



ATTENDANCE POLICY

North Shore State School



Rationale

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

North Shore State School expects every child to be at school every day unless there is a reasonable excuse. Illness, medical and dental appointments are valid reasons for absenteeism. Birthdays, play dates and shopping trips are examples of reasons not considered valid.

North Shore State School's attendance policy aims to ensure maximum learning outcomes for every child. Research identified very clear links between attendance and success and achievement at school.

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. North Shore State 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 truancy can place a student in unsafe situations and impact on their future employability and life choices
- believes attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community.

Strategies

At North Shore State School we promote 100% attendance by:

- Providing rich, engaging learning experiences for every child
- Supporting every child to achieve their learning goals
- Working in partnership with parents and carers to ensure regular attendance

PLEASE NOTE: If notification is not provided, the absence will be recorded as unexplained and this will be recorded and displayed on the semester reports.

If the excuse for absence given is deemed unreasonable by the Principal then the absence will be recorded as 'unreasonable'.

When a student is absent without explanation for 3 days or the school identifies unexplained or unsatisfactory absences or patterns of absences without reasonable excuses or where a student's attendance is reasonably considered unsatisfactory by the Principal, North Shore State School will take the following actions:

- Authorised officer at the school confirms that child is obliged to attend and that no circumstances exist where the parent's obligation does not apply.
- Authorised officer at the school contacts both parents and determines if there is a reasonable excuse for not ensuring their child is attending school.
- School offers support to family to ensure child's attendance improves.
- Authorised officer at the school considers whether an exemption from schooling, flexible arrangement or alteration to a student's educational program is appropriate and required.

- If the child is still not attending regularly after three weeks (15 school days) of the first attempt to contact parents, an authorised officer at the school sends by registered post, a **Notice (Form 4 – Failure to attend (s.178(2))** to both parents outlining parents' legal obligation and inviting both parents to attend a meeting to discuss the situation.
- Authorised officer at the school keeps a copy of the Notice (Form 4) and records date, time and by whom letter was posted.
- If after sending the Notice (Form 4):
- a meeting occurred with the parents, but there is no change in circumstances within one week (5 school days) of this meeting; or
- a meeting did not occur with the parents, and there is no change in circumstances within one week (5 school days) of sending the Notice;
- an authorised officer at the school sends by registered post a **Warning Notice (Form 5 – Failure to attend (s178(4))** advising parents of their legal obligations and offering a meeting to discuss support available to address failure to attend.

Reporting Absences

At North Shore State School we request parents/carers/guardians inform the school of ANY length of student absences by:

- Calling the school absentee line (available on the website) notifying admin of the absence and the valid reason for the absence
- Provide notification in writing to the class teacher or admin and outline the valid reason
- E-mail the class teacher or absences@northshoress.eq.edu.au with notification clearly outlining the valid reason

Exemptions from Compulsory Schooling

Every parent of a child of compulsory school age or a young person in the compulsory participation phase has a legal obligation to ensure their child is enrolled and attending school or participating in an eligible option.

Parents can apply for an exemption from this obligation when their child cannot attend or it would be unreasonable in all the circumstances for their child to attend school or participate in an eligible option for **a period of more than 10 consecutive school days.**

Situations where an application for an exemption may be made include:

- Illness
- Family reasons
- Cultural or religious reasons

If your child is exempted from compulsory schooling, you are excused from your obligation in relation to compulsory schooling or compulsory participation.

The school principal is not responsible for providing an educational program to your child, however they may provide advice on other educational options available.

You are encouraged to discuss with the school whether an application for exemption is a suitable option. The school can provide you with an ***application form for an exemption***. It is important that supporting documentation and evidence are attached to the application.

When a decision about the exemption has been made, you will be informed in writing whether or not the exemption has been granted and if any conditions have been imposed. If you are not satisfied with the decision made, you can make a submission for the decision to be reviewed.

Some related resources

Every Day Counts

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

Departmental Policies

SMS-PR-017: Enforcement of Compulsory Schooling and Compulsory Participation Phase

<http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/students/smspr017/>

SMS-PR-029: Managing Student Absences

<http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/students/smspr029/>

SMS-PR-036: Roll Marking in State Schools

<http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/students/smspr036/>