

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. All students, staff and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school. This policy explains to school staff and parents the key practices and procedures Laurimar Primary School has in place to support, monitor and maintain student attendance and record, monitor and follow up student absences.

This policy applies to all students at Laurimar 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 LPS, parents and School Attendance Officers under legislation or the School Attendance Guidelines.

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.

SCOPE

To maximise student learning opportunities and performance by ensuring that children attend school on time every day and without unnecessary absences.

DEFINITION

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

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

POLICY

Students are expected to attend Laurimar 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 Laurimar Primary School, or
- the student is registered for home schooling and has only a partial enrollment in Laurimar Primary School for particular activities.

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

Laurimar Primary School 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.

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

Laurimar Primary School parents are committed to ensuring their child/children attend school on time every day when instruction is offered, to communicate openly with the school and provide valid explanations for any absence.

Parents will communicate with the relevant staff at Laurimar Primary School 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 & PROMOTING ATTENDANCE

Laurimar Primary School *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* supports student attendance.

Our school also promotes student attendance by:

- continuing to promote a minimum attendance rate of 95% for all students to ensure that core teaching and learning is not missed throughout the year
- Attendance Awards will be given at the end of each semester for students who have achieved 100% attendance
- 'Breakfast with the Stars' student wellbeing club

Laurimar Primary School must record student attendance twice per day. This is necessary to:

- meet legislative requirements
- discharge Laurimar Primary School's duty of care for all students

Attendance will be recorded by the classroom at the start of the school day 9am and after lunch 2.30pm using Compass.

If students are in attendance at a school approved activity, 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 should notify Laurimar Primary School of absences by:

- using Compass (Preferable)
- with a written note or medical certificate upon their child's return
- contacting the school office (9717 7100) on the day of the absence
- contacting the student's class teacher via Class Dojo

If a student is absent on a particular day and the school has not been previously notified by a parent, or the absence is otherwise unexplained, Laurimar Primary School will notify parents by a phone call. Laurimar Primary School will attempt to contact parents on the second day of the unexplained absence, allowing time for the parent to follow the process of recording absence.

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.

Laurimar Primary School 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 Laurimar Primary School considers that the parent has provided a **reasonable excuse** for their child's absence the absence will be marked as '**excused absence**'.

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

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

- 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
- 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; however will continue to encourage 95% + attendance rate

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. Parents will be notified if an absence has not been excused.

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, Laurimar Primary School 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 an Individual Education Plan
- implementing a Student Absence Learning Plan for students who will be absent for an extended period
- arranging for assistance from relevant student wellbeing/welfare staff

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

Referral to School Attendance Officer

If Laurimar Primary School decides that it has exhausted all strategies for addressing a student's unsatisfactory attendance, the school, in accordance with the School Attendance Guidelines may refer the non-attendance to a School Attendance Officer in the North Western region for further action.

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

When a student's whereabouts are unknown and it can be concluded 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 for 10 consecutive school days; or
- no alternative education destination can be found for the student.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- [School Attendance Guidelines](#) - DET

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated in September and is scheduled for review in September 2022.