



Gindie 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. Gindie State School expects that every student will attend school every day of the school year unless prevented by reasonable circumstances from doing so.

Gindie State School attendance policy aims to maximise participation in learning programs by all students to ensure all children can access equitable educational outcomes.

At Gindie State School we are committed to achieving the target of 95% or greater attendance for all students.

Importance of Attending School

At Gindie 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.

The responsibility for enforcing school attendance is with the Department of Education and Children's Services. The Department therefore has a legal responsibility to record and monitor attendance and take appropriate action to rectify problems of non-attendance.

It is important that students, staff and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school. Gindie State School is committed to promoting the key messages of the Queensland State-wide initiative *Every Day Counts* which promotes four key messages:



- ⇒ All children be enrolled at school and attend on every school day.
- ⇒ Schools monitor, communicate and implement strategies to improve regular school attendance.
- ⇒ Truancing can place a student in unsafe situations and impact on their future employability and life choices.
- ⇒ Attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community.

Responsibilities

Parents/Carers Responsibilities:

- Ensure that their child attends school every school day.
- Provide a satisfactory explanation for all absences, lateness or early departure. If child is absent from school a message from the school's absentee line will be sent via SMS. Parents/ Carers are encouraged to reply via the SMS absence line (0472 832 412), text to school phone or direct phone call to the school.
- Contact the school prior to any planned absence. Where this is not possible, parents must provide the reason for any absences prior to 9:30 a.m. on the day of absence, or within two 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 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 two 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 evidence in the form of text, phone (message can be left on phone) a written note (signed and dated) from parents/carers explaining their lateness.
- Contact the school via phone text, phone (message can be left on phone) or a written note (signed and dated), if their child 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.

Student Responsibilities:

- Under the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006, students must attend school each day. They must be on time and have all necessary equipment.
- Never leave school during school hours without permission from parents/carers or the school.
- Report to class on arrival and where possible provide an explanation for lateness followed up by parent contact.
- Ensure all missed school work is completed.
- Ensure absence records are accurate and all absences have been explained by parents/carers.

School Responsibilities:

- Regularly inform students, staff and parents/carers about the Gindie State School *Attendance Policy and Procedures* (including the Policy and Procedures for *late arrival*, *early departure* and *truancy*) 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 of each day and again after lunch.
- Notify parents/carers via the schools SMS absentee phone of any unexplained absence, requesting a satisfactory explanation for their child's absence.
- Discuss individual attendance with students and offer support and help to parents and students when school attendance is identified as reoccurring.
- 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 Gindie State School, we are committed to achieving our attendance target and continually improving and promoting attendance and achievement by:

- Ensuring consistent follow up of absences with parents/caregivers.
- Working with students and families to reduce absenteeism.
- Recognising and rewarding students who are on target and maintain attendance of 95% or greater.
- Monitoring attendance through weekly report and data display (updated weekly).
- Ensuring work that is missed due to absence is completed during play breaks and in some cases for homework.
- Any student with an attendance rate below 90% will be considered on an individual basis as to whether their participation continue to be allowed in extra-curricular activities including school camps, excursions and arts councils. Students applying for school captaincy will also have the attendance percentage considered as a part of this process.

Responses to absences

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, family holidays, visiting friends and relatives, fishing or camping, is not considered a satisfactory explanation for an absence. An absence for which a satisfactory reason has not been provided is considered an *unauthorised absence*.



If there is no explanation from the Parent/Caregiver regarding a student's absence or lateness for that day this will be followed up with an additional SMS requesting a reason. On the third day of an unexplained absence, lateness or if a regular pattern of non-attendance is observed, the Principal will contact home by phone.

Where there is a continuation of unexplained absences, or absences without satisfactory reasons, parents will be required to attend a meeting with the Principal to address issues contributing to these absences and to discuss implementation of appropriate strategies and support mechanisms.

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. and monitoring attendance.

Reporting and Monitoring Attendance

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

- SMS school absentee line (0472 832 412),
- Telephone the school office and leave message if not in direct contact with staff
- Signed/dated note sent with the student
- In person to a staff member

Departmental Policies and Procedures

Managing Student Absences and Enforcing Enrolment and Attendance at State Schools

<https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/managing-student-absences-and-enforcing-enrolment-and-attendance-at-state-schools-procedure>

Appendixes

Appendix A: Every day counts infographic for parents

Appendix B: Every day counts in Prep

Appendix C: Regular school attendance parent fact sheet

Appendix D: Anxiety about going to school



Appendix A: Every day counts infographic for parents

Department of Education



For more information

Go to the **Every day counts** website: <https://education.qld.gov.au/initiatives-and-strategies/every-day-counts>

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Appendix B: Everyday day counts in Prep



Every day counts in Prep because going to Prep every day ...

- will make sure your child gets the most out of their important first year of school
- will make your child's transition into Year 1 easier
- improves your child's reading, writing and maths
- builds a positive approach to learning
- strengthens your child's independence and confidence.



What will your ...

- Deliver the full Curriculum to
- Monitor your
- Talk to you a absences.
- Work with you affecting you
- Give your ch learning nee
- Offer develop appropriate l

Support for fan

- If you think y start Prep, o Prep Year, y principal.
- If needed, y your child st

Appendix C: Regular school attendance parent factsheet



Every day counts
Regular school attendance

Did you know? Research shows that in Queensland, higher student attendance at school is associated, on average, with higher student achievement.

Why is regular attendance at school important?

Regular school attendance will mean that your child gets a better chance at life. Your child will achieve better when they go to school all day, every school day:

- they learn better
- they make friends
- they are happier
- they have a brighter future.

Why must I send my child to school?

Routine medical or dental appointments should be made either before or after school hours.

While it is a last resort, you may be permitted to excuse your child from attending school for a short period of time.

What should I do if my child is going on a holiday?

You are encouraged to use your child's school time for learning. If your child is on a holiday, let the school know what arrangements you have made. Depending on the circumstances, the school may be able to provide a temporary exemption from school attendance while they are absent.

Do I need to provide a medical certificate if my child has an illness?

Appendix D: Anxiety about going to school



It is normal that, at some stage in life, every individual will feel anxious when faced with a difficult situation. Each individual will cope with anxiety in different ways. During difficult times, you can support your child to cope with anxiety in effective ways and by doing so, enhance their resilience. Anxiety becomes a problem when it is persistent and prevents them from enjoying normal life experiences for a long period of time.

How can I tell if my child has anxiety?

Signs of anxiety in children may include:

- having lots of worries and a strong need for reassurance
- psychosomatic symptoms which occur before school (e.g. feeling nauseous, shortness of breath or headaches). When the threat (fear of going to school) is taken away, the symptoms will reduce.
- Problems at school
 - being bullied
 - not having friends
 - conflicts
 - feeling lost at school
 - fear of getting into trouble
 - learning difficulties
 - not getting along with teachers
- New situations – a new grade or teacher
 - it is normal to feel nervous
- Failure – worry that they won't be able to do it
 - they know the correct answer but are afraid to say it
- Fear of losing a parent
 - bad will happen to parent
 - a parent being away
 - family problems
 - parents separating

- Discuss various scenarios, possible outcomes and ways to handle the situation. This will help put things in perspective.
- Show your child how you cope positively when feeling anxious or stressed. Remain calm and positive when they are feeling anxious so that you can help them feel more confident.
- Avoid taking over or giving your child the impression you will fight their battles for them. Children with anxiety are usually very happy for someone else to do things for them. However, if adults take over for them, it stops them from learning how to cope for themselves as they begin to believe that someone else will rescue them.
- If your child is anxious about failure, remind your child that everyone makes mistakes and that you can learn from mistakes. Praise their best efforts.
- Talk with school staff to find out what assistance the school can provide.
- If your child has problems walking through the school front gate or getting on the bus, arrange for them to meet a friend before school so they can go to school together. Alternatively, check if there is another entrance to the school that your child feels more comfortable using.
- If your child delays getting ready for school so that they will be late, encourage them to still go to school and reassure them that you will contact the school to explain why they are late.
- Should your child find socialising before school a source of anxiety, arrange for them to arrive just before the bell.
- Be involved in your child's school (e.g. volunteer in the tuckshop, help with the classroom reading

appropriate way) or support. Alternative regarding your child can assist you with professional such a or therapist. Children their anxiety by using improving self-esteem and changing the w situations.

Did you know

- Approximately 1 Australia exper
- Children with an untreated may poorly in schoo health difficult disorders and:
- Anxiety disorder often persist in adulthood.

Useful websi

- Ten Hints for Crei
<http://andrewfuluploads/2014/0/>
- Parent resources bullying and cybi
<https://educationparent-participat>
- Supporting stud