



IPSWICH EAST STATE 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. Research shows that regular attendance is integral to successful academic, employment and social outcomes. Accordingly, it is important that students, staff and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of regular student attendance.

Ipswich East State School expects that every student will attend school every day of the school year ready for learning unless prevented by reasonable circumstances from doing so. This includes having the correct uniform, food for the day, equipment required for learning and being ready to walk into class at 8:50am.

Ipswich East State School attendance policy aims to maximise participation in high quality learning programs by all students to ensure they 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

At Ipswich East State School we believe that students need to attend school regularly in order to participate fully and gain maximum benefit from schooling. Regular attendance enables children to access a full education and assists them to reach their full potential. School staff set an example for students by encouraging and emphasising attendance and punctuality.

A child between the ages of six and sixteen years is of compulsory school age, irrespective of distance from the school or whether the student has a disability. All students are required to be enrolled at a registered government or non-government school and must attend on every day instruction is provided, unless the minister has granted an exemption from school attendance.

It is important that students, staff and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school.

Ipswich East 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

Parents/Carers Responsibilities:

- Ensure that their child is enrolled at school and attends school on every school day.
- Ensure that their child arrives on time each day.
- Provide a satisfactory explanation for all absences, that is, any time during which a student is not attending or participating in their educational program.
- Contact the school prior to any planned absence. Where this is not possible, parents must provide the reason for any absences prior to 10.00 a.m. on the day of absence, or within 2 days of the student's return to school. This may take the form of a medical certificate or a satisfactory explanation for the absence. Contact can be made by:
 - ⇒ Phone: School's Absence Line - 07 3432 6333 (Option 1)
 - ⇒ email: absences@ipsweastss.eq.edu.au
 - ⇒ In Person: verbally or via a hand written letter by the parent or carer
- Contact the Principal if student absence is to be for an extended period of time (e.g. family reasons or illness) and request school work - at least 2 days' notice should be given to prepare work
- Contact the Principal if a student is refusing to attend school. Initiate or attend meetings to seek support and discuss their child's attendance or participation in their educational program.
- Provide a written note or email (signed and dated) to the class teacher, if their child is late or is required to leave school early.
- Advise the school of any change of address or phone numbers to ensure school records are accurate. Up to date data is essential in an emergency.
- All parents are encouraged to resolve any discrepancy re: attendance information for their student.

Student Responsibilities:

- Attend school each day (unless there is an acceptable reason for an absence) on time and prepared for learning, with all necessary equipment.
- Never leave school during school hours without permission from parents/carers or the school.
- Report to the office if arriving to school after 9:00am and provide a note from parents/carers explaining their lateness.
- Ensure all missed school work is completed.
- Ensure absence records are accurate and all absences have been explained by parents/carers.

School Responsibilities:

- Provide a respectful environment for students and families to work cooperatively encouraging attendance and participation.
- Regularly inform students, staff and parents/carers about the Ipswich East State School *Attendance Policy* (including the Policy and Procedures for *late arrival*, *early departure* and *truanting*) and make this publicly available through the school's website, newsletters and enrolment package.
- Monitor student attendance daily, through marking the roll at the beginning and end of each day.





- Monitor and track all students' attendance patterns and keep families informed of undesirable situations or trends.
- Notify parents/carers of any unexplained absence, requesting a satisfactory explanation for their child's absence – within 1 week of unexplained absence.
- Discuss individual attendance with students and offer support and help to parents and students when school attendance has become a problem.
- Staff will refer any student/family to the Principal if attendance issues are not resolved.
- Provide students with school work when they are absent for legitimate extended periods of time.
- Notify the relevant authorities if non-attendance persists.

Strategies

At **Ipswich East State School** we promote 100% attendance by:

- Implementation of the School Attendance Policy.
- Developing a positive and safe school culture that promotes positive relationships.
- Communicating frequently and clearly, high expectations of attendance.
- Promote high expectations for school attendance to the school community by communicating that higher school attendance is associated with higher student achievement (school newsletter, parent meetings, school website, parade)
- Ensuring consistent monitoring and follow up of unexplained absences with parents/caregivers.
- Monitoring of the schools attendance data to identify absenteeism trends and individual students with high levels of absenteeism.
- Working with students and families to reduce absenteeism.
- Recognising and rewarding students who are on target and maintain attendance of >95%.

Responses to absences

At Ipswich East State School, we are committed to achieving the following targets in improving attendance:

- 100% explained absences
- 95% school attendance rate

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

- Students in out of home care will be phoned on the same day that an absence occurs
- The parent or carer will be contacted by the class teacher (by note 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*, and they will be reminded of their obligations to





ensure their child attends school on every school day and the requirement for providing satisfactory explanations for all absences.

- Records of contact with parents and carers regarding unexplained absences will be recorded in OneSchool

At Ipswich East State School the consequences or impacts of unexplained or unauthorised absences might include the following:

- Unexplained absence letters will be generated and sent home, reminding parents/carers of their obligations to ensure their child attends school on every school day and the requirement for providing satisfactory explanations for all absences. Parents are asked to provide the reason for the unexplained absences, sign and return the *Unexplained Absence Letter*.
- If any unexplained absence letters are not returned within 3 days, or if a regular pattern of non-attendance is observed the Principal or an authorised officer will contact home by phone or post a letter where contact is not made.
- Where there is a continuation of unexplained absences, or absences without satisfactory reasons, parents will be invited (Form 4) to attend a meeting with the Principal to address issues contributing to these absences and to discuss implementation of appropriate strategies and support mechanisms.
- Liaising with other agencies such as Queensland Police and local non-government organisations, to address the trends or support the student and their family to encourage attendance.
- Where unsatisfactory attendance still continues, the Principal may commence formal processes associated with *Enforcement of Compulsory Schooling and Compulsory Participation* as per Education Queensland policy up to and including referral by the Director General for prosecution under the Education (General Provisions) Act. This includes the reporting of persistent and/or unexplained absences to Education Queensland, The Queensland Police Service and the Department of Child Safety.

Absences for which a satisfactory reason has been provided are considered *explained absences*, and the student's enrolment is viewed as continuous. Undertaking a leisure activity such as shopping, visiting friends and relatives, celebrating a birthday, fishing or camping, is not considered a satisfactory explanation for an absence.

Exception to compulsory schooling

If your child or children cannot attend or it would be unreasonable in all circumstances to attend school for more than 10 consecutive days, an exemption from compulsory schooling or the compulsory participation phase is available. The exemption excuses parents from their legal obligation to ensure that their child of compulsory school age is enrolled at or attends a school, or in the compulsory participation phase, is participating full-time in an eligible option. Contact the Principal for further advice.





Reporting and monitoring attendance

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

- Contact the school office either by phone or email (the.principal@ipsweastss.eq.edu.au)
- Leave a message on the school absence line - 07 3432 6333 (Option 1)
- Inform the classroom teacher either via email, letter or in person

Daily attendance procedure

1. Classroom teachers record daily student absences via electronic rolls each morning at the commencement of class before 9:05am and at the beginning of the final learning session at 2.15 pm.
2. Students arriving after 9:05am must go to the office with their parents and sign in/ receive a late slip. Any students leaving early before 3pm must be signed out by a parent. An early slip is then given to the teacher in charge and the student released to the parent.
3. Administration staff record absences on OneSchool at the end of each day.
4. When a daily absence has an explanation, office staff or teachers will record the explanation on OneSchool using the relevant code.
5. Classroom teachers check the roll for unexplained absences and follow up according to the process outlined in Response to Absences.

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](#)

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's regular review cycle

