

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Rationale

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

Baringa State Primary School attendance policy aims to outline the expectations and responsibilities that the School, students and parents have in relation to attendance. It also outlines the School's attendance strategies and procedures.

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. Baringa State Primary 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 in regard to enrolment and attendance.
- Implement strategies to manage student enrolment, absences, chronic absenteeism, school refusal and truancy using the guidelines set out in the Every Day Counts Policy.
- Monitor student absences and identify when a student is absent for three or more consecutive days, or where there is a pattern of persistent unexplained absences, or where a student's attendance rate is reasonably considered unsatisfactory.
- Take reasonable steps to follow up unexplained absences as soon as possible or ideally within three days of the absence.
- Continue to work with regional and other local resources to re-engage students and their families with the aim of returning the students to school.
- Follow established processes for enforcing parental obligation in regard to: enrolment, attendance, compulsory participation.

At our school we promote 100% attendance by including "Every Day Counts" information and discussing the importance of attendance with every new family upon enrolment displaying Every Day Counts material within the school. As a school we are committed to achieving or surpassing the state average for attendance.

Student responsibilities:

- All students need to be at school each and every day prepared for work and learning.
- All students are to be accountable for attendance and participation.
- All students are expected to be in class on time and remain in class each lesson.
- Students are to remain at school during school hours unless they have permission from parents/carers or the school.
- Ensure all missed school work is completed.

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 school, on every school day for the educational program in which the child is enrolled, unless the parent has a reasonable excuse for their child's absence. From time to time a student may be absent from their educational program. Parents must provide a satisfactory reason for these absences. Parents should provide a reason for a child's absence as soon as possible.

Acceptable reasons for a student's absence would be:

- Natural disaster
- Representative sport
- Illness
- Funeral
- Legal Obligations
- Suspension or exclusion

As a school we strongly encourage families not to schedule holidays during school time. This minimises the disruption to student learning. If you need to schedule holidays during school time, please contact the school in advance to talk about arrangements.

For any absence of longer than 10 school days, an application for exemption needs to be submitted to the school. Application forms are available from the administration office.

Unreasonable reasons for student absence would be:

- Birthdays
- Shopping
- Visiting friends or family
- Minor appointments e.g., haircuts

Strategies

At Baringa State Primary School we promote 100% attendance by:

- Providing a welcoming, supportive and inclusive learning environment where students are challenged through differentiated and engaging student led learning activities.
- Including Every Day Counts information and discussing the importance of attendance with every new family upon enrolment.
- Disseminating Every Day Counts material and messages within the school community through assemblies, newsletters, and school-based rewards.

Responses to absences

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

· 100% attendance

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

- Absences are actioned daily **via SMS text messaging, email** or a **phone call** to parents.
- A please explain letter with details of unexplained absences is sent to those parents who do not respond to the messages every week.

- A phone call is made to those parents that do not respond to the letter.
- Weekly monitoring of three or more unexplained absences is conducted by the Deputy Principal.
- Half termly monitoring of all absences is conducted by the Deputy Principal utilising percentage reports and attendance data sets.
- Where there is a persistent pattern of unexplained absences or absences without reasonable justification, a student's attendance can be considered unsatisfactory. The Principal may commence 'compulsory' schooling and compulsory participation processes.

Reporting and monitoring attendance

At Baringa State Primary School reports of absence or truanting are taken seriously.

Students, parents, members of community and school staff may report an absence in the following ways:

- Informing the Administration office in person, by phone, email or by writing a letter

Some related resources

Every Day Counts

<http://education.qld.gov.au/everydaycounts/index.html>

Departmental Policies and Procedures

- Managing Student Absences
- Enforcement of Compulsory Schooling and Compulsory Participation Phase
- Roll Marking in State Schools