



RSSS: Attendance Policy

Rationale

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

Rochedale South State School expects students to attend school each day to ensure opportunities are maximised to achieve academic, social and emotional success.

Rochedale South State School's attendance policy aims to reduce absenteeism through early identification of students whose attendance is not regular. It provides all stakeholders with clear processes to addressing student absences.

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. Rochedale South 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:

- Inform parents of their legal obligations about enrolment and attendance through the school website, newsletter items and at meetings.
- Implement strategies to manage student absences, chronic absenteeism, truancy and school refusal.
- Monitor student absences and take reasonable steps to follow up unexplained absences.
- Work with students and their families to help identify the reasons for poor attendance, promote the benefits of attending school, identify attendance and achievement goals, and develop a realistic plan for improving attendance.
- Follow appropriate processes for enforcing parental obligation in regard to student enrolment and attendance.



- Review attendance data (once per term) for the previous term to identify students with poor attendance and monitor these students. Investigate trends such as: days of the week with the highest levels of absenteeism (usually Mondays and Fridays); times of the year in which attendance is lowest (e.g. end of term, around public holidays); year levels, gender and cultural groups with the poorest attendance.

Student responsibilities:

- Attend school every day – be on time and organised for learning.
- Report any anxieties/issues affecting school attendance to a trusted adult at school or at home.

Parent responsibilities:

- Each parent of a child who is of *compulsory school age* has the legal obligation to ensure their child is enrolled and attends a state school or a non-state school, on every school day for the educational program in which the child is enrolled, unless the parent has a reasonable excuse.
- Advise the school of any absences via the Student Absence Line or in writing and provide a reasonable explanation for the absence.
- Communicate with the school an issues or concerns that may be affecting their child's attendance at school.
- Promptly return any official "Student Absence Letters" that have been sent home requesting information regarding unexplained absences.

Strategies

At Rochedale South State School we promote 100% attendance by:

- Encouraging positive, respectful relationships between staff and students. Talking with students. Ensuring students know that staff at the school care about them.
- Explicitly teaching social and emotional skills (Keys to Success) through the Learning to Live Together Program (including Anti-Bullying programs).
- Ensuring the program of instruction is challenging, relevant and catered to the individual needs of learners.
- Providing a range of extra-curricular activities and school events to encourage student participation.
- Creating opportunities for student success to be recognised.

Responses to absences

At Rochedale South State School we are committed to achieving the following targets in improving attendance:

- Minimising the number of students in the less than 85% attendance bracket down to 10%.
- Minimising the number of students in the 85 - 90% attendance bracket down to 10%.
- Reducing the number of late arrivals down to half the current rate.



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

1. Class teacher to call the parent to ascertain explanation for absence after initial 3 day period.
2. If the student does not return the following day or a reasonable excuse was not provided by the parent, the class teacher refers the matter to the Principal or DP.
3. Principal or DP phones or sends letter to parents seeking an explanation for unexplained absences.
4. If Admin deems a reasonable excuse has not been provided, a meeting is requested with parents to discuss reasons for their child's high levels of unexplained absences or lateness and to identify practical strategies for getting students to school on time.
5. Refer student to Student Welfare Team to identify reasons for absences/lateness and to develop practical strategies to improve attendance. Further referral to local community agencies may be necessary.
6. Establish an Individual Attendance Plans for students with high levels of absences. Add these students to the "Attendance Alert List" on OneSchool.
7. Each Friday, the Absence Officer, prints official "Student Absence Letters" from OneSchool to send home to parents of students with unexplained absences.
8. **RECORDS OF ALL MEETINGS, PHONE CALLS, CONVERSATIONS, HOME VISITS, REFERRALS ETC MUST BE KEPT (ON ONESCHOOL) IN THE EVENT OF PROSECUTION.**

At Rochedale South State School the consequences or impacts of unexplained or unauthorised absences (after a period of 3 weeks) might include the following if all the above strategies have been ineffective in improving attendance:

- Principal or DP sends (by registered post) a [Notice - Form 4 – Failure to attend \(s.178\(2\)\)](#). School to keep a copy dated, time and by whom letter posted.
- If no change in circumstances occurs within 5 school days of Form 4 being issued (or within 5 days of a meeting resultant from Form 4), the Principal or DP sends (by registered post) a [Warning Notice - Form 5 – Failure to attend \(s.178\(4\)\)](#). School to keep a copy dated, time and by whom letter posted.
- If no change in circumstances occurs within 5 school days of [Form 5](#) being issued, the Principal contacts Regional Office to request a search for information regarding enrolment at another state school and to advise they wish to seek the DG's consent to prosecute.

Reporting and monitoring attendance

At Rochedale South State School reports of absence or truanting are taken seriously. Students, parents, members of community and school staff may report an absence in person or in writing to the Principal or DP.

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**](#)