

Research shows that attendance at school all day and every day positively affects learning, wellbeing, employment and life outcomes for children and young people. Learning is cumulative and it is disrupted if students often miss school.

Our Values

- **We are Respectful** - We care for ourselves, others, and our environment.
- **We are Persistent** - We keep trying, embrace challenges, and strive to achieve our goals.
- **We are Curious** - We ask questions, seek understanding, and love learning.

Purpose

At Kidman Park Primary School, we believe that regular attendance is essential for learning, wellbeing, and long-term success. Every day at school matters. Learning is cumulative, and absences whether frequent or extended can disrupt academic progress, social connection, and wellbeing.

This Attendance Policy reflects the Kidman Park Approach to Wellbeing and aligns with the South Australian Department for Education Attendance Policy and the Education and Children's Services Act 2019 (SA).

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Promote regular attendance as a shared responsibility between school, students, and families
- Provide clear expectations and procedures around attendance, lateness, and absences
- Ensure early identification and support for students experiencing attendance difficulties
- Strengthen student wellbeing, engagement, and learning outcomes

Legislative and Policy Context

Attendance at school is compulsory under the Education and Children's Services Act 2019 (SA). All children and young people must attend school from 6 years of age until they turn 17, unless enrolled in an approved exemption or alternative learning arrangement.

The Department for Education Attendance Policy outlines the responsibilities of schools, parents/carers, and students to support consistent attendance and to respond appropriately when concerns arise.

Whole School Approach to Attendance

Attendance at Kidman Park Primary School is embedded within our **tiered wellbeing and engagement framework**.

We support positive attendance by:

- Creating a safe, inclusive, and culturally responsive learning environment
- Building strong relationships with students and families
- Promoting a sense of belonging and connection to school
- Using data to monitor attendance patterns and identify early concerns
- Responding with support and compliance, recognising that attendance barriers are often complex

Attendance data is reviewed regularly by leadership and wellbeing teams to inform planning, targeted support, and continuous improvement.

Attendance Expectations

- School hours are **8:50am – 3:10pm**
- Students are expected to attend school **every day the school is open**, unless unwell or approved for an exemption
- Students should arrive between **8:25am and 8:50am**

If a student arrives late or needs to leave early, they must report to the **front office** for a late slip or sign-out.

Categories of Attendance Concern

In line with Department for Education definitions:

- **Regular attendance:** fewer than 5 days absent per term
- **Habitual non-attendance:** 5–9 days absent per term (for any reason)
- **Chronic non-attendance:** 10 or more days absent per term (for any reason)

These categories help the school identify students who may require additional monitoring or support.

Roles and Responsibilities

Students

Students are expected to:

- Attend school every day unless unwell or exempt
- Arrive on time and be ready to learn
- Participate positively in learning and school activities
- Follow procedures for late arrival or early departure

(Expectations are adjusted according to age and individual circumstances.)

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring their child attends school every day
- Supporting punctual arrival and regular routines
- Providing a reason for absences, lateness, or early departures (preferably on the same day)
- Supplying medical certificates or written explanations for illnesses of **3 or more consecutive days**
- Keeping contact details up to date
- Scheduling appointments outside school hours where possible
- Working in partnership with the school when attendance concerns arise

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Clearly communicating attendance expectations and procedures
- Accurately recording attendance, lateness, and early departures each day
- Following up unexplained absences on the day they occur
- Monitoring patterns of attendance and documenting concerns
- Engaging families early and respectfully when concerns arise
- Collaborating with wellbeing and support services as required
- Making mandatory notifications when appropriate, guided by **RAN-EC training** and departmental procedures

Supporting Attendance A Tiered Response

Tier 1: Universal Support

- Promotion of regular attendance through school culture and communication
- Inclusive classroom practices and positive relationships
- Whole-school wellbeing programs and engagement strategies

Tier 2: Targeted Support

- Monitoring patterns of absence or lateness
- Individual check-ins with students
- Communication and planning with families
- Short-term attendance goals and adjustments

Tier 3: Intensive Support

- Individual attendance plans
- Involvement of wellbeing staff and external agencies
- Referrals to Student Support Services (e.g. Social Work, Attendance/Truancy)
- Formal documentation and escalation where required

Absences and Notifications

- Parents/carers must notify the school of absences via phone, email, or approved school communication platforms
- If no explanation is received, the school will follow up with families
- Ongoing unexplained absences will be documented and addressed through the attendance support process

Exemptions from Attendance

The Principal may approve exemptions from attendance in accordance with Department for Education guidelines:

- Short-term exemptions: up to **1 month**
- Family holidays: up to **12 months**

Exemptions:

- Must be approved **before** the absence occurs
- Require completion of an official **Exemption Form**
- Are recorded and retained in the student's file
- Are still counted as absences for reporting purposes

Exemptions longer than one month (excluding holidays) must be approved by the Department for Education.

Monitoring, Review and Continuous Improvement

Attendance data is reviewed regularly to:

- Identify trends and emerging concerns
- Evaluate the effectiveness of supports and interventions
- Inform school planning and wellbeing strategies

This policy will be reviewed in line with Department for Education requirements or as school needs change.