

# TPPS 2016 Attendance Policy and Guidelines

Our values – Respect, Creativity, Excellence, Resilience

Our vision: Learners are inspired to become confident, creative and active global citizens of the future.

Thorndon Park Primary School is committed to the goal of all students gaining maximum benefits from participating in the school’s learning and teaching program.

The Education Act provides for compulsory attendance of every child aged from six to sixteen years of age in government schools. The DECD Attendance policy states that all children and young people will attend school in line with the requirements of the education programs organised for them. Thorndon Park Primary School actively supports the legal requirements for attendance of students and the DECD policy directions and guidelines.

Once a child is enrolled at school they are expected to attend regularly every day and arrive and leave on time. Punctuality is important as being organised at the beginning of the school day sets the students up for a successful day. DECD expects priority is placed on early identification of non-attendance and irregular attendance and that the school ensures intervention. Non-attendance and irregular attendance can be viewed as early indicators of potential for disengagement from education programs. Absence from school impacts on a child’s social, emotional and academic development.

The staff at Thorndon Park Primary School acknowledges that the monitoring of school attendance enables identification of areas for improvement and students who are at risk. Leadership works in partnership with parents, students, teachers and Attendance Counsellors as necessary to implement appropriate intervention strategies

## **School Times**

8:30 – 8:50 am	Yard Supervised
8:40am	Students can enter class
8:50 – 10:40 am	Lessons
10:40 – 11:00 am	Recess
11:00 – 12:40 pm	Lessons
12:40 – 12:50 pm	Supervised Lunch (eating)
12:50 – 1:30 pm	Lunch Play
1:30 – 3:10 pm	Lessons
3:10pm	School ends
3:25pm	Students to have left the school yard

*If children arrive prior to 8:30am or are not collected by 3:30pm they will be sent to Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) and the parents billed. Before and After School Care is provided from 7:30am in the mornings and until 6:00pm in the evenings. Please contact OSHC on 0421618856 if you require this service.*

**Acceptable reasons for absence include**

- Sickness, doctor, dentist or specialist appointment
- Special or emergency family circumstances (eg. accident, birth, death)

**Unacceptable reasons for absences include**

- Shopping
- Sleeping in
- Tiredness
- Peer Pressure
- A Family Day
- Caring for a sick family member.

*These absences are generally unacceptable reasons for a child to stay home, other than in exceptional circumstances.*

**Lateness:** A student is deemed late if their arrival time is after 8:50am. Our school day begins at 8:50am. Lateness is embarrassing for the students, disruptive for the class and wastes valuable time for both teachers and students.

Children who are late must collect a blue late slip from the school office before going to class. The parent/caregiver must provide a reason for lateness either in person when signing them in, via a phone call or a note.

**Parent Responsibilities:** It is the parents' responsibility to ensure the school has been notified of the reason for the child's absence, either personally, by phone or in writing. On the day a child is to be absent parents should contact the school by phone (preferably before school), giving reasons for the absence; otherwise they should send a note to the class teacher on the child's return to school.

Parents should be pro-active in notifying the school in regards to absence or lateness. Requests for explanation of student lateness/absence are only sent when information has not been received from an adult with duty of care. *We cannot accept verbal explanations from students.*

***Exemptions from school -***

- If parents are taking their children on holidays during school time, it is legislation that they must seek an exemption from school attendance for their children for that period of time.
- This is done by completing an *Application for Exception* form available for the front office. The Principal may approve an exemption for periods of up to one year.
- For longer periods of time an exemption has to be sought from the Education Director of the Department of Education and Child Development.
- An exemption should be sought if a child is away because of an infectious disease.

Parents should notify the school office if family arrangements change (e.g. the child will be residing elsewhere or the child will be collected by a person other than a parent).

Students that are away for more than 3 consecutive days require a sick certificate.

It is the parents' responsibility to collect their child before 3:20pm each day.

**Early Collection:** Collecting students prior to dismissal time (3:10pm) can also be disruptive and has similar consequences to lateness.

If you are collecting your child early the parent/caregiver needs to sign the child out at the front office and wait in the office for the student to be sent for.

It is preferable if the parent informs the teacher that this will be occurring in the morning of the day it will be happening.

### **Staff Responsibilities**

- Teachers are required to record all absences, late arrivals and early dismissals.
- Attendances are entered on student information records.
- Teachers will communicate with parents requesting a written reason for absence where none has been given by sending home a Student Absences/Lateness form, followed by contacting the parent/caregiver.
- If unexplained absences continue, a letter will be sent to the parents from the Principal.
- If the attendance problem continues, the Principal, in consultation with the teacher, will refer the matter to the Regional Attendance Counsellor.

**Role of the Attendance Counsellor:** Students Attendance Counsellors are members of the DECD professional teams providing a supportive service to students, parents/ caregivers and school staff. Their aim is to assist with the full participation of all students in education.

### **Student Attendance Counsellors may assist by:**

- Working with students in a supportive role.
- Visiting students at home and consulting with parents /caregivers
- Monitoring student attendance and reviewing progress as necessary.

Wherever possible, dental and medical appointments should be made out of school hours.

If you are concerned about your child's attendance at school please have a chat with their class teacher.

If you cannot arrive by 3:10pm to collect your child please ring the school office on 8337 2050.