Halifax State School Attendance Policy

Rationale

All schools in Queensland are committed to providing safe and supportive learning environments for all students which address their educational needs. Halifax State School expects that every student will attend school every day of the school year unless prevented by reasonable circumstances from doing so.

The Halifax State School Attendance Policy aims to maximise participation in learning programs by all students.

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. Halifax 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 truanting 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.

Responsibilities

At Halifax State School we expect staff:

- Will mark rolls diligently and accurately every morning and afternoon or activity (e.g. sport, music lessons etc.);
- Are responsible throughout a normal school day or during a camp/ excursion;
- Return rolls to the office each Friday by class teachers, to ensure student attendance can be recorded in our system promptly and parents can be notified of unexplained absences;
- To ensure that class absences are recorded and reported either through electronic or paper modes;
• To make contact with parents/guardians within 3 days for unexplained absences if the student has returned with no explanation;
• To make contact with parents/guardians (by administration) if a pattern of absence is noted or a student is absent for three consecutive days with no contact made by parents/guardians;
• To identify students who are found to be truant for any part of a school day, are reported to parents/guardians immediately by the school administration with appropriate consequences established;
• To ensure that pro-active & supportive strategies are employed with students who demonstrate an unwillingness to attend school.

Student responsibilities:

At Halifax State School we expect:

• That every student will attend every day of school throughout the year;
• That if coming to school late, they should present a note from a parent/guardian or have a parent/guardian inform the school explaining lateness. Persistent lateness will lead to principal making contact with parent/caregiver;
• That students remain at school the entire day and only depart prior to the end of the school day through the office with a parent/guardian who sign them out and with approval by school administration;
• That students ensure their parents/guardians provide them with a note or phone call explaining absences;
• That students will actively and promptly follow up with their teachers after all absences to ensure they have all the required work to continue successfully in their classes.

Parent responsibilities:

At Halifax State School we expect;

• That parents/guardians actively support the school in ensuring their child attend school every day;
• That parents/guardians provide a note or phone the office if their children are late for school;
• That parents/guardians provide notification prior to any planned early departure from school & remind their child that they still must report to office where they’ll be signed out before departure;
• That parents/guardians inform the school of all absences via note, phone call or in person as soon as possible (preferably on the day of the absence);
• That parents/guardians give forewarning of known future absences, in particular long term;
• That parents/guardians will actively & promptly instruct their child to follow up with their teachers after all absences to ensure they have required work to continue successfully in their classes.
• That parents/guardians make informed decisions about appropriate absences from school, remembering that every absence requires the student to organise catch-up work.

• That parents/guardians support the school in applying detentions for students who truant during any school day.

Research clearly shows that students who attend very regularly achieve much better results across the long term

Strategies

At Halifax State School we promote 100% attendance by:

• Promoting a positive and supportive school environment through the School
• Our You Can Do It! Program is a mechanism for promoting attendance at school and motivating students to come to school through the positive rewards it offers
• Ensuring consistent follow up of absences with parents/caregivers
• Working with students and families to reduce absenteeism

At Halifax State School, we are committed to achieving the following targets in improving attendance:

• Reduce the number of students not attending more than 85% of school days to zero in each year level.
• Improve the school's overall attendance to above 95% at the completion of each year.

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

• Office staff (or class teacher) will notify the Principal
• Principal will contact parents, verify reason for absence and record in One School
• Principal will monitor for ongoing student absences
• Principal will produce monthly reports to track student attendance

At Halifax State School the consequences or impacts of unexplained or unauthorised absences might include the following:

• Meeting with parents/guardians
• Referral to Guidance Officer and/or outside agencies
• Developing an Individual Attendance Plan for students
• Formal processes as per Education Queensland policy up to and including referral by the Director General for prosecution under the Education (General Provisions) Act.
Reporting and monitoring attendance

At Halifax State School reports of absence or truanting are taken seriously. Parents, members of the community and school staff may report an absence in the following ways:

- Telephone the school office
- Signed/dated note sent with the student
- In person to the office or class teacher

Related resources

- **HSS Responsible Behaviour Plan**
- **You Can Do It! Resources**
- **5 Keys To Success resources**
- **Every Day Counts**

*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/

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Every day counts – Is your child at school today?
www.education.qld.gov.au/everydaycounts