



Mossman State High School ATTENDANCE POLICY



Rationale

All schools in Queensland are committed to providing safe and supportive learning environments for all students. Research shows that regular attendance is integral to successful academic, cultural, sporting and vocational outcomes.

Mossman State High School expects that every student will attend school every day of the school year unless prevented by illness or extenuating circumstances.

Mossman State High School attendance policy aims to maximise participation in learning program for all students to ensure all students can access equitable educational outcomes.

At Mossman State High School we are committed to achieving a target of 95% or above in 2016.

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. Mossman State High 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 impacts on their future employability and life choices;
- believes attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community.

Responsibilities

School responsibilities:

- regularly inform students and parents/carers about the Mossman State High School Attendance Policy and make this publicly available through the school's website, newsletters and enrolment packages;
- monitor student attendance daily through the marking of rolls diligently and accurately every lesson/activity (e.g. excursions, alternate programs, instrumental music lessons);

- contact parents/carers if any unexplained absences occur, requesting a satisfactory explanation for their child's absence;
- contact parents/carers if their student is found to be truant for any part of a school day with appropriate consequences established;
- discuss individual attendance with students and offer support and help to parents if their student demonstrates an unwillingness to attend school;
- provide school work for students when they are absent for legitimate extended periods of time;
- notify the relevant authorities if non-attendance persists;
- monitor and track all students' attendance patterns and keep families informed of undesirable situations and trends;
- acknowledge students who attend school every day and achieve 95% or above attendance.

Student responsibilities:

- attend school every day prepared for classes and learning;
- arrive at school on time. School commences at 8.40am every day and finishes at 3.00pm;
- never leave school during school hours without permission;
- provide a note from parents/carers explaining absences if contact has not already been made by phone or email.

Parent/Carers responsibilities:

- ensure that their child attends school every school day;
- inform the Attendance Officer (07 4084 1340) via note, email or phone call or in person if their child is late for school;
- provide notification prior to any planned early departure from school and remind their child that they must report to the school office where they will be signed out before their departure;
- inform the Attendance Officer of all absences via note, email or phone call or in person as soon as possible (preferably on the day of the absence);
- contact the Attendance Officer if their child's absence is to be for an extended period of time (e.g. extenuating family reasons or illness), as there is a mandated form that must be completed by the parent/carer and approval given by the Principal. Please note, approval may not always be given;
- request school work if student absence is to be for an extended period of time for an approved absence. Adequate time should be given to teachers to prepare work while the student is away. Please note, it may not be possible for work to be prepared for practical based classes;
- contact the HOD Junior Secondary or HOD Senior Secondary if a student is refusing to attend school. Attend meetings to seek support and discuss their child's attendance or participation in their educational program.

Strategies

At Mossman State High School, we promote 100% attendance by:

- ensuring consistent follow up of absences with parents/carers;
- working with students and families to reduce absenteeism;
- recognising and rewarding students who are on target and maintain attendance of >95%.

Early Departures

All principals of state school have been directed by the Director General of Education to provide the following advice to each school community.

Section 18 of the Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2006 allows a Principal/Head of School to grant a student leave of absence for a student leaving school grounds to receive;

- Medical treatment,
- Dental treatment, or
- Specialised instruction. (Specialised instruction means instruction or training in a subject or activity that is not part of the student's normal school subjects or activities.)

The principal must only exercise this discretion:

- If a parent advises the principal of a student's requirement to leave the school grounds for such purposes.
- It is advisable that the request is received in writing.
- In instances where the principal specifically requires the request be made in writing, the parents must provide it in writing.

However S.18 of the regulation DOES NOT INCLUDE:

- leaving school to go shopping;
- buy lunch;
- go home to work; or
- visit a friend etc,

as reasons for giving leave of absence.

Students WILL NOT be given permission to leave the school grounds for reasons other than those outlined in Section 18 of the Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2006.

Parents must make arrangements for students to run errands and so on outside of school hours.

If you wish your child to leave the school grounds during school hours please:

- send a letter informing the school of your intentions to the school office, informing the school of when your child will be collected;

Responses to Absences

At Mossman State High School, we are committed to achieving our attendance target of 95% or higher and continually improving attendance and attainment by:

- communicating expectations to parents/careers, students and community;
- connecting students and parents/carers with staff. [e.g. Form Classes, Form Teachers, Year Coordinators, Head of Department Junior Secondary, Head of Department Senior Secondary, Deputy Principal Junior Secondary, Deputy Principal Senior Secondary, Student Support Services Team (Principal, Guidance Officer, Social Worker, School Based Youth Health Nurse, Community Education Counsellor, School Chaplain);
- diligent and accurate roll marking every lesson/activity;
- contacting parents/carers regarding absences and lateness to school;
- establishing individual case management for students who display unacceptable patterns of attendance;
- implement recommended legal action or enrolment cancellation if student and or parent/carer do not engage with and respond to support processes.

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

- the Form Teacher will refer absences to their Director Supervisor who will contact the HOD Junior Secondary or HOD Senior Secondary to discuss attendance and issues;
- the Head of Department Junior Secondary or Senior Secondary will contact the parent/carers to discuss attendance and issues;
- if the Head of Department is unsuccessful in making contact or is unable to gain a reasonable response, they will refer the matter to the Deputy Principal Junior Secondary or Senior Secondary;
- the Deputy Principal Junior Secondary or Senior Secondary will arrange a meeting with the parent/carer of the student to discuss attendance issues. Support and/or intervention will be arranged for the parent/carer and student if necessary;
- the Community Education Counsellor will be involved in conversations with indigenous parents/carers to offer assistance where necessary;
- Student Support Services Team members will be involved in the case management of students with a pattern of unexplained absences and/or a pattern of unauthorised absences.

At Mossman State High School the consequences or impacts of unexplained or unauthorised absences might include the following:

- detention (including after school);
- referral to a Student Support Services Team member;
- referral to an outside agency;
- meeting with parents/carers;

- establishment of a Case Management Team;
- formal processes as per Education Queensland Policy up to and including referral by the Director General for prosecution under the Education (General Provisions) Act.
- Non-compliance or Show Cause letter to be processed.

Reporting and monitoring attendance

At Mossman State High 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;

- telephone the Attendance Officer (07 4084 1340) or email the school;
- signed/dated note, sent with the student and handed to the Form Teacher or Attendance Officer;
- in person to a Senior Year Coordinator, Head of Department Junior Secondary or Senior Secondary, Deputy Principal Junior Secondary or Senior Secondary or Principal;
- in person to meet with the Guidance Officer, Social Worker or Community Education Counsellor.

ATTENDANCE SCHEDULE

Frequency	Strategy	Responsibility
Enrolment	Enrolment Agreement Parent and student commit to regular attendance. Role of school, parent and student articulated.	Parent, student, Principal/Deputy Principal
	Academic Success Guarantee Parent and student commit to regular attendance – in return the school commits to our vision of every student being challenged and inspired to achieve success.	Parent, student, Principal/Deputy Principal
Daily	Greeting Principal or a Deputy Principal welcome students as they enter gate each morning.	Principal/Deputy Principal
	Breakfast Club Free breakfast available for any student each morning. Staffed by members of Student Support Services Team.	Chaplain, Community Education Counsellor, School-based Youth Health Nurse
	Positive Teacher/Student Relationships Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) strategies used.	Form Teacher, Class Teacher, Student
	Student work appropriate for student capacity Differentiated classwork to meet individual/group needs.	Class Teacher, Student
	Phone Call Home To query absence from school after two days absent.	Junior Secondary Student Services & Senior Secondary Student Services Teams
	Home Visits To talk with parents/carers if students have regular absences or a pattern of absences.	Community Education Counsellor, Guidance Officer, Chaplain, Social Worker
	Fractional Absence Process Follow up on fractional absences – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Late arrival • Truant from class 	Junior Secondary Student Services & Senior Secondary Student Services Teams
	Attendance Accord Commitment of local businesses to not serve school age students in uniform unless a parent is accompanying them.	Local Businesses, Principal, Deputy Principals
	Everyday Counts Message displayed on School LED Sign and in each classroom, staffroom and office.	Business Services Manager, Deputy Principal, Principal.
Weekly	Letter Home Showing unexplained absences and request to explain the absence.	Attendance Officer, Deputy Principal.
	Attendance Data Displayed in Form Classes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognised at Year Level Assembly and Junior School and Senior School Assembly. ➤ Highlighted at Staff Briefings. 	Form Teacher Junior Secondary Student Services & Senior Secondary Student Services Teams

Term	100% Attendance Postcards sent home mid-term.	Junior Secondary Student Services & Senior Secondary Student Services Teams
	Letters Home Regarding attendance and acknowledging excellent attendance, achievement, effort and behaviour.	Principal
	'Club 95' Acknowledging and rewarding students with 95% attendance or higher.	P&C Association, Junior Secondary Student Services & Senior Secondary Student Services Teams
	Newsletter Articles Highlighting attendance targets, cumulative effect of small regular absences across years of schooling, daily attendance rates, correlation between attendance and achievement, value of school attendance.	Principal
	Parent-Teacher Interviews / Meetings Related to attendance, achievement, subject choices.	Teachers, Heads of Department, Principal, Deputy Principal, Guidance Officer
	Interim Term Report Cards Comments on achievement, effort, behaviour and attendance.	Classroom teachers, Head of Department, Principal
Semester	Semester Report Card Comments on achievement, effort, behaviour and attendance.	Classroom teachers, Head of Department, Principal
	Parent/Teacher Interviews Related to achievement, effort, behaviour and attendance.	Parent, Student, Classroom Teachers, Head of Department, Deputy Principal
	Parent Evenings Related to curriculum, pathways, transitions.	Parents, Teachers, Students, Head of Department, Deputy Principal, Principal
	Letters Home Regarding attendance and acknowledging excellent attendance, achievement, effort and behaviour.	Principal, Junior & Senior Head of Department, Deputy Principal

Mossman State High School Attendance Flowchart

