



## ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES and PROCEDURES

### **Rationale**

Dowerin District High School expects that all students attend school on a regular basis (at least 90% of available days) to maximise the learning opportunities provided. The following procedures support students to achieve and maintain regular school attendance.

### **School community beliefs about the importance of attending school**

It is important that students, staff and parents/caregivers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school. Dowerin District High School:

- Believes all children should be enrolled at school and attend school all day, every school day, unless there are valid reasons for not doing so.
  - Valid reasons for non-attendance are illness, medical appointments and significant unavoidable personal matters.
- Monitors, communicates and implements strategies to improve regular school attendance.
- Believes truancing can place a student in unsafe situations and impact on their future employability and life choices.
- Believes all members of the Dowerin community should promote and support regular attendance.

### **Strategies**

At Dowerin District High School we promote regular attendance by:

- Providing a quality education for all students, catering for diverse needs and interests.
- Maintaining a safe and caring school environment,
- Promoting a shared vision of high attendance with all stakeholders, based on our commitment to student learning.
- Implementing consistent responses to addressing absences.
- Monitoring and tracking student attendance and setting attendance goals.

### **Responsibilities**

#### **Student responsibilities:**

- Be at school during normal timetable hours, or
- Be absent only with parents' or school's permission.
- Attend school on all days, including sports carnivals, excursions and Dowerin Field Days; unless there is a valid reason for not doing so.
- Be punctual. Hours of expected attendance are 8:45am – 3:00pm.

#### **Parent/Caregiver responsibilities:**

- Send children to school every school day except when valid circumstances (illness, medical and other unavoidable appointments) prevent this.
- Inform school of reason for any absence within three days of the absence.
- Inform the school in advance if there is a foreseeable extended absence.
- Collaborate with the school, using open, positive communication, to attempt to resolve any issues that may negatively impact student attendance.
- Plan for holidays during scheduled school holiday time.
  - i. Dowerin District High School acknowledges that holidays are an enriching experience, but by law, every student is expected to attend school every day. Teachers are not obliged to accommodate students on holiday with learning programs. Catch up work may be provided when a student is absent in the case of extended illness, with evidence, through negotiation with the administration team.
  - ii. Parents who wish to take students out of school for the purpose of a family holiday for longer than two school days are required to apply in writing, to Principal Barbara Garner.



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### **Responsibilities Continued**

#### **Classroom and Form Teacher responsibilities:**

- Maintain accurate attendance records, entering data into Integris by 9:15am daily.
- Contact parents/caregivers after any unexplained absence.
- Contact parents/caregivers if concerned about late arrivals and early departures.
- Use a Classroom Attendance Reflection Tool, focussing on barriers/blockers, strategies and responsibilities, for students close to moderate educational risk with unreasonable or unjust cause.
- Promote a safe and supportive school environment by teaching Explicit Teaching of Behaviours lessons.

#### **Administration responsibilities:**

- Use an automated SMS messaging system to contact parents/caregivers of any students with an unauthorised absence at 10am and 2pm, daily.
- Track and monitor individual student, whole school, and regular attendance fortnightly.
- Follow up any unexplained absences with Classroom and Form teachers, fortnightly.
- Develop a School Attendance Improvement plan, in collaboration with parents/caregivers and teachers, for students at severe educational risk and for students whose attendance has not improved after reasonable action has been taken by the Classroom/Form teacher.
- Send letters promoting attendance to families/caregivers with students at indicated educational risk (80 – 89%) and below, termly.
- Send letters asking parents/caregivers to explain unauthorised absences, termly.
- Ensure Principal and Deputy Principal are badged attendance officers.
- Provide targeted support, which may include the involvement of external agencies and home visits, for students at severe educational risk.
- Promote school attendance with the wider community (for example not serving school aged children during school hours)

### **Processes**

#### **Late Students**

Students arriving late to school are required to sign in through the front office. Students will be given a late pass which needs to be handed to the Classroom Teacher. Ongoing lateness will be discussed with parents/caregivers.

#### **Students Leaving During the Day**

Students needing to leave early in the day are expected to inform their Classroom Teacher of the time and reason the child needs to leave. Students need to be signed out of the front office by a parent or caregiver. Once signed out the student/caregiver will receive a pass to give to their teacher to indicate students have been signed out correctly.

#### **Illness and Injury at School**

If students fall ill or are injured at school, they will be sent to the front office where they will receive basic first aid. If a student is diagnosed as being too unwell to remain at school, or requires further medical treatment, the front office will contact the parents/carers to collect the student.