

## Attendance Policy Unley High School

### Belief Statement

At Unley High School, we believe student attendance is an essential part of fulfilling the requirements of our educational program. Regular attendance enables students to access education effectively and reach their full potential. School staff are expected to set an example for students, encouraging and emphasising attendance and punctuality.

### Rationale

Parents/Caregivers have a legal responsibility to ensure children between the ages of 6 and 17 years attend school, irrespective of distance from the school or whether a child has a disability or not. Students are required to be enrolled at a registered government or non-government school and must attend school every day instruction is provided for the child, unless the Minister for Education and Child Development has granted an exemption from school attendance. The Education Act 1972 outlines the appropriate regulations pertaining to school attendance.

Students under the age of compulsion (17 years), attend school to access curriculum and support that will help them prepare for their future pathways to further education, training and employment. Students under the age of compulsion who do not engage will be supported to re-engage with their schooling. Students over the age of compulsion who do not engage will be supported to negotiate/consider alternative pathways.

The Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) has a legal responsibility to record and monitor attendance and take appropriate action to rectify problems of non-attendance. In turn, Unley High School has responsibility for fulfilling DECD student attendance data collection and reporting requirements.

### Parent/Caregiver Responsibilities

- Parents/Caregivers are responsible for children getting to and from school, with the understanding that student supervision begins at 8:30am and ceases at 3:15pm.
- Inform the school of student absence by emailing their child's Home Group Teacher or phoning 8394 5400, prior to 8:30am wherever possible.
- Parents/Caregivers must provide the school with an appropriate explanation for non-attendance. This could comprise a letter, planner note, phone call, email, or a medical certificate.
- If an extended absence of four days or more is planned, Parents/Caregivers must complete an *Application for Exemption from School Attendance* form and notify their Home Group Teacher at least four weeks prior. Forms are available at [www.decd.sa.gov.au](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au) or from Student Services at school. If the absence is for four weeks or more, a letter outlining the purpose for the absence and a study plan from teachers must accompany the *Application for Exemption from School Attendance* form. All Year 11 and 12 students must include a letter outlining the purpose for the absence and a study plan from teachers must accompany the *Application for Exemption from School Attendance* form for absences of more than one week. Forms, study plans and letters should be returned to Student Services.

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**Government of South Australia**  
Department for Education and  
Child Development

Trading as: South Australian Government Schools.

CRICOS Provider Number: 00018A

It is recommended that families plan holidays during school holiday periods wherever possible. Please be aware if students miss assessment tasks while absent for family holidays, their grades may be affected. This may impact on Academic Achievement Awards.

- For students undertaking SACE, a medical certificate is requested if assessment deadlines will be missed due to illness.
- A note is required from Parents/Caregivers if a student arrives late to school or is to leave school prior to normal dismissal.

### **Student Responsibilities**

- Attend school every day school is open.
- Attend each of their scheduled lessons on time and for the duration of the lesson.
- Catch up on any work missed due to absence, ie be proactive in following up with teachers, and negotiating a completion date. The Learning Centre can be utilized to assist with this.
- Home Group begins at 8.45am
- When arriving after 9.00am, sign in at Student Services and provide an explanation in writing which is signed by a Parent/Caregiver.
- If leaving school before that day's lessons have been completed, sign out at Student Services and provide an explanation in writing, which is signed by a Parent Caregiver.
- Comply with consequences resulting from truancy from lessons or school.
- Senior students who have unscheduled lessons at the beginning or end of the day may negotiate with their Home Group Teacher to study from home during these times and attend scheduled lessons only. Year 12 students must attend Pastoral Care on Monday and two progress discussions per term.

### **Home Group Teacher Responsibilities**

- Take roll in Home Group and record attendance/absence details in Learner Management System (LMS)
- Sign any notes and forward any emails regarding a student leaving school during the day to Student Services.
- If a student is absent for three consecutive days without explanation, contact Parent/Caregiver.
- Document all attempts to contact Parent/Caregiver in LMS.
- If absences continue, or a pattern is noted, refer matter to Year Level Manager (YLM).
- Monitor student attendance for patterns of absence, including reasons for absence.

### **Subject Teacher Responsibilities**

- Take roll in class and record attendance details in LMS.
- If a student truant a lesson, if appropriate, issue an After School Detention/Catch up.
- If truancy reoccurs, inform YLM, Parent/Caregiver and Home Group Teacher.

### **Year Level Manager Responsibilities**

- Follow up referrals from Home Group Teacher and Subject Teachers with the student.
- Document attempts to contact Parents/Caregivers in LMS.
- If a wellbeing issue is causing a lack of attendance, refer student to a Student Counsellor.

### **Student Counsellor Responsibilities**

- Follow up referrals from YLM with the student.
- Document attempts to contact Parents/Caregivers in Counsellor Notes.
- If a satisfactory solution is not determined, refer to Attendance Officer.

**Assistant/Deputy Principal Responsibilities**

- Follow up referrals from YLM and Student Counsellor.
- Document attempts to contact Parents/Caregivers in LMS.
- If a satisfactory solution is not determined, refer to Attendance Officer.
  - ❖ 'Attendance at school' proforma letter can be sent by any staff member as appropriate, if co-signed by Principal.