All children have the right to learn
Everyone is treated respectfully
We all have the right to feel safe

WE VALUE:

Teamwork, Respect, Responsibility,
Persistence and Honesty
At Geranium Primary School we provide a safe, success oriented and caring environment. We believe that students need to attend school regularly in order to participate fully and gain maximum benefit from schooling. Regular attendance enables children to access a full education, so enabling them to reach their full potential. School staff set an example for students, encouraging and emphasising attendance and punctuality.

Our aim is to ensure all students can access equitable educational outcomes. Monitoring of school attendance enables identification of students at risk and the early implementation of intervention strategies. We believe the early detection and assessment of the causes of school non-attendance are crucial to every student’s educational development.

All members of the school community are expected to meet the requirements of attendance and work to the best of their ability and skill level as consistently as possible. **Student attendance is everyone’s business.**

### ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

As there is only one intake, a child who turns 5 before May 1st will start in Term 1 of that year and a child who turns 5 after May 1st of that year will begin school the following year in Term 1. Children from that age but not yet 17 are of compulsory school age. Every child of compulsory school age, irrespective of distance from school or whether the student has a disability or not, is required to be enrolled at a government or non-government school or Open Access College and must attend the school (except at the Open Access College) on every day, or for such parts of every day, as instruction is provided at the school for the child, unless an exemption from school attendance has been granted.

Compulsory attendance at school for children is from Reception to 17 years of age and is based on the premise that each child has the right to receive an education which aims to promote personal development and equality of opportunity.

The primary responsibility for meeting this legal requirement rests with the parent/guardian. The responsibility for enforcing school attendance is with the Department for Education and Child Development. **The department therefore has a legal responsibility to record and monitor attendance and take appropriate action to rectify problems of non-attendance.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School commences:</th>
<th>8:40am</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recess:</td>
<td>10:30am – 11.00am</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lunch:</td>
<td>1.00pm – 1:50pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dismissal:</td>
<td>3:20pm</td>
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The Governing Council has decided that a late student is anyone who arrives after 9.00am and the early departure time is any time prior to 3.20pm.
RESPONSIBILITIES

Students

* Arrive at school punctually. Children are asked to arrive at school between 8:15 and 8:40am
* Leave the school grounds, immediately school is dismissed unless required to remain at school (eg: bus students)
* Attend school on every day when instruction is offered unless the school receives a valid reason for being absent eg illness/family reasons.
* Provide teachers with an appropriate explanation for their non-attendance. This must be in writing and may be in the form of a medical certificate.
* When a student is late for school it is appropriate that the student explains the reason for their lateness.

Parents

* Ensure their children regularly attend school.
* Notify the school of any absences by phone call before 9.15am on the day of the absence and then with a written explanation.
* When a student is late for school, explain the reason for lateness, in writing.
* Let the school know if an extended absence is likely or an Exemption from school is required and if they wish the school to arrange work at home for students.

Teachers

* Encourage students to attend school regularly by providing exciting and stimulating educational programs which are inclusive of the needs of all students.
* Monitor each child’s attendance.
* Accurately complete the Attendance Sheet for each day. Absences are to be coded according to the criteria set out on the back of the Absence Sheet folder.
* Complete and update Absentee Information eg Absentee Sheet, and send this to the Front Office by 9.15am each day. The Absentee Sheet includes a list of late arrivals and reason for lateness.
* Coordinate the collection of work for students who are unable to attend school for acceptable reasons and for whom work is requested.
* Inform the Principal of any concerns about attendance, and in particular when a student is absent, without a reasonable explanation, for 3 consecutive days or if an irregular attendance pattern is identified eg 5 days in 2 weeks.

Principal

* Ensure the EDSAS Roll is accurately completed.
* If the child is Aboriginal, contact Aboriginal Education Worker immediately the non-attendance is apparent. Refer Appendix 2.
* Principals have delegated authority from the Minister to approve applications for temporary exemption from school attendance for periods of up to one calendar month.
* Parents or Caregivers should apply in writing and Principals should forward copies of both non approved and approved exemptions to DECD. Copies of such advices are to be retained in school.
files, together with applications and are to be made available to appropriate departmental officers as required.

* All applicants for temporary exemptions of one calendar month, and for permanent exemptions, are to be set out on Form ED175 and forwarded to the Student Attendance Counsellor at the REO.

* Applications for home schooling are referred, by the Principal, to the Regional Director or the Assistant Regional Director. Only when parents receive written approval to home school their child/children, may the child/children be released from attending school.

* Complete the letter regarding the absence of a student and send home to parent / caregiver.

* Document interventions, strategies, phone calls and include in student file.

* Refer to an Attendance Counsellor on an ED171 if attendance issues are not resolved.

### School Response

After 3 days of unexplained absence, either consecutive or non-consecutive the following occurs:

* The teacher informs the Principal of the non-attendance.

* If the child is Aboriginal then the Principal or delegate informs the District AEW.

* The teacher and Principal devise a school based plan to address the non-attendance.

* The Principal or delegate completes the ED171, the notice of unexplained absence. This is sent to the parent/caregiver. An accompanying letter may inform the parents of the child’s non-attendance.

* The Principal may phone and will inform the parent of the consequences of further non-attendance i.e. referral to DECD support staff (with parents’ permission) and Attendance Counsellor (parents’ permission not necessary). The Principal will establish the reason/s for non-attendance and will continue to work on an ‘Improved Attendance’ Plan.

* The Principal will document intervention strategies, phone call etc and place in the child’s school file.
FLOWCHART FOR LEADERS MANAGING / REPORTING OF ATTENDANCE ISSUES.

The student is absent for more than 3 days. Parent/Carer has not notified site or provided a reason for absence.

- Teacher records absence and asks Principal to follow up and make phone contact to obtain reason.
- SSO enters absence and reason as supplied in EDSAS.
- And / or generates letter to Parents/Carers if unsatisfactory reason.

The student is absent for more than 3 days. Parent/Carer has not notified site or provided a reason for absence.

- Teacher records absence and follows up to obtain reason.
- SSO enters absence and reason in EDSAS.

The student's attendance is irregular, often more than 3 days. Parent/Carer rarely notifies site or provides a reason for absence.

- Teacher records all absences / notifies Principal who follows up each time through diary entry or phone contact to obtain and validate.
- SSO enters absence and reason in EDSAS.
- Principal provides support in contacting Parents/Carers.

Are the issues resolved and is attendance regular?

- Yes
  - Principal provides support as required in communicating with Parents / Carers.
  - Principal supports teacher to monitor attendance patterns.
  - SSO enters any absence and reason in EDSAS.
- No
  - Principal supports teacher and I contacts Parents/Carers to meet and discuss consequences on Academic progress.
  - Principal sends ED171 referral to Student Attendance Counsellor. May consult re DECD/Agency service response.

Are the issues now resolved and is attendance regular?

- Yes
  - Principal continues to support teacher and monitor attendance patterns.
  - Student Attendance Counsellor may continue to advise and consult with site; provide T&D as appropriate; support child/family; co-ordinate other DECD and outside services.
- No
  - Student Attendance Counsellor will continue to advise and consult with site; support child/family; co-ordinate services and required agencies.
  - Determine Parent/Carer willingness and ability to support child and site.
  - Remind Parent/Carer of responsibility and seek legal advice as appropriate.
  - Case conference and construct legal briefing as required.
ATTENDANCE CHECKLIST

Lateness.

1. Is the student late?

2. How often does this occur?

3. Is this a new situation or one that has been ongoing?

4. Is there a pattern? Lessons, subjects, teachers, after weekends eg Mondays and/or Fridays

5. Are there reasonable explanations / reasons for the lateness?

Absence.

1. How often does this occur?

2. Is there a pattern? after weekends? eg Mondays and/or Fridays

3. On their own or in company of others?

4. What is the total number of absences?

5. Is there a sibling whose attendance patterns are a concern also?

6. Is attendance a new situation or one that has been ongoing?

7. Are there reasonable explanations / reasons phoned in or written?
What has been tried?

At School …class teacher

1. Discussed the attendance issues with the student (class teacher, home group teacher, school counsellor, Student Attendance Counsellor)

2. Made contact with the Parents/Carers to discuss concerns. (Telephone, letter) or used Emergency contact numbers if parents non-contactable.

3. Changes to the curriculum content.

4. Changes to the curriculum presentation.

5. Modified for alternative curriculum program

6. Additional support in certain subject areas. (Internally / externally provided eg ATSI)

7. Use of peer and adult mentors.

8. Program involvement to develop social skills.

9. Program involvement to improve peer relationships.

10. Develop strategies to improve punctuality.

On Site …Administration to Child and Family

1. Made contact with the Family/Carers (Telephone, letter, home visit) to ascertain level of willingness and ability to support site.

2. Principal and teacher with Family to discuss issues, roles and responsibilities.
3. Made contact with Family on the day prior to re-entry from S.E.E.

**At School... Whole of Site (support structures)**

1. Review Site Behaviour Management Policy
2. Review Site Attendance Internal Structures
3. Review current Harassment Policy and Procedures Student Grievance Processes
4. T&D/program Strategies to improve teacher/child relationships
5. T&D to develop pro-active and reactive Attendance strategies
6. Work Experience / work education programs/placements
7. Protocols for transition between, Pre-school – Primary School

**External Structures and Support**

1. Referral to the Student Attendance Counsellor
2. Referral to other DECD support services (GO, Speech, ISBM, Disabilities regarding underpinning issues and their possible impact on the child’s attendance patterns)
3. Referral to appropriate Outside agencies (Families SA, CAMHS, Options)
4. Support to refer to Paediatrician/Community/Health Services
5. Development of Health Care Plan to access OAC re Medical Enrolment