



## ATTENDANCE POLICY

In NSW all children between the ages of six and below the minimum school leaving age of seventeen are legally required to attend school or an educational facility. Information below outlines the procedures and requirements relating to attendance matters at Albion Park Rail Public School.

Regular attendance at school is important for students to reach their potential. Regular attendance and engagement in educational programs is strongly linked to the likelihood of students experiencing success in learning. Students who have poor patterns of attendance are at risk of not achieving their potential and are disadvantaged in the quality of choices they are able to make in later life. Such learners may be:

- socially isolated and experience bullying and harassment
- at risk of harm during times of absence by being more likely to be involved in socially unacceptable and/or illegal activities
- have gaps in their knowledge and understanding of basic concepts
- more likely to leave school at a younger age
- over-represented in the juvenile justice system
- at risk due to wellbeing and possible child protection issues

If you are having difficulties in getting your child to school you should contact the Principal as soon as possible to discuss the problem and ask for help.

### WHOLE DAY ABSENCES

*The Education Act 1990* requires your child to attend school each day that instruction is provided unless prevented from doing so by sickness or other approved reason. The Principal will only grant leave for the following instances:

- sickness – where the absence is satisfactorily explained as being due to illness
- misadventure or unforeseen event
- participation in special events not related to the school
- domestic necessity such as serious illness of an immediate family member
- attendance at funerals
- recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions

If a student is absent, a note explaining the absence should be handed in to the teacher on the first day of their return. The explanation should contain:

1. Date that the note was written

2. Student's name
3. Days/dates the student was absent from school
4. The reason the student was absent
5. The signature of the student's parent or caregiver

If more than one student from the same family has been absent a separate note for each student should be written.

Students can collect an **absence note book** from their teacher, or the Office staff. It makes note writing easy as it ensures all the relevant information is given to the school.

Parent/s or caregivers are required – by law – to provide a written or verbal explanation to the Principal ***within seven days*** of any absence as to why their child was not at school. It is important that the school receives a written or verbal explanation because:

1. It is a parent's legal obligation to explain their child's absence ***within seven days***
2. It is a requirement that the school investigate all unexplained absences
3. It is the way the school knows that your child was legitimately absent

**The Act requires you to explain your child's absences  
within seven days of their occurrence**

**Failure to do so will result in an unjustified absence being recorded**

It is important for parents to make attending school a priority. Allowing children days off for birthdays, to look after younger children, to go shopping, to keep you company or because they were tired from a late night, not only sends the wrong message to your child, it is also against the law. Children who get used to having days off school for these kinds of reasons develop an attitude that their attendance at school is not very important. This can become a big issue, as a child gets older.

An attendance rate of 95% or above is a good target. This equates to no more than three days absence per term.

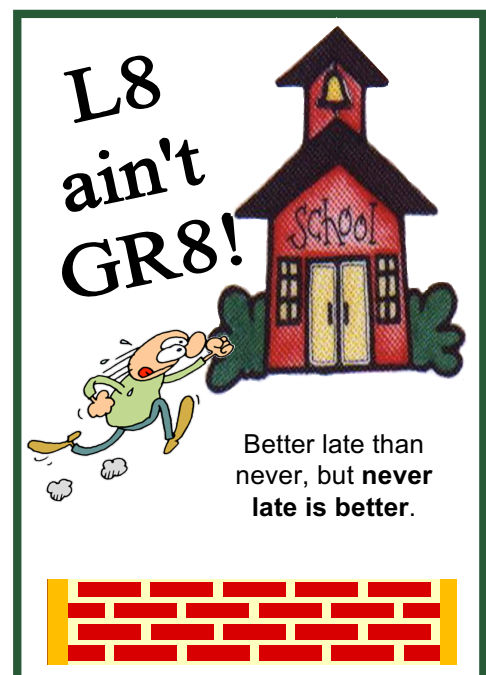
**PARTIAL DAY ABSENCES**

In some instances your child may **arrive late** to school. It is important that on these occasions the student signs in at the Office and provides a satisfactory explanation for the lateness. The students must take a late pass to their class teacher when they arrive at school.

Teach your children that being on time is important.

Requests to leave early should be kept to a minimum. Appointments, wherever possible, should be made outside of school time. Leaving early after special school events counts as a partial absence.

If you are picking up your child early, please come to the Office and sign your child out. The Office staff will have the Office Assistant collect your child from their classroom to meet you at the Office.



If you know in advance about picking your child/children up during recess or lunch (between 11am and 11.30am or between 1.30pm and 2pm) it would be helpful to send a note to the

class teacher in the morning so that your child can meet you at the Office as it can sometimes be difficult to locate students in our vast playground areas.

## **EXTENDED OR SPECIAL LEAVE**

The Principal can grant exemptions from attendance at school in certain circumstances.

These include:

- exceptional circumstances such as health of the student where sick leave or alternative enrolment is not appropriate
- participation in elite sporting events for short periods of time i.e. for one or two days, and at short notice

The DEC no longer offers exceptions for domestic circumstances, including participation in **family holidays** during school term.

In the case of students of compulsory school age who are enrolled in school, applications for exemption from school attendance must be *applied for in advance*.

## **ATTENDANCE CERTIFICATE**

At Albion Park Rail Public School we acknowledge and encourage the students to strive for high levels of attendance, as we value the significant impact positive attendance patterns can have on the students who attend school here.

Students who attend every day without any partial absences are acknowledged with a special certificate in recognition of this tremendous effort - **100% Attendance Certificate**. Each term is counted individually. These certificates are presented at a Whole School Assembly, usually in Week 10. Attendance is tracked over the course of the year and students with no absences throughout the year are again acknowledged at our End Of Year Presentation Assemblies.

**Near Perfect Attendance Certificate** - The students who are eligible for these certificates will have had less than 3 days of absences in that term. This can be a combination of whole day absences or partial absences. Each term is counted individually. These certificates will be presented by class teachers in stage assemblies or at another suitable time.

**EFFECTIVE: January 2018**