

BEAUDESERT STATE HIGH 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.

Each parent of a child who is enrolled at Beaudesert State High School must ensure that their child attends school each school day unless the parent has a reasonable excuse. BSHS is aware that the issue of absenteeism is complex and covers a range of behaviours, including chronic absenteeism, school refusal and truancy. However, partnerships between the school, parents and the local community can assist in reducing absenteeism.

Beaudesert State High School attendance policy aims to:

- develop a positive school culture,
- identify absences quickly,
- follow-up promptly, and
- send clear messages to students and parents that attendance is vital.

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. Beaudesert State High 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.

Strategies

At Beaudesert State High School we promote 100% attendance through:

- Positive School Behaviour Initiative
- Ensuring consistent follow up of absences with parents/caregivers
- Working with individual students and families to reduce absenteeism.

Responses to Absences

At Beaudesert State High 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 95%.

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

- Red Room Referral
- Referral to Student Support Services Committee
- Referral to Guidance Officer and/or outside agencies
- Meeting with parents/guardians
- 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)

Reporting and monitoring attendance

At Beaudesert State High School reports of absence or truanting are taken seriously. Parents/guardians and school staff may report an absence in the following ways:

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

Implementation

Develop a positive school culture

BSSH staff and students promote a positive school culture through our Positive School Behaviour Initiative which emphasises three core expectations: respect, responsibility and readiness.

Absences

All student absences must be explained with a reasonable excuse as per Director-General's Guidelines. (Appendix A) Students may bring a note signed by their parent/guardian or medical certificate upon return to school.

Late Arrival

Students arriving late to school must present a note to the office staff. Students will then be issued with a late slip to present to their teachers. Class teachers should update their roll from "absent " to "present" when a late slip is presented.

Early Departures

Permission to leave school early can only be granted by administration or office staff. Students are required to bring a note of explanation to student services before 8.50am.

Early leaving passes may be collected from Student Services during morning tea or lunch.

The following day, office staff are to remove late and early students from the inconsistencies report.

Record student absences

- Subject class teachers will mark their roll every lesson. Office staff will record late arrivals and early departures.
- When a daily absence has an explanation, office staff will record reason in OneSchool.
- Office staff follow up daily absences with a text message home. Replies to text messaging are recorded in OneSchool.
- Office staff will maintain a sick bay register.

Follow up unexplained absences

- Office staff send text messages home on a daily basis.
- Office staff post Unexplained Absence Letter to parents on a weekly basis.
- Office staff will generate a weekly “UNEXPLAINED” absence report and distribute to all roll class teachers.
- Roll Class teachers will monitor unexplained absences by requesting notes or phoning home, returning notes or messages returned by students/parents to office staff who record reasons for absence on OneSchool. Any attendance concerns are to be reported to the Year Coordinator.
- If an explanation for the absence is given by phone or text, the office staff will record this on OneSchool.
- Long term absences are monitored by Year Coordinators.
- When necessary, Year Coordinators will generate an Attendance Alert List.
- Year Coordinators for each year will monitor Inconsistent Class Absences Report.
- The Year Coordinator will investigate and follow up as appropriate. Eg Attendance Card Procedure, phone call home, administration consequence. Classroom teachers may also be required to phone home to discuss attendance issues related to their specific class.

Monitor student non-attendance and patterns of non-attendance

- Class teacher may need to contact parent for absence explanation. Class teacher to communicate with Year Co-ordinator.
- Office Staff print and post unexplained absence letters on a weekly basis.
- Year Coordinators and office staff will monitor absences through OneSchool report Student Official Absence Report on a weekly basis.
- The Year Level Coordinator will analyse the student's daily attendance data to investigate relationships to factors such as day of the week, class/subject/year level, timetable, gender/ cultural groups.
- The Year Level Coordinator will initiate contact with the parents and student to investigate/ resolve issues and initiate a plan to improve attendance.
- If the issue is not resolved, then the Year Level Coordinator will refer the student to the Principal/ Deputy Principal.
- The Principal/ Deputy Principal/support staff will liaise with parents to help facilitate a resolution to the absentee issue.
- The Principal/ Deputy Principal/support staff will collaborate with other agencies
- The Principal/ Deputy Principal will follow the Education Queensland Managing Student Absences and Enforcing Enrolment and Attendance at State Schools (SMS-PR-043) Appendix B. Official form 4/5. Sent by registered post.

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/>

Appendix A

Director-General's Guideline for authorised officers on how to determine whether parents have a reasonable excuse for the purposes of ss. 176 and 239 of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld)

Under s176(1) of the Education (General Provisions Act) 2006 (EGPA) each parent of a child who is of compulsory school age must ensure that the child is enrolled and attends school on every school day for the educational program in which the child is enrolled unless the parent has a **reasonable excuse**.

Under s239(1) of the EGPA, each parent of a young person in the compulsory participation phase must ensure the young person is participating full-time in an eligible option, unless the parent has a **reasonable excuse**.

What is not a reasonable excuse

For the purposes of ss.176 and 239, and without limiting the ordinary meaning of the term, I am parents **do not have a reasonable excuse** if, for example:

- they claim they meet the situation of a reasonable excuse as mentioned above without providing reasonable and sufficient evidence to support their claim
- they refuse to let their child attend school due to an alleged incident or incidents that occurred at school
- they refuse to cooperate with staff at the school or region
- they claim they do not understand their legal obligations
- they refuse to respond to the notices and/or claim that they did not receive the notices
- they claim they are not able to control their child without any valid reasonable or sufficient evidence (e.g. information provided by relatives, police or child protection authorities and/or the child/young person, observations from school/region personnel, information from other agencies) supporting their claim
- they claim the extended absences are for family reasons
- they have provided false, misleading or incorrect information intentionally.

STUDENT ABSENTEEISM

Roll class rolls marked at the beginning of each day.

Class Rolls marked during each individual lesson.

Year Co's and D.P's monitor inconsistent class Absences Report.

COMPULSORY
Student absent Period 1
Text sent home

COMPULSORY PARTICIPTION
Student absent at Period 1
Text sent Home.

List of unexplained absences given weekly to roll class teachers. Roll class teachers request note of explanation from student or phone home and forward messages to office. Attendance concerns reported to Year Co-ordinator.

Letter sent home requesting Parents/Guardians confirm unexplained absences.

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Interviews/Phone call conducted with Yr Co to establish reasons.

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Still not attending 15 Days from first attempt to contact Parent/Guardian send Form 4 Via registered post - Referral One School

Flexible arrangements and alternative programs are offered.

If no change after 5 school days – send Form 5 registered post – Record on One School

Cancellation of Enrolment Process – registered post Notify regional if cancelled.

Referral to Region