



ARMADALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

AIM: For all Armadale Primary School Students to have regular attendance during their time enrolled at the school.

As per the Western Australian School Education Act of 1999, “a student **must** attend school on the days on which school is open for instruction”. Parents/carers are required to inform the school as to the reason for absence within three days of the first day of absence.”

The Department categorises student attendance in the following ways:

| | | |
|-------------------|------------|---------------------------------------|
| REGULAR | 90% - 100% | High chance of achieving potential |
| AT INDICATED RISK | 80% - 89% | Reduced chance of achieving potential |
| AT MODERATE RISK | 60% - 79% | Limited chance of achieving potential |
| AT SEVERE RISK | 0% - 59% | Unlikely to achieve potential |

SCHOOL HOURS

First bell – 8:25am

Second bell – 8:35am

RECESS – 10:45am – 11:05am

LUNCH – 1:05pm – 1:45pm

End of Day bell – 2:45pm

LATE ARRIVALS

Students arriving at school AFTER 8:35am are considered late. They must pass through the front office to collect a late pass. The office staff will mark their time of arrival via compass. Students are then to hand the late pass to their classroom teacher. This assures the teacher that the morning roll has been adjusted to reflect the late arrival. If the child arrives after 12:00pm, this will be counted as a half day absence.

EARLY DEPARTURE

If a parent/carer needs to collect their child from school before the end of the regular school day, they must first visit the front office and sign the student out. They will then be given a slip to hand to the staff member currently supervising their child. If this is during break time, the slip needs to be given to one of the staff on duty. Staff may only release a child into the care of the parent/legal guardian once they have received and sighted this slip. Any students picked up before 2pm will be marked as having a half day absence.

NOTIFICATION/RECORDING OF ABSENCE

If a student is going to be absent from school, it is the responsibility of their parent/legal guardian to inform the school of the absence and its reason. This notification can be made in the following ways:

- The Compass App
- Calling the front office on 93914500 during office hours (Mon -Fri 7:30am – 3:30pm)

If there has been no notification of absence by 9:30am, an automated text message will be sent to the primary contacts of students marked UNEXPLAINED ABSENT on the morning class rolls. This is to inform parents of any truancy and provide an opportunity for parents/carers to reply with a reason for the absence.

*As per the Western Australian School Education Act of 1999, "Parents/carers are required to inform the school as to the reason for absence **within three days** of the first day of absence."*

At APS we aim to be as accommodating as possible and instead allow three weeks for parents to log the reasons for student absences. After this three-week period elapses, attendance will be locked as an UNEXPLAINED ABSENCE.

ACCEPTABLE REASONS FOR STUDENT ABSENCE

As per the Department of Education, the following are acceptable reasons for a student absence

- your child is unable to attend because they are sick
- attending cultural or religious observances such as sorry time and funerals
- an unavoidable medical appointment
- an unavoidable natural event such as flood waters or a cyclone

Students who are away for the above reasons will be marked as absent with 'Reasonable Cause' via the Compass platform, once the school has been informed by the parent/guardian.

UNACCEPTABLE REASONS FOR STUDENT ABSENCE

As per the Department of Education, the following are NOT acceptable reasons for a student absence

- is celebrating a birthday
- is going on a family holiday
- is visiting family and friends
- has slept in or had a big weekend
- is looking after other children
- hot weather
- has sport or other recreational activities that have not been approved by the school
- has appointment such as haircuts and minor check ups

Students absent for any of the above reasons will be marked as absent with 'Unacceptable Reason' via the Compass platform, once the school has been informed by the parent/guardian.

*NOTE: Members of the APS administration team may refer to Department policy and use their discretion, on a case-by-case basis, to determine whether a particular absence is accompanied by an ACCEPTABLE or UNACCEPTABLE reason.

EXTENDED MEDICAL ABSENCES

If a child is absent/going to be absent for three or more consecutive school days (including across weekends) with an illness given as the reason, the school may request a medical certificate or similar evidence for the absence.

IN-TERM VACATIONS

The Department of Education policy states that family vacations taking place during a school term are an UNACCEPTABLE reason for student absence. Principals are permitted, in some circumstances, to use discretion and rule a vacation as ACCEPTABLE. Some vacation reasons that **may** qualify **might** include:

- Travelling for a funeral
- Travelling for the wedding of an immediate family member
- Travelling for cultural reasons

If a student's absence is entered into Compass by a parent with vacation given as the reason, the Corporate Service Officers (front office staff) will defer to admin to make a ruling and then mark the absence as either acceptable or unacceptable.

We do strongly encourage parents/carers to contact the principal and their child(ren)'s teacher(s) prior to going on a vacation as absences affect classroom and school planning. However, prior notification **does not** guarantee that the vacation will be recorded as an acceptable reason.

INFORMING PARENTS OF ATTENDANCE CONCERNS

Attendance letters will be generated through Compass and sent to parents/carers at the following times:

TERM 1: Final week of term

TERM 2: Week 5

TERM 2: Final week of Term

TERM 3: Week 5

TERM 3: Final week of Term

TERM 4: Week 5

TERM 4: Final week of Term

The attendance letters will be sent to the parents/carers of ALL students with a Year-to-Date attendance below 90%, separated into the following categories:

AT INDICATED RISK **80% - 89%** Reduced chance of achieving potential

| | | |
|------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| AT MODERATE RISK | 60% - 79% | Limited chance of achieving potential |
| AT SEVERE RISK | 0% - 59% | Unlikely to achieve potential |

****NOTE:**

- Student attendance percentages are calculated by dividing the total number of days marked absent by the total number of days the school has been open in the calendar year.
- Half day absences DO affect this percentage
- Explained absences and/or Reasonable Cause absences DO NOT affect student attendance percentage. *E.g. A child missing 15% of school days, having all days explained with a reasonable cause will still receive an attendance letter as their attendance is 85%. Regardless of the reason, an attendance below 90% places a child AT RISK of not achieving their potential.*
- Vacations, whether authorised or not, affect students' attendance percentages

REQUESTING AN ATTENDANCE MEETING

The administration team may request, within the aforementioned attendance letters, a meeting with the parents/carers of students for which they are becoming concerned about attendance. This concern could be due to factors such as:

- A sharp drop in attendance
- Prolonged periods of low attendance
- A high percentage of student absences being unexplained
- Becoming aware of school refusal leading to decrease attendance
- Patterns emerging in the days/times of absences

The purpose of these meetings is to:

- Determine the reason(s) for the absences
- Identify ways in which the school can support the student and their family
- Create a plan (if necessary) through which increased attendance can be achieved

DESIGNATED ATTENDANCE OFFICER

Staff can become a badged attendance officer to perform attendance duties away from a school site.

Badged attendance officers may visit public spaces or conduct home visits to check for students who:

- are not enrolled in an educational program
- are absent from school.

Principals can authorise school staff. Directors of education can authorise regional office staff and principals.

Staff employed by an external agency cannot be authorised as badged attendance officers.

Our school's Designated Attendance Officer is:

Name: Trent Pattison

Position: Assistant Principal

Expiry: 21.11.2026

Maintaining a regular attendance (90% or higher) is one of the most powerful factors in students achieving success not only academically, but socially and emotionally as well. It is imperative that the school and families present a united front with adherence to this policy. This will give every student their best chance at successful schooling, and a successful future.

Armadale Primary School

Updated 9.9.2024