

# Attendance Policy

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Parents of children of Compulsory School Age have a legal obligation to ensure that their children are enrolled in school and attend for every day of the educational program in which they are enrolled.

Compulsory School Age means if the child is at least 6 years (in 2007) or 6 years 6 months (from 2008) and less than 16 or completes Year 10, whichever is sooner.

The act outlines a number of instances where compulsory attendance obligations do not apply. Listed below are just some such instances:

- a child who is suspended from a state school at which the child is enrolled,
- a child who, for not more than 10 consecutive school days, is too ill to attend the state school or non-state school at which they are enrolled,
- a child who is prevented from attending school because of a direction, declaration, order or requirement made under an Act or other law about an infectious or contagious disease.

Parents of students in the Compulsory Participation Phase have a legal obligation to ensure that these students participate full-time in an eligible option.

A young person's Compulsory Participation Phase –

- a) starts when the person stops being of compulsory school age; and
- b) ends when a person –
  - I. gains a senior certificate, certificate III or certificate IV; or
  - II. has participated in eligible options for 2 years after the person has stopped being of compulsory school age; or
  - III. turns 17 years.

Where parents of a child of compulsory school age or a student in the compulsory participation phase persist in their failure to enrol their child in school or an eligible option, or to ensure that child's attendance or participation even after formal processes have been implemented, prosecution of the parent for failing to comply with the compulsory schooling or compulsory participation obligations may be recommended.

Further information is provided in Chapter 9: Compulsory Schooling; and Chapter 10: Compulsory Participation Phase; of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006.

## EXEMPTIONS FROM COMPULSORY SCHOOLING AND COMPULSORY PARTICIPATION

SMS-PR-030 outlines procedures to be taken by delegated officers when a student seeks to be exempt from compulsory schooling or from the compulsory participation phase.

Parents/carers can apply for an exemption from compulsory schooling, if, for a period of more than 10 consecutive school days, their child cannot attend a school or it would be unreasonable in the circumstances to require the child to attend school.

An exemption from compulsory schooling is not required for a student to undertake a recognised apprenticeship or traineeship. However, a student of compulsory school age would require an exemption in order to undertake other employment during the time when the student would usually participate in their education program.

Parents/carers can apply for an exemption from compulsory participation if, for a period of more than 10 consecutive school days, the young person cannot participate in any eligible option or it would be unreasonable to require the young person to participate in any eligible option. A student in the compulsory participation phase requires a partial exemption if seeking to combine part-time work with education and /or training. A student in the compulsory participation phase does not require an exemption to engage in full-time work.

Exemptions less than a year need to be authorised by the Principal and those for more than a year need to be authorised by the Executive Director Schools.

## SMS-PR-031: Flexible Arrangements

SMS-PR-031 states that schools can make flexible arrangements where it is in the interests of a student to involve another/ other educational provider/s in delivering education or training to them.

The other educational provider could be a TAFE college, a private tutor, a provider of vocational education and training, a registered training organisation or a community organisation that offers special training programs for children and young people.

A student with a flexible arrangement remains enrolled at the school while an alternative educational provider delivers all or part of the student's educational program for the period of the arrangement.

The intent of a flexible arrangement is to enable a student to participate in education and training at a level equivalent to full-time participation at school.

## ATTENDANCE MONITORING PROCEDURES

### Parent Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that when their child is absent from school, that absence is explained the morning of the absence by telephoning the absentee line 34002460. Alternatively, the absence details may be emailed to: [absences@bribislahs.eq.edu.au](mailto:absences@bribislahs.eq.edu.au). In the case of extended absenteeism (three or more days), it would be appreciated if parents could contact the school in order to further explain the situation.

When explaining your child's absence, could you please provide the following details:

1. Your first name and last name
2. First name and last name of your child
3. Date/s of absence (it would greatly assist us if you called on the morning of your child's absence)
4. Reason for absence eg illness (please do not just say your child is absent with no explanation)

### School Responsibility

The school attendance record is probably the most valuable data source available for the early detection of students experiencing personal, social and educational difficulties at school, and therefore needs to be accurate. Consistent attendance at school is a significant factor in achieving better academic and social outcomes. New concepts and skills are taught and reinforced each day by the teachers. Therefore, it is a whole school responsibility to ensure daily attendance monitoring procedures are followed and students not attending are followed up on a regular basis.

### Teacher Accountability

#### ***Daily Responsibility***

- All ECP rolls must be marked by 8.45am. This will be via IDAttend (electronic roll marking system). Instructions are included in Appendix A.
- By 10.00am the school will send a text message to all parents of students who have been marked absent (hence the need for accuracy).
- Class rolls must be marked at the beginning of lessons 2, 3 and 4. Where this is not possible (such as outdoor lessons) rolls must be marked by 3pm at the very latest.
- Teachers are to keep a hard copy of all class rolls in case IDAttend cannot be accessed or an evacuation occurs.
- Class lists must be accurate.
  - o Class lists can be printed from OneSchool at any time.
  - o New and departing enrolments are published on the school notices. Teachers are to check the notices and make adjustments to rolls as necessary.

#### ***Weekly Responsibility***

- Every ECP teacher has the responsibility of monitoring and following up on student absenteeism.

## A02 ABSENCES RESPONSIBILITIES

- Monitoring of all absences including:
  - o Sending a daily text message to parents of absent students
  - o Phone calls to parents re unexplained absences
  - o Letters to parents re unexplained absences (Friday)
  - o Monitoring and referring at risk students to Guidance Officer, Youth Support Coordinator (as needed)
  - o Monitoring and referring of all students who truant
  - o Printing of absence reports for teachers for ECP
  - o Entering into Id Attend absence notes, absence phone calls and absence messages from absences line and emails.

## TERM / SEMESTER MONITORING

- Each term administration and HLCs will analyse student absenteeism and follow up with the assistance of the Guidance Officer where necessary. Using ID Attend absence reports (Days Absent Report, Late Report)
- Each semester teachers will discuss student absenteeism with parents and students during ECP meetings.

## PROCEDURES FOR LATE ARRIVALS

- Students MUST report to the front office if they arrive late to school. They will receive a late slip. If a student does not have a late slip from the office send the student to the office so that their late arrival can be recorded.
- Do NOT allow any student to enter your classroom late without printed / written confirmation from their previous teacher or the office.
- If a student arrives late to class after morning tea from another class without a note this unexplained lateness should be made up at a time convenient to the teacher (do not send students to the office).

## PROCEDURES FOR EARLY DEPARTURES

- Students may only leave the school early for good reason.
- Students wishing to depart early must report to the front office at the beginning of the school day with a letter of permission from their parent / carer.
- The student will then be issued an early departure slip.
- The student must show the class teacher the early departure slip before leaving their class. The student must then report to the front office prior to departure.
- DO NOT allow students to leave early without presenting an early departure slip.

## TRUANCY POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Chronic absenteeism is persistent or habitual absence or lateness (variously defined as 10% or more school days absent) where parent/carer explanations (when there are any) may be considered unreasonable.

School Refusal is a form of chronic absenteeism. Parent/carers are aware of the absenteeism but are unable to address it. This form of absenteeism may result from past school experiences, psycho-social reasons (e.g. clinical levels of anxiety) or a developed habit of absence.

Chronic absenteeism and school refusal are managed at HLC, Deputy and Guidance Officer level via departmental policy and procedures.

Truancy is defined as disengagement from school. It may be accompanied by alienation from the school culture and may involve absence that is not known by parent/carers.

Students truanting are identified through:

- ID Attend roll marking
- Staff - break times, students arriving part way through a lesson
- Parent - unexplained absences that parents cannot vouch for are deemed to be truancy.

## Daily Attendance Report and Follow Up Procedures

- At the end of every day an Daily Attendance Report is printed to identify students who were not in every lesson. This report is then used to monitor possible truants.
- Students who have been marked inconsistently in this report (eg marked unexplained for a lesson and marked present in all other lessons) will be highlighted on the report which will be put into the pigeon hole of the teacher who marked the student unexplained.
- The teacher then checks the Daily Attendance Report with the student next time the student is in class to see if the absence was done in error or if the student had a reason for not being in class.
- If the absence was found to be an error the class teacher needs to go into ID Attend and adjust the roll accordingly. IF this is not an error (student was truant) class teacher writes on the Daily Attendance Report 'possible truant' and hands the report back to office.
- HLC's will be emailed the details of the student. HLC's will investigate identified truanting students.
- After the investigation, HLC notifies parent (letter or phone call), enters truancy on One School and issues students with a Student Attendance Card.
- HLC's will notify AO2 responsible for absence data entry of confirmed truants. AO2 will enter this information on ID Attend.
- HLC's may request the assistance of LC teachers in following up suspected truants.

## Action

The expected outcome of applying consequences for truancy is to ensure students attend classes. The severity of consequences applied will depend on the specific context of the behaviour and any background information relevant for the student.

## Mandatory

1. If students are out of class, they must be carrying an "Out of Class Permission Slip", their student diary signed or an LC Lanyard.

## Recommended Action for Initial Incidents

1. Incidents of truancy must be recorded on OneSchool by the HLC once truant behaviour has been confirmed.
2. Students must be interviewed and counselled by HLCs.
3. Parent contact must be made to inform parents of truancy incidents. Before or after school support times arranged with parent (24 hours' notice). Administration will assist with the provision of before and after school support times.
4. Students complete support times and complete missed work.
5. Student Attendance Monitoring Cards issued to students.

## Recommended Repeat Offenders

1. As above
2. Internal suspension
3. If truanting continues then move to external suspension
4. For junior aged students letters to be started; for senior students cancellation process to begin.