



## UNDERDALE HIGH SCHOOL – ATTENDANCE POLICY

DECD Policy	Attendance Policy
Leader Responsible	Senior Leader – Student Wellbeing and Engagement Leader
Status	Approved, endorsed by Governing Council
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Underdale High School is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all students and regular attendance and engagement in the learning program will influence educational and life success. Research shows that regular non-attendance can have a big impact on students' academic achievements and affect their relationships with other students, and lead to social isolation.

### DECD Requirements

The South Australian Government has identified improved attendance as a priority for the Department of Education and Child Development (DECD) schools with the aim to achieve 95% minimum attendance for all students.

To achieve this:

- The Educational Act specifies that a child who is under 17 years of age must attend school.
- The parent/caregiver has the primary responsibility for meeting this legal requirement.
- Schools have the legal responsibility to record and monitor attendance
- Schools must take appropriate action to rectify problems of non-attendance.
- Students who are in receipt of Youth Allowance are allowed no more than 5 days of unexplained absence from school in a term. Students in breach of this Mutual Obligation to Centrelink can incur a loss of entitlements.

Therefore, Underdale High School will aim to use early intervention strategies and communication with parents/caregivers as keys to improving attendance.

This includes:

- Promoting high expectations for school attendance through newsletter items and acknowledgement of improvement in attendance.
- Home Group Teacher monitoring overall attendance.
- Discussions with parent/caregiver about the significance of regular attendance and its impact on student achievement.
- Year Level Coordinator referring to Behaviour Management Policy to outline possible consequences for students who do not provide an acceptable explanation of non-attendance.
- Student Services Team to facilitate family meetings for chronic non-attenders, discuss and monitor strategies to improve attendance.

### Attendance Expectations

School commences at 8.45 am each day and finishes at 3.15, except Wednesday, when the school day finishes at 2.15 pm. All students who arrive/depart outside of these times must provide an explanation from a parent/caregiver when signing in/out of Students Services.

### Exceptions:

- Senior students who have no scheduled lessons at the beginning/end of the day can *sign in/out* as Home Study. Timetable must be presented to Student Services
- Students on alternate learning programs. Timetable to be presented to Student Services.
- Students, in consultation with Year Level Coordinators, who have alternative arrangements.

### Reasons for absence

The Parent/Caregiver is required to promptly provide an explanation for absence, either by:

- Telephone: Contact the School on 8301 8000.
- Email: Contact the Home Group Teacher via email.
- Diary Note: Provide a note on the day of return from absence.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

*Also refer to the Student Attendance and Absence Procedures Flowchart.*

### Student

- Attend school and all scheduled lessons each day unless there is an acceptable reason for an absence.
- Arrive at school prior to the first bell (8.40 am) and remain on site unless there is permission to leave early.
- Students who have Home Study or another valid explanation for arriving/leaving out of normal school hours must sign in/out at Student Services.
- Check DAYMAP to complete work that has been set on day of absence.
- In negotiation with the Subject Teacher, assessment due on day of absence must be completed and, as required, accompanied with a valid medical certificate according to the Submission of Work Policy.
- Remind parent/caregiver to promptly provide an explanation for absence/lateness to the school.

### Parent/Caregiver

- Ensure that your child is enrolled at school and regularly attends the educational program offered at Underdale High School.
- Contact the school promptly via phone, email or note to provide an explanation for absence/lateness.
- Access DAYMAP Parent Portal to monitor your child's attendance and assessment requirements, especially when absent.
- Acceptable explanations for absence will only include:
  - Illness (Year 11/12 absences from summative assessment must be accompanied with a valid medical certificate).
  - Illness (3 or more consecutive days must be verified by a medical certificate).
  - Medical/dental appointments that cannot be made out of school hours (verified by appointment card).
  - Family trauma/bereavement (parent/caregiver note).
  - Days of religious or cultural significance.
  - Other reasons accepted by the Principal.
- Students who are absent from school for more than 3 days for family holiday or reasons other than illness need to complete an exemption form before they leave, available from the front office.

## RESPONSIBILITIES FOR MONITORING ATTENDANCE AT UNDERDALE HIGH SCHOOL

Student Services Team, Subject Teachers and Home Group Teachers will monitor student attendance. If a student has an unexplained absence an SMS will be sent to the parent/caregiver. Where a pattern of non-attendance is identified then appropriate action will be taken and will include family meetings.

*Ultimate responsibility for **monitoring attendance** rests with the Home Group Teacher.*

### Home Group Teacher

- Explanation to students of expectations, responsibilities and support around attendance.
- Maintain accurate electronic records using DAYMAP, marking and updating roll with appropriate code **every** lesson.
- Home Group Teacher is informed by Subject Teacher to follow up unexplained lesson absences.
- Consistently monitor partial and full day absences and follow up unexplained absences using agreed procedures and consequences as appropriate.
- Contact parent/caregiver for all unexplained absences according to UHS procedures.

- Monitor student attendance to all subject lessons weekly and follow up unexplained lesson absences with Subject Teachers, students and parent/caregiver.
- Record appropriate actions taken in student Attendance Note on DAYMAP.
- Refer to Year Level Coordinators if additional support and early intervention is required.
- Cross reference DAYMAP roll to EDSAS printout for accuracy of attendance data.

### **Subject Teacher**

- Maintain accurate subject rolls using DAYMAP, marking roll with appropriate code **every** lesson.
- Ensure students are punctual to all lessons.
- Monitor attendance and inform Home Group Teacher immediately, via email (cc Year Level Coordinator), of any unexplained student absence/lateness.
- Send/email letter of concern to parent/caregiver for non-attendance.
- Document actions taken in student Attendance Note on DAYMAP.
- Record class work, homework and assessment tasks using DAYMAP to support students to catch up with work taught and assessment tasks set if absent.
- All missed summative work must be completed by students according to the Submission of Work Policy and by negotiation with the Subject Teacher and, as required, accompanied with a valid medical certificate
- Refer to Year Level Coordinator students who have absences of 20% or greater after 4 weeks of the commencement in a subject.

### **Year Level Coordinator**

- Monitor student attendance weekly through DAYMAP checks.
- Follow up students referred by Home Group and Subject Teachers.
- Facilitate meetings with families of students who are repeatedly late/absent.
- Develop strategies with students and monitor progress through a Student Learning Plan.
- Refer to Behaviour Management Policy to outline possible consequences for repeated absences/lateness.
- Manage student referrals with chronic attendance issues (10 days or more)
- Monitor students at risk with continuing attendance issues at weekly Case Management meetings.
- Document actions taken in student Attendance Note on DAYMAP.

### **Student Services Team**

- Support Year Level Coordinators with Case Management of chronic non-attenders.
- Oversee collection and analysis of data to monitor student attendance and identify students with continuing attendance issues.
- Maintain Datawall to provide meaningful data for staff to monitor student attendance.
- Assistant Principal oversees Case Management for chronic non-attenders and manages referrals to DECD Regional Attendance Officer (10 days or more).
- Student Counsellors support students and families in managing attendance issues.
- VET Coordinator investigates alternative educational pathways for identified students.
- FLO Coordinator investigates and supports students in their retention in learning programs.
- Document actions taken in student Attendance Note on DAYMAP.

*Also refer to the Student Attendance and Absence Procedures Flowchart.*

# Student Attendance and Absence Procedures

