



**ALEXANDRA HILLS STATE SCHOOL**

# **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

## **2016-2018**

<p><b>Rationale</b></p>	<p>As a school we strongly believe that consistent, full time attendance and punctuality on each school day are important characteristics of successful students. Being on time and prepared to learn gives everyone their best chance of success in the classroom and for their academic futures. This attendance plan and policy has been prepared in accordance with and in reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Alexandra Hills State School's Vision.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Alexandra Hills State School's Values of I am Safe, I am Respectful and I am a Learner</i></li> <li>▪ <i>DET Initiative Everyday Counts</i></li> <li>▪ <i>The Education (General Provisions) Act 2006, Chapter 9 Parts 1,2,3,and 4 and Chapter 10 Parts 1,2,3,and 4, and</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Departmental policies and guidelines:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>SMS-PR-036: Roll Marking in State Schools.</i></li> <li>• <i>SMS-PR-031: Flexible Arrangements for School Students</i></li> <li>• <i>SMS-PR-030: Exemptions from Compulsory Schooling and Compulsory Participation.</i></li> <li>• <i>SMS-PR-043: Managing Student Absences and Enforcing Enrolment and Attendance at State Schools.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>School community beliefs regarding the importance of attending school</b></p>	<p><i>At Alexandra Hills State School we acknowledge the importance of all students, staff, parents and caregivers sharing a clear and common understanding of how vital attending school everyday is for every student.</i></p> <p><i>Alexandra Hills State School:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>is committed to promoting the key messages of Every Day Counts</i></li> <li>• <i>believes all children should be enrolled at school and attend school all day, every school day</i></li> <li>• <i>monitors, communicates and implements strategies to improve regular school attendance</i></li> <li>• <i>believes that it is a parent's and caregivers responsibility to ensure that their child attends school on every school day for the educational program in which he/she is enrolled.</i></li> <li>• <i>recognises that a parent of a young person in the compulsory participation phase is obliged to ensure their child is participating full-time in an approved education or training option.</i></li> <li>• <i>Insists that at any time a student is not attending or participating in their educational program it is considered an absence and must be explained.</i></li> <li>• <i>believes truancing can place a student in unsafe situations and impact on their future employability and life choices</i></li> <li>• <i>believes attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community.</i></li> </ul>

**Everyday Counts**

Every Day Counts is a DET state-wide initiative addressing the issue of student attendance at school. The initiative is designed to assist in ensuring a positive and committed attitude by parents, community and students towards consistent, full time school attendance. It requires the support of all parties within the school community to successfully manage student attendance.

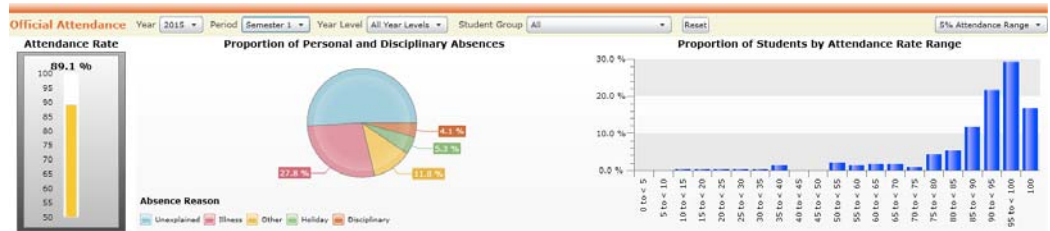
Every Day Counts promotes four key messages;

- all children should be enrolled at school and attend on every school day
- schools should monitor, communicate and implement strategies to improve regular school attendance
- truancing can place a student in unsafe situations and impact on their future employability and life choices
- attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community. While most students attend school consistently, there is a small number of students who are absent from school without an acceptable reason and this may harm their education.

**Attendance data snapshot**

2012	2013	2014	2015
91.8%	90.1%	89.8%	89%

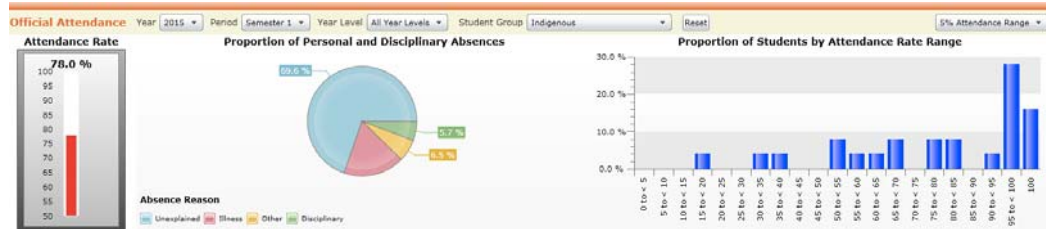
Currently, student attendance levels are recorded as 89%.



**Indigenous focus school  
Indigenous Student data**

2012	2013	2014	2015
92.2%	86.9%	86.7%	78%

Currently, Indigenous attendance levels are recorded as 78%.



**Attendance targets**

2016	2017	2018	2019
93%	94%	95%	96%

<p><b>Compulsory schooling</b></p>	<p>Each parent of a child who is of compulsory school age must ensure that the child is enrolled and attends school on every school day for the educational programs in which the child is enrolled unless the parent has a reasonable excuse. A parent of a young person in the compulsory phase must ensure the young person is participating full-time in an eligible option, unless the parent has a reasonable excuse.</p> <p>Parents of children of Compulsory School Age have a legal obligation to ensure that their children are enrolled in school and attend for every day of the educational program in which they are enrolled. □(Further information can be obtained in the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006)</p>
<p><b>Early warning signs</b></p>	<p>At <i>Alexandra Hills State School</i>, we are committed to identifying early warning signs of irregular attendance by our students. □Some early warning signs include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Arriving late for school and or classes</li> <li>2. Leaving school early on a regular basis</li> <li>3. Many days absent (either unexplained absences or through illness or family □reasons)</li> <li>4. Learning Difficulties</li> <li>5. Being a victim of bullying or harassment</li> <li>6. Difficulties moving from one school to another</li> <li>7. Health issues experienced by the student and or a family member.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Celebrating great student attendance</b></p>	<p>At <i>Alexandra Hills State School</i>, we recognise outstanding attendance by celebrating with students and the community at the end of each term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principal Certificates</li> <li>• <i>Attendance Prize Raffle</i> for students recording 93%+ attendance and students recording 100% attendance.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Student attendance</b></p> <p><b>Parent responsibilities</b></p>	<p>If a student is going to be absent from school parents / caregivers should;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ring the school on the <i>Alexandra Hills State School Absentee Hotline</i> on <b>3820 0360</b> to report the absence and reason why the student will not be attending that day.</li> <li>• Provide a note explaining the absence prior to or on the first day of the student returning to school.</li> <li>• Parents wanting their child to leave school early must sign the student out at the front desk in Administration and provide the official slip to the teacher prior to removing the student from class. In the interest of child safety, no student will be able to exit the classroom unless this procedure has been followed. □</li> </ul> <p><i>Please note that our school is not obliged to provide work for a student/s whose parents/caregivers voluntarily take them on holidays during a school term/s. However, we will endeavour to do so if given sufficient notice.</i></p>

<p><b>Student attendance</b></p> <p><b>Student responsibilities</b></p>	<p><i>Alexandra Hills State School</i> students should adhere to the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Students must be</i> at school by 8:30am every day. Students arriving after 8:45am must report to Administration.</li> <li>• Students who are arriving late unaccompanied by a parent/caregiver should provide a note explaining their tardiness.</li> <li>• Students must be on time to class. Students persistently arriving late will be sent to the Office to explain their tardiness to the Principal.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Student attendance</b></p> <p><b>Teacher responsibilities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers will mark their class rolls promptly at 8:45am and 2:00pm on <i>OneSchool</i> on each school day. If for some reason <i>OneSchool</i> cannot be accessed, teachers are to mark a paper roll. If a parent/guardian informs you of a student's absence you are to update this information on <i>OneSchool</i>.</li> <li>• If a student has been away for three consecutive days without explanation, teachers are to ring or email parents/caregivers in an attempt to ascertain why the student has been absent. This contact must be recorded on <i>OneSchool</i>.</li> <li>• If the teacher is unable to reach the parent / caregiver and the absences continue the matter should be referred to the Principal.</li> <li>• If a teacher recognises a pattern in a students absences or is concerned about a student's lack of attendance, they should attempt to communicate that concern with the Parent/Caregiver. If this attempt of communication is unsuccessful than the matter should be referred to the Principal.</li> <li>• If a child arrives late to class without a formal late slip they should be referred to the Office.</li> <li>• No student can leave early from school unless an official early departure slip is provided by the parent/caregiver.</li> <li>• Consistently reinforce attendance expectations with students and parents.</li> <li>• Ask students to graph their own attendance on a regular basis.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Student attendance</b></p> <p><b>Administration Officer Responsibilities</b></p>	<p>The Alexandra Hills State School Administration Officer will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generate Late Slips for students to take to their class on arrival.</li> <li>• Generate the monthly absences reports for students with unexplained absences <input type="checkbox"/> and provide them to the Principal.</li> <li>• Generate the Absence Alert letters (per the Principals request) and <input type="checkbox"/> record these contacts in <i>OneSchool</i>.</li> <li>• Notify the Principal immediately if there are any students who have fifteen <input type="checkbox"/> continuous days of unexplained absences.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Student attendance</b></p> <p><b>Principal Responsibilities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact parents on the lists provided to them by the AO2 to either get explanations for the absences or arrange an interview (This is to be recorded on <i>OneSchool</i>)</li> <li>• Place any student approaching this phase of absenteeism on an <i>Individual Attendance Plan</i>.</li> <li>• Discuss data trends and the underlying reasons for absences during <i>Staff Meetings</i>.</li> <li>• Establish and publicise an attendance target and report progress towards that target on websites and in newsletters.</li> <li>• Include information about the attendance policy in <i>Alexandra Hills State</i></li> </ul>

<p><b>Student attendance</b></p> <p><b>Principal Responsibilities</b></p>	<p><i>School Prospectus</i> and in information for new parents. Ensure that parents of Prep students understand the importance of attending school every day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include frequent and consistent messages about the importance of attendance in all communications with the school community including newsletters, assemblies, noticeboards, websites, Facebook pages, flyers, and at Staff Meetings. Emphasise the importance of attendance at the beginning of each year, with reminders throughout the year.</li> <li>• Monitor any student whose absenteeism reaches 15 days of continuous <input type="checkbox"/> absenteeism or chronic absenteeism. Principal also to monitor student who is <input type="checkbox"/> experiencing school refusal (This is to be recorded on <i>OneSchool</i>).</li> <li>• Principal to approve the use of <i>Form 4 Failure to Attend Notice (s178(2))</i> – <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Students of Compulsory School Age Letter</i>.</li> <li>• Encourage open dialogue with staff, students, parents, and the community to <input type="checkbox"/> identify potential improvements and new ideas.</li> <li>• Stage public pledges on school attendance where the school, student and <input type="checkbox"/> parent sign an agreement.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Forms of absenteeism</b></p> <p><b>Chronic absenteeism</b></p>	<p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistent or habitual absence or lateness</li> <li>• Students with high levels of absences, variously defined</li> <li>• Has 10% or more school days absent</li> <li>• Parents may provide explanations for absences, but these explanations may be considered unreasonable.</li> </ul>	<p><b>School responsibilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistent or habitual absence or lateness</li> <li>• Students with high levels of absences, variously defined as 10% or more school days absent</li> <li>• Parents may provide explanations for absences, but these explanations may be considered unreasonable.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Forms of absenteeism</b></p> <p><b>School refusal</b></p>	<p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A form of chronic absenteeism</li> <li>• Parents often are aware of the absenteeism but are unable to address it.</li> </ul> <p>Students who are almost <input type="checkbox"/> completely unwilling or unable to <input type="checkbox"/> attend school because of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• their past school experiences;</li> <li>• psycho-social reasons related to clinical levels of anxiety;</li> <li>• a developed habit of absence.</li> </ul>	<p><b>School responsibilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The school gathers information about the student and family to help understand the nature of and reasons for the absences.</li> <li>▪ The school implements strategies to address issues like learning problems or bullying where appropriate.</li> <li>▪ School support staff such as Guidance Officers to be involved.</li> <li>▪ Where appropriate the school refers students and parents to relevant professionals for programs according to the individual student’s needs.</li> <li>▪ Solutions may require whole-of-government intervention and support, as for truancy.</li> </ul>

	<b>Examples</b>	<b>School responsibilities</b>
<p><b>Forms of absenteeism</b></p> <p><b>Truancy</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Disengagement from school</li> <li>▪ May be accompanied by alienation from the school culture</li> <li>▪ Unexplained absences from school perhaps without the knowledge of the parent/s</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where the reasons for truancy pertain to aspects of the school, the school implements strategies to address these aspects.</li> </ul> <p>The school alone may not be able to address all of the needs of the student (home environment, social and emotional wellbeing and/or mental health). Schools should work with the family and liaise with other agencies.</p>