

## Mackenzie State Special School Attendance Policy

*“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 education program in which the child is enrolled unless the parent has a reasonable excuse.” (Education General Provisions Act 2006, s176)*

### RATIONALE

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

Mackenzie State Special School expects that all students attend school every school day, unless a valid reason exists for them not to be present. Our attendance policy aims to support parents and students to attend school every day.

School community principles 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. Mackenzie State Special 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 attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

#### Student responsibilities:

- Attend school every day unless there is a reasonable excuse for their absence.
- Make every day count in their learning.

#### Parent/Carer responsibilities:

- Ensure their child of compulsory school age is enrolled at a state or non-state school and attends their educational program every school day.
- Provide the school with an appropriate explanation for the student's nonattendance as soon as possible after the absence. Usually this comprises of a letter, telephone call or SMS from a parent/caregiver or a medical certificate.
- When a student is late for school, it is a requirement that the parent/caregiver explains the reason for lateness.
- Shall make contact with the school to advise if an extended absence is likely/planned or if the teacher needs to arrange work at home for the student.
- In the instance where absences are longer than 10 days, an exemption form is completed by the parent/carers and submitted to the Principal for approval.



### **Teacher responsibilities:**

- Mark attendance roll twice daily (AM - by 9.15am, PM - by 2:15pm) to ensure accurate class rolls are maintained. Any unexplained absences will generate a SMS text message for parent/carers to respond to in accordance with the Department's 'same day student absence notification' procedures.
- If a student is away for a period of three or more consecutive days and a reasonable explanation is not provided, the classroom teacher shall make contact to the parent/carer by telephone. All contacts or attempted contact shall be recorded on OneSchool and referred to relevant DP, HOD & AO.
- Bring to the attention of authorised officers any student whose attendance is irregular, who does not provide written or verbal reasons adequately explaining absences, who is absent for three unexplained consecutive days or more or whose absences appear unwarranted.

### **Authorised Officers in Schools (Principals, Deputy Principals, Head of Departments):**

- Communicate clearly to parent/carer of their legal obligations regarding attendance.
- Regularly monitor students' attendance data including the analysis and identification of at-risk students (Fortnightly monitoring of OneSchool data absentee report).
- Use formal letters and follow up phone calls whose parent/carer have not provided written or verbal reasons adequately explaining absences.
- Formally report absences on mid and end of year written reports.
- Work closely with families and support agencies when families are suffering hardships or are in crisis to ensure that students are at school in an environment that has order and routine.
- Access the absence data and when necessary, send correspondence requesting explanation for unexplained absences (administration officer).
- The principal is required to follow up any extensive absenteeism.

## **STRATEGIES**

At Mackenzie State Special School, we promote 100% attendance by:

- Providing a safe and supportive school environment that promotes positive relationships and includes the implementation of programs, which develop social and emotional skills, peer tutoring and mentoring, anti-bullying strategies and access to school support staff if needed.
- Maintaining communication with families to identify students at risk and to provide support to ensure that their child attends school every day.
- Promote high expectations for school attendance to the school community by communicating that higher school attendance is associated with higher individual student outcomes (an example of this may include but not limited to the school newsletter, parent meetings, certificates for attendance, etc).
- HOD's review attendance data twice termly as part of ELT SP.
- School team liaise with DOE OT and PT to ensure students resume regular school attendance post-surgery/post injury to minimise impact on attendance.


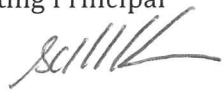


## REPORTING, MONITORING AND RESPONDING TO ABSENCES

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

- Student absence line 3420 2100
- Sending a text 0418 536 527
- Schoolzine
- QParents



<p><b>Endorsed by:</b> Melissa Simpson, P&amp;C President</p>  <p>Nick Hart, WMS Representative &amp; Deputy Principal.</p>	<p><b>Approved by:</b> Snjezana de Kroon, Acting Principal</p>  <p><b>Date of approval:</b> 29/4/24</p>
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