



Western Suburbs State Special School: Attendance Policy

Attendance Policy

All enrolled students are required to attend school unless reasonable and valid grounds exist for them to be absent. The Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 makes it compulsory for young people to remain at school until they finish school.

Rationale

All schools in Queensland are committed to providing safe and supportive learning environments for all students which address their educational needs.

Western Suburbs State Special School expects that all students will attend the educational program offered every school day, unless a valid reason exists for them not to be present.

Western Suburbs State Special School attendance policy aims to ensure all students are given the best opportunity to learn by outlining the responsibilities of the school, parents and students in managing attendance issues.

School community beliefs about the importance of attending school

It is important that students, staff and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school. **Western Suburbs State Special School**,

- is committed to promoting the key messages of Every Day Counts
- believes all children should be enrolled at school and attend school all day, every school day
- monitors, communicates and implements strategies to improve regular school attendance
- believes attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community.

Responsibilities

School responsibilities:

- Monitor and identify student absences as outlined in: *Roll Marking in State Schools*
- Mark rolls on OneSchool accurately by 9:30am and 1:00pm each day by class teacher.
- Follow up absences quickly and address absence issues with parents and carers via email, phone or text messaging system.

- Follow Education Queensland policy and procedures for enforcing enrolment and attendance in *Managing Student Absences and Enforcing Enrolment and Attendance at State Schools*.



Student responsibilities:

- Attend school each day unless there is a reasonable excuse for an absence
- Make every day count in their learning

Parent responsibilities:

- Ensure that their child is enrolled at school and regularly attends the educational program provided by Western Suburbs State Special School.
- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time each day either by TMA transport assistance or privately conveyed to school.
- Contact the school prior to any planned absence
- Provide an explanation (preferably in writing), this may take the form of a medical certificate, email of explanation, written explanation or a verbal explanation to the school through either a phone call or visit to the school.
- Inform Transport (Bus) company of change of transport arrangements for their child.

Strategies

At **Western Suburbs State Special School** we promote 100% attendance by:

- Implementation of the School Attendance Policy
- Development of a safe and supportive school environment that promotes positive relationships, including the implementation of programs to develop social skills, life skills and personal development plans. There is also access to a Guidance Officer if needed.
- Consistently recording and following up unexplained student absences
- Monitoring of the school's attendance data to identify absenteeism trends and individual students with high levels of absenteeism
- Promote high expectations for school attendance to the school community by communicating that higher school attendance is associated with higher individual student outcomes. (school newsletter, parent meetings, certificates for attendance)



Responses to absences

When a student is absent without explanation or a pattern of absences has been identified, **Western Suburbs State Special School** will take the following actions:

- Parents/ carers are informed via phone, text or email message if their child is absent from school each day.
- The parent or carer will be contacted by the class teacher (by communication book or telephone call) to determine if there is a reasonable excuse for the absence/s (*Director General's Guidelines ss176 and 239 of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006*)
- Records of contact with parents and carers regarding unexplained absences will be recorded in OneSchool

When a student is absent without explanation for 3 days or a pattern of absences has been identified, **Western Suburbs State Special School** will take the following actions:

- The parent or carer will be contacted by phone by the class teacher or administration staff regarding the absences. A record of contact will be documented in OneSchool.

At **Western Suburbs State Special School** the consequences or impacts of unexplained or unauthorised absences might include the following:

- If, after 5 days, the student is still not attending school regularly without a reasonable excuse, the Deputy Principal or Principal will attempt contact with parent or carer. A record of contact will be documented in OneSchool.
- If, after 10 days, the student is still not attending school regularly without a reasonable excuse, the school will follow the processes for managing student absences as outlined in the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 – SMS-PR-043. This includes the reporting of persistent and/or unexplained absences to Education Queensland, The Queensland Police Service and the Department of Child Safety.
- The Student Services Officer sends a letter home listing all absences and if the absences are unexplained requesting reasons for the absences and records on OneSchool (Letter/ Notice, Form 7 – Failure to participate (s241(2)) Letter/Notice requests notification to parents/ carers legal obligation and inviting you to attend a meeting to discuss attendance issues.
- If no action results from Letter/ Notice Form 7 within one week, Student Service Officer contacts parent and records in OneSchool.
- If the child is still not attending regularly after 15 school days of the first attempt to contact parents, Student Officer informs Deputy Principal and send Warning Notice (Form8 – Failure to participate (s241 (4)).
- Deputy Principal requests meeting with parents/guardians to discuss situation
- If no change in circumstances within (5 days), Principal requests authorisation from Regional Director to consent to prosecute.





Some related resources

Every Day Counts

<http://education.qld.gov.au/everydaycounts/index.html>

Departmental Policies and Procedures

[Managing Student Absences and Enforcing Enrolment and Attendance at State Schools](#)

[Roll Marking in State Schools](#)

TMR Parent Responsibilities

