%	94.6%	95.1%
Year 1	94.6%	95.5%	94.8%	93.4%
Year 2	95.8%	94.4%	95.3%	95.5%
Year 3	95.4%	95.7%	94.4%	95.0%
Year 4	95.6%	95.4%	95.2%	93.5%
Year 5	95.3%	95.8%	94.8%	95.3%
Year 6	95.7%	95.0%	95.3%	94.3%
Year 7	95.5%	95.8%	94.8%	94.8%
Primary other		78.9%	76.9%	
Total	95.5%	95.4%	94.9%	94.6%

Our approach to improving attendance

At Highgate School our attendance strategies are guided by the South Australian Department for Education's attendance policy.

We will plan, implement and review the following attendance improvement actions. We will do this with our governing council, staff, students, families and local community.

Promote

We will promote the importance of education from the earliest years of life and throughout the schooling years as a school community priority of the highest value.

Our actions

- Communicate why going to school every day matters. Explain how absences affect learning, wellbeing and future success.
- Promote ways parents and carers can use routines in the early years to create good habits later.
- Set up attendance expectations. Share this with families. Lead by example.
- Include information about student attendance in school reports.



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Assess

We will assess patterns of non-attendance and circumstances. We will use this to inform the development of appropriate targeted, intensive and coordinated interventions.

Our actions

- Record daily absence. Make sure it is recorded correctly. Import the data into the department's reporting system (EDSAS or EMS).
- Set up a process for quick and consistent recording and follow up of all absences.
- Analyse attendance data for trends and patterns of absence.
- Review attendance data with staff. Discuss students at risk.
- Create ways to let staff know about any worrying student absences.
- Check on all students who have habitual and chronic non-attendance. Find out what support they might need.

Engage

We will actively engage and include all children, young people and their families in education and interventions which support attendance.

Our actions

- Create a welcoming and inclusive school.
- Engage and challenge students. Allow for different student abilities and needs. Modify the curriculum and teaching practices if needed.
- Set up programs that support student wellbeing and school connections.
- Support students to build resilience.
- Support students to develop relationships.
- Encourage staff to talk with families and students about attendance.
- Involve students in the design and delivery of their learning.

Support

We will provide support to address the barriers to attendance, learning and wellbeing. We will make sure there is inclusive support for children and young people so they can be physically present and engaged in education.

Our actions

- As early as possible, support students who have attendance and wellbeing issues.
- Work with Student Support Services on student attendance issues.
- Set up attendance improvement or learning plans for students with attendance issues.
- Work with families to find out why students are away from school. Make sure the support fits their individual needs.
- Support Aboriginal students with attendance issues. Make sure the support fits the student's individual and cultural needs.

Monitor

We will monitor attendance to make sure that risks are identified, supports are in place, and progress is monitored.

Our actions

- Make sure staff understand their duty of care to check on and follow up attendance issues.
- Set up ways for staff to escalate attendance issues.



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Evaluate

We will evaluate the need for further or ongoing interventions, referrals for external support and mandatory notifications.

Our actions

- Work with the Social Worker - Truancy for extra attendance support.
- Train staff and volunteers in mandatory reporting of attendance issues.
- Keep in contact with families of students who have attendance issues.