



Attendance Policy

Rational

Maroochydore State High School is committed to providing safe and supportive learning environments for all students which address their educational needs. In Queensland, research shows that higher student attendance is associated with higher student achievement and helps children to build social and emotional skills such as communication, teamwork and resilience. Maroochydore State High School's attendance policy aims to ensure students are reaching their Personal Best targets through full attendance and engagement in all facets of school.

Policy Guidelines

Based on the *Every Day Counts* message, at Maroochydore State High School we:

- expect all children should be enrolled at school and attend on every school day
- monitor, communicate and implement strategies to improve regular school attendance
- communicate to parent and students that truanting can place a student in unsafe situations and impact on their future employability and life choices
- understand that attendance at school is the responsibility of parents and students and that we will support them to ensure requirements are being met.

Regular attendance at school is central to both schooling success and later employment. Students must attend school each day. Legal requirements of attendance pertain to all students. It is a legal requirement to explain all absences.

- Maroochydore State High School operates under the following guidelines:
- Punctuality and regular attendance are essential.
- All students from Year 7 through to Year 12 are required to attend all timetabled classes in every one of their subjects. Class rolls are marked every period.
- Attendance at school each day is a legal requirement under the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 current as at 1 July 2014.
- Attendance Rolls are legal documents which are subject to checking by the Department of Education and
- Training. Full attendance gives students the optimal chance for success.

Procedures

Attendance is the responsibility of students, school and parents working together to ensure all requirements are met.

The School:

- Regularly inform students, staff and parents/carers about the Maroochydore State High School Attendance Policy and Procedures (including the Policy and Procedures for late arrival, early departure, truanting and missed assessment due to absence) and make this publically available through the school's website, newsletters and enrolment package and enrolment process.

- Monitors attendance daily through the marking of the official roll at the beginning of each day and via teacher rolls each lesson.
- Notifies parents/guardians of unexplained absence, requesting a satisfactory explanation for their child's absence by using a daily text messaging system to inform parents of student's absenteeism without explanation.
- Will deal with truancy in a timely manner with follow up consequences as outlined in Positive Behaviour Matrix
- Reinforcing punctuality. Students who are continually late will have consequences initially implemented by the teacher of the class they are late to and then further consequences may be implemented for repeat offenses.
- Teaching staff will mark the roll at the beginning of every session. Staff will only mark students as being in attendance if students are physically present in the classroom.
- Provides students with school work when they are absent for legitimate extended periods of time.
- Offers support when school attendance has become a problem.
- Notifies the relevant authorities if non-attendance persists.

Students:

- Attend all classes on time.
- Sign in and out if entering or exiting school grounds after and before normal timetabled times.
- Provide a note from parents/carer explaining the reason for late arrival / early departure.
- Discuss attendance with relevant staff if there are issues or concerns.
- Ensure absence records are accurate and all absences have been explained by parents/carers.
- Ensure all missed school work missed during absences is completed.

Student attendance in each lesson is monitored. Students truanting class or with other attendance anomalies will be initially addressed by the classroom teacher. If there are persistent issues, they may be referred to other staff. Students truanting lessons will be required to make up lost lesson time before or after school or during breaks.

Parents/Carers:

School absenteeism and truancy can impact significantly on students' learning and wellbeing. Under the law, parents must make sure their child is enrolled and attends school on all school days unless there is a reasonable excuse. If their child does not want to go to school, or is missing school without them knowing, contact the school immediately for assistance and support.

Parents need to:

- Ensure that their child attends school every day for the program in which they are enrolled.
- Complete an exemption form if their student will be absent for more than 10 consecutive days.
- Engage regularly with school staff (every 3 days) for extended periods of absence and notify the school of extenuating circumstances.
- Ensure absence records are accurate and all absences have been explained.
- Advise the school of any change of address or phone numbers to ensure school records are accurate. Current data is essential in an emergency.
- Contact the school prior to any planned absence. Where this is not possible provide the reason for any absence as soon as possible. This should take the form of a medical certificate if a student is missing assessment for medical reasons.
- Contact the school if their child's absence is to be for an extended period of time (eg for family reasons or illness) and request school work.
- Contact the school if their child is refusing to attend school. Initiate or attend meetings to seek support and discuss their child's attendance or participation in their educational program. Engaging with outside service providers may be necessary.

Parents need to provide a satisfactory explanation to the school (notes must be signed and dated):

- If their child arrives late or needs to depart early from school.
- If their child is going to be, or has been, absent from school as a result of illness or injury.

Response to Absences: compulsory Schooling (up to age 16 or the completion of Year 10):

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

- Attendance Officer will contact parent by phone or email.
- If there is no improvement, a letter may be sent to the parent outlining concern with attendance or a home visit may be organised through Student Support.
- A meeting with parents/carers re issues of concern re attendance.
- 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))) outlining parents' legal obligation and inviting parents to attend a meeting to discuss the Situation

If, after sending the Notice (Form 4):

- A meeting occurred with the parents, but there is no change in circumstances within two weeks (10 school days) of this meeting, or
- A meeting did not occur with the parents, and there is no change in circumstances within two weeks (10 school days) of sending the Notice (Form 4), then 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.

Response to Absences: post-compulsory Schooling (student has turned 16 or completed Year 10):

Students of post-compulsory school age whose attendance is unacceptable will be required to show cause as to why their enrolment should remain effective. Failure to do so will result in the student's enrolment being cancelled. Student expectations are outlined in the *Senior Good Standing Policy*.

Support

At Maroochydore State High School we promote attendance by:

- Implementing a Care Teacher/ Dean of Students/ Junior and Senior Team/Attendance Officer structure to monitor attendance.
- Rewarding and acknowledgement of full attendance through Club 92 and other initiatives
- Developing organisational and wellbeing skills through focused lessons embedded in Pastoral Care