



# Attendance



## Policy

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### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to

- ensure all children of compulsory school age are enrolled in a registered school and attend school every day the school is open for instruction
- ensure students, staff and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school
- explain to school staff and parents the key practices and procedures Kororoit Creek Primary School has in place to
  - support, monitor and maintain student attendance
  - record, monitor and follow up student absences.

### Scope

This policy applies to all students at Kororoit Creek Primary School.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Department of Education and Training's [School Attendance Guidelines](#). It does not replace or change the obligations of Kororoit Creek Primary School, parents and School Attendance Officers under legislation or the School Attendance Guidelines.

### Definition

*Parent* – includes a guardian and every person who has parental responsibility for the child, including parental responsibility under the *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth) and any person with whom a child normally or regularly resides.

### Policy

Schooling is compulsory for children and young people aged from 6 to 17 years (unless an exemption from attendance or enrolment has been granted).

Daily attendance is important for all children and young people to succeed in education and to ensure they do not fall behind both socially and developmentally. School participation maximises life opportunities for children and young people by providing them with education and support networks. School helps people to develop important skills, knowledge and values that set them up for further learning and participation in their community.

Students are expected to attend Kororoit Creek Primary School during normal school hours every day of each term unless:

- there is an approved exemption from school attendance for the student
- the student has a dual enrolment with another school and has only a partial enrolment in KCPS, or
- the student is registered for home schooling and has only a partial enrolment in KCPS for particular activities.

Both schools and parents have an important role to play in supporting students to attend school every day.

KCPS believes all students should attend school all day, every day when the school is open for instruction and is committed to working with its school community to encourage and support full school attendance.

Our school will identify individual students or cohorts who are vulnerable and whose attendance is at risk and/or declining and will work with these students and their parents to improve their attendance through a range of interventions and supports.

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Students are committed to attending school every day, arriving on time and are prepared to learn. Our students are encouraged to approach a teacher and seek assistance if there are any issues that are affecting their attendance.

KCPS parents are committed to ensuring their child/children attend school on time every day when instruction is offered, to communicating openly with the school and providing valid explanations for any absence. Parents will communicate with the relevant staff about any issues affecting their child's attendance and work in partnership with the school to address any concerns.

Parents will provide a reasonable explanation for their child's absence from school and endeavour to schedule family holidays, appointments and other activities outside of school hours.

### **Supporting and promoting attendance**

Kororoit Creek Primary School's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* supports student attendance. Our school also promotes student attendance by promoting the importance of regular attendance through the school newsletter, ensuring that parents are aware of their obligations to notify the school of their child's absence.

### **Recording Attendance**

**Kororoit Creek Primary School** must record student attendance twice per day. This is necessary to:

- meet legislative requirements
- discharge KCPS's duty of care for all students

Attendance will be recorded by the supervising teacher using Compass at 9.05 am at the start of the school day and again at 1.30pm prior to the students going outside for lunchtime.

If students are in attendance at a school approved activity off campus, the teacher in charge of the activity will record them as being present.

### **Recording absences**

For absences where there is no exemption in place, a parent must provide an explanation on each occasion to the school.

Parents are required to notify the school of a student's absence preferably in advance but no later than 9.30am on the day of absence. This can be done by:

- recording the absence on Compass
- contacting reception by phone or email
- a written note to the classroom teacher

If a student is absent on a particular day and the school has not been previously notified by a parent or guardian, or the absence is otherwise unexplained, KCPS will notify parents by automatic SMS or email messages. Parents will have the option to access Compass via a link in these messages to enter an explanation.

If contact cannot be made with the parent (due to incorrect contact details), the school will attempt to make contact with any emergency contact/s nominated on the student's file held by the school, where possible, on the day of the unexplained absence.

KCPS will keep a record of the reason given for each absence. The principal will determine if the explanation provided is a **reasonable excuse** for the purposes of the parent meeting their responsibilities under the *Education Training Reform Act 2006* and the School Attendance Guidelines.

If KCPS considers that the parent has provided a **reasonable excuse** for their child's absence/late arrival the absence will be marked as **'authorised absence'**.

If the school determines that no reasonable excuse has been provided, the absence will be marked as **'unauthorised absence'**.

The Principal has the discretion to accept a reason given by a parent for a student's absence. The Principal will generally excuse:

- illness or accident
- medical and dental appointments, where out of hours appointments are not possible or appropriate
- bereavement or attendance at the funeral of a relative or friend of the student

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- school refusal, if a plan is in place with the parent to address causes and support the student's return to school
- cultural observance if the parent/carer notifies the school in advance
- family holidays where the parent notifies the school in advance

Parents will be notified if an absence has not been excused by letter. A letter will be sent out every 4 weeks notifying the parent of any unexplained absences and providing a space for an explanation to return back to school. If no explanation is provided by the parent within 10 school days of an absence, it will be recorded as an 'unexplained absence' and recorded on the student's file.

### **Late arrivals and Early departures**

At Kororoit Creek Primary School homerooms will be open and supervised at 8.50am. Music will play over the school sound system to indicate that children must make their way to their classroom to ensure they are ready for learning time to commence at 9.00am.

Students arriving at school after the 9.00am bell must present to the front office and will be issued with a late pass which is then given to the supervising teacher.

Unauthorised late arrivals are monitored over a two week period and the following actions take place:

- First late arrival- An automatic SMS is sent to the parent. Parents will have the option to access Compass via a link in these messages to enter an explanation for the late arrival.
- Second late arrival- A follow up phone call from the Attendance Officer to the parent
- Third late arrival- Assistant Principal is informed and a follow up call or meeting is arranged to provide relevant support.

Students are required for the full school day to ensure they are not missing valuable learning time. Whilst the school understands that there may be unavoidable instances where a child needs to be collected from school early for reasons such as medical appointments students are required to be at until 3.15pm.

Parents or guardians collecting students before the end of the school day are required to report to the office with photo identification. Staff will record the students departure on Compass if parents have not already done so prior to collecting their child.

If someone other than the parent needs to collect a student from school early, authorisation needs to be provided by the parent prior to collection through a phone call or email to reception.

### **Managing non-attendance and supporting student engagement**

Where absences are of concern due to their nature or frequency, or where a student has been absent for more than five days, KCPS will work collaboratively with parents, the student, and other professionals, where appropriate, to develop strategies to improve attendance, including:

- establishing an Attendance Student Support Group
- implementing a Return to School Plan
- implementing a Student Absence Learning Plan for students who will be absent for an extended period
- arranging for assistance from relevant staff eg. Student Wellbeing officer and Assistant Principal.

We understand from time to time that some students will need additional supports and assistance, and in collaboration with the student and their family, will endeavour to provide this support when it is required,

### **Referral to School Attendance Officer**

If KCPS decides that it has exhausted strategies for addressing a student's unsatisfactory attendance, we may, in accordance with the School Attendance Guidelines refer the non-attendance to a DET School Attendance Officer in the South Western Regional office for further action.

If, from multiple attempts to contact a parent, it becomes apparent that a student will not be returning to the school, the principal may make a referral to a School Attendance Officer if:

- the student has been absent from school on at least five full days in the previous 12 months where:
  - the parent has not provided a reasonable excuse for these absences; and
  - measures to improve the student's attendance have been undertaken and have been unsuccessful

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- the student's whereabouts are unknown and:
  - the student has been absent for 10 consecutive school days; or
  - no alternative education destination can be found for the student.

**More information and resources**

- [School Attendance Guidelines](#)
- School Policy and Advisory Guide: [Attendance](#)

**Review cycle and evaluation**

This policy was last updated on 21 February 2019 and is due to be reviewed every 3-4 years.