



Stafford State School

Independent Public School

Student Attendance Policy

Rationale

All schools in Queensland are committed to providing safe and supportive learning environments for all students which address their educational needs. Stafford State School expects students to attend everyday so that every child can help to contribute to society. Stafford State School attendance policy aims to improve attendance of our 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.

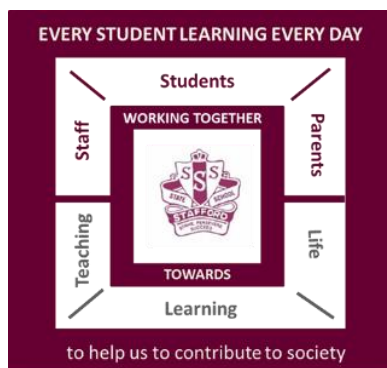
Stafford State School:

- 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 truancing 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.

Student Attendance

The Stafford State School approach to increasing student attendance is grounded in five core concepts:

- Developing a positive school culture
- Communicate high expectations of attendance
- Record and follow-up student absences
- Monitor student non-attendance
- Provide intervention and support



We will do this by:

- consistent messages to the whole school community at school assemblies, in school newsletters and at staff meetings
- setting a public attendance target of 95 per cent for all students
- taking a 'no-tolerance' approach to unexplained absence by setting a zero unexplained absence target for every student
- educating parents and carers to understand their legal obligation to ensure their child attends school
- encouraging parents not to condone absences for reasons such as shopping, birthdays or to look after siblings
- offering support to parents if their child refuses to attend school
- using rewards for students including excellent attendance certificates and letters to parents about student effort and achievement
- Stafford State School uses Explicit Instruction that focuses on high quality teaching and learning, reviewing performance targets and setting student goals



Every day counts



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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 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, Stafford 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

Non-attendance is managed in state schools in line with the DET procedures, *Managing Student Absences and Enforcing Enrolment and Attendance at State Schools* and *Roll Marking in State Schools*, which outline processes for managing and recording student attendance and absenteeism. At Stafford State School we consistently record and follow up unexplained student absences on a regular basis. We:

- Mark electronic class rolls twice daily. The first marking is before 9:00am and the second marking at 1:45pm, following second break
- Monitor the school's attendance data to identify absenteeism trends and individual students with high levels of absenteeism
- Expect all parents to contact the school absentee line or call the school to record a student absence
- Monitor student absence without explanation or watch for a pattern of absences
- Ensure unexplained absences are followed up with a SMS from a member of the administration team to enquire on the welfare of the absent student.

All efforts are made by the school to build stronger partnerships with parents to support student attendance. Proactive strategies that are being used to increase attendance:

- Promoting High Expectations for School Attendance to the school community by communicating that higher school attendance is associated with higher student achievement (school newsletter, school website and assembly)
- Stafford State School Playgroup – Encouraging School Readiness and valuing school
- Stafford State School Attendance Policy / Signage up around the school promoting attendance – Every Day Counts
- Weekly Class Attendance Certificates.

School Absentee phone number: 3552 6370



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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 and Procedures

[**Managing Student Absences and Enforcing Enrolment and Attendance at State Schools**](#)
[**Roll Marking in State Schools**](#)

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/>