



# Attendance Policy



## Rationale

All schools in Queensland are committed to providing safe and supportive learning environments for all students which address their educational needs. Wellers Hill State School's attendance policy aims to ensure that 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. Wellers Hill 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

### School responsibilities:

- Implement a School Attendance Policy
- Ensure all staff follow electronic roll marking procedures in the morning and afternoon using OneSchool
- Develop a safe and supportive school environment that promotes positive relationships and providing support mechanisms for families (Guidance Officer, Queensland Police Service, Department of Child Safety, Child Youth Mental Health Service)
- Consistently record and follow up all student absences
- Monitor school student attendance data to identify absenteeism trends and individual students with high levels of absenteeism
- Promote high expectations of school attendance to the school community

### Student responsibilities:

- Attend school regularly unless there is a valid reason
- Provide copies of notes to teachers or from teachers to parents to reduce number of unexplained absences
- Remind parents to email, phone or return a note when absent from school

### Parent responsibilities:

- Ensure that their child is enrolled at school and regularly attends the educational program provided at Wellers Hill State School
- Ensure their child arrives on time (8:40am for a 8:50am start, 8:30am for 8:40am Prep) and ready to learn
- Provide an explanation of all absences to the school within 24 hours of absence. This can be done via:
  - Telephone (07) 3249 1333
  - Email: [admin@wellhillss.eq.edu.au](mailto:admin@wellhillss.eq.edu.au)
  - Letter to the class teacher on student return from absence with accompanying medical certificate for multiple days with illness
- Any absences from school over 10 consecutive days now requires the parent to complete an "Exemption from Compulsory Schooling & Compulsory Participation" Form which must be signed by the Principal prior to taking leave



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- Meet with school staff in cases of regular non-attendance, or regular unexplained absences and follow up with strategies for improvement

## Improvement Plan

Develop a school attendance policy	Record and follow up student absences	Monitor student non-attendance and patterns of non-attendance	Develop a positive school culture	Collaborate with other agencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboratively develop a clear, inclusive and simple policy</li> <li>• Promote high expectations</li> <li>• Communicate to students and school community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and document consistent and effective follow-up processes for unexplained absences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyse attendance data</li> <li>• Investigate relationships to factors such as day of the week, class/subject/year level, timetable, gender/cultural groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure a safe and supportive school environment</li> <li>• Develop positive home-school relationships</li> <li>• Celebration of high attendance through certificates, newsletter, webpage and incentives</li> <li>• Improvements in attendance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement appropriate strategies/support mechanisms</li> <li>• Liaise with Queensland Police, Local government, business community including local shopping centres, youth groups and facilities and other schools</li> </ul>



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## Strategies

At Wellers Hill State School we promote 100% attendance by:

Teachers	Administration	Parents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasise the importance of attendance at teacher parent nights and formal/ informal parent conversations</li> <li>Follow the electronic roll marking procedure for 8:50am and 2:10pm</li> <li>Talk to or ring parent to discuss unexplained absence after 2 days.</li> <li>Inform office via email if student is away</li> <li>Update unexplained absences when given a reason from parents</li> <li>Inform office via email if student has unexplained for 3 days and you were unable to make contact with parents, record this on oneschool contact. (emails can be attached)</li> <li>Brochure on attendance sent home to parents</li> <li>Display attendance posters in all classroom</li> <li>Incentives including: lower school horse race, lucky draw, certificates and prize box;</li> <li>When marking roll each day, talking to students and reminding them to bring in a note or have parent contact the office.</li> <li>Attendance graphs and class based discussion on assembly, in class and newsletters</li> <li>Individual and class attendance targets</li> <li>Celebration of attendance achievement</li> <li>Creating safe and supportive classroom environments that encourage children to attend school every day.</li> <li>Providing rich and stimulating learning experiences in all classrooms that encourage students to learn.</li> <li>Staff showing interest and concern for student welfare and following up with absences that have been unexplained.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phone parents for students absent for 3 days unexplained (teacher informs office)</li> <li>Display attendance posters on noticeboards and school signs and website</li> <li>Home visits to discuss absences;</li> <li>Letters sent home to parents relating to unexplained absences regularly.</li> <li>Regular tracking of attendance data and discussion. Teachers and students informed of trends.</li> <li>Individual case management for high level non-attenders.</li> <li>Attendance is recognised and celebrated on weekly assembly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure their child arrives at school or commences their educational program on time every day <b>(8:50am for 9:00am start)</b></li> <li>Expecting all parents to explain all absences. (via note, SMS, phone, email or verbal)</li> <li>Expecting all parents to complete a "Exemption from Compulsory Schooling &amp; Compulsory Participation" Form for any consecutive absences over 10 days</li> </ul>

## Responses to absences

At Wellers Hill State School we are committed to achieving the following targets in improving attendance:

- No unexplained absences for the school year
- 100% follow up by school staff to ensure all students who are absent have phoned, emailed or called the school.

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

- The parent or carer will be contacted by the class teacher or administration staff (by note, email 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*)
- All contact and attempted contact with parents regarding student absences will be recorded in OneSchool.
- If the student is still not attending school regularly, the school will follow the processes for managing student attendance 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.

Every day counts – Is your child at school today?

[www.education.qld.gov.au/everydaycounts](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/everydaycounts)





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## Reporting and monitoring attendance

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

- Phoning or emailing the school
- Making an appointment with the school Principal at a time that is mutually convenient
- Discussing the issue or concern with the school guidance officer

### *Frequently asked questions*

#### **Do I need to let the school know if my child has been away?**

Yes – Let the school know if your child is sick or can't come to school for any other reason.

#### **Can my child stay away from school to do family things?**

No – You should arrange things like camping and fishing and visits to family and friends after school or on weekends.

#### **Does the occasional day away from school really affect my child's education?**

Yes – Research shows that in Queensland, higher student attendance is associated, on average, with higher student achievement.

#### **What should I do if my child won't go to school?**

Let the school administration officer or your child's teacher know as soon as possible.

## 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](#)