Upper Coomera State College

PREP - 12 ATTENDANCE POLICY

Innovative
Committed
Inspired

INTRODUCTION

Regular attendance and punctuality are important characteristics of successful students. Being on time and prepared to learn gives everyone the best chance of success in the classroom. It is important that students, staff and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school. Upper Coomera State College:

- Is committed to promoting the key messages of Every Day Counts
- Believes all eligible children should be enrolled at school and attend school all day, every school day
- Believes that it is a parent's responsibility to ensure that their child attends school on every school day for the educational program in which he/she is enrolled
- Recognises that a parent of a young person in the compulsory participation phase is obliged to ensure their child is participating full-time in an approved education or training option
- Believes that supporting attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community
- Determines the duration and location of a student's educational program and this may include sites other than the school site, for example, sporting grounds, museums or TAFE
- Insists that at any time a student is not attending or participating in their educational program it is considered an absence and must be explained
- Monitors, communicates and implements strategies to improve regular school attendance
- Believes that truanting can place a student in unsafe situations and impact on their future employability and life choices

EVERY DAY COUNTS

Every Day Counts is a state-wide initiative addressing the issue of student attendance at school. The initiative is designed to change parent, community and student attitudes to school attendance. It requires the support of both parents and the community if student attendance is to be successfully addressed.

Every Day Counts promotes four key messages:
- All children should be enrolled at school and attend on every school day.
- Schools should monitor, communicate and implement strategies to improve regular school attendance.
- Truanting 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.

While most students attend school consistently, there is a small number of students who are absent from school without an acceptable reason and this may harm their education.
Going shopping, visiting family, staying up late and being tired or extending school holidays are not acceptable reasons to be away from school. Research shows that higher rates of attendance at school is related to higher achievement.

It is widely recognised that attendance problems are best managed by early identification and intervention.

COMPULSORY SCHOOLING

Each parent of a child who is of compulsory school age must ensure that the child is enrolled and attends school on every school day for the educational programs in which the child is enrolled unless the parent has a reasonable excuse. A parent of a young person in the compulsory phase must ensure the young person is participating full-time in an eligible option, unless the parent has a reasonable excuse.

Parents of children of **Compulsory School Age** have a legal obligation to ensure that their children are enrolled in school and attend for every day of the educational program in which they are enrolled.

Compulsory School Age means if the child is at least 6 years 6 months (from 2008) and less than 16 or completes Year 10, whichever is sooner. Parents of students in the Compulsory Participation Phase have a legal obligation to ensure that these students participate full-time in an eligible option.

A young person's Compulsory Participation Phase –
   a) starts when the person stops being of compulsory school age; and
   b) ends when a person –
      I. gains a senior certificate, certificate III or certificate IV; or
      II. has participated in eligible options for 2 years after the person has stopped being of compulsory school age; or
      III. turns 17 years.

Where parents of a child of compulsory school age or a student in the compulsory participation phase persist in their failure to enrol their child in school or an eligible option, or to ensure that child's attendance or participation even after formal processes have been implemented, prosecution of the parent for failing to comply with the compulsory schooling or compulsory participation obligations may be recommended.

Further information is provided in Chapter 9: Compulsory Schooling; and Chapter 10: Compulsory Participation Phase; of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006.

Attendance: College Responsibilities

- An accuracy school attendance record is one of the most valuable data source available for the early detection of students experiencing personal, social and educational difficulties at school.
- Consistent attendance at the College is a significant factor in achieving better academic and social outcomes.
- New concepts and skills are taught and reinforced each day by the teachers.
- Therefore, it is a whole college responsibility to ensure daily attendance monitoring procedures are followed and students not attending are followed up on a regular basis.
- An SMS text messaging system is used to improve our communication with parents/carers about student attendance and punctuality.

Attendance: Parent Responsibilities

If a student is going to be away, parents/caregivers should either:-

• Text 0416 906 149 with the student's name and Class/PBL/Form class, the date of absence and the reason for absence, or
• Phone the school absence line – 5580 7570 clearly stating the student's name and Class/PBL/Form class, the date of absence and the reason for absence.

If a student is absent for any medical reason, the College expects the parent to source a medical certificate for the illness.

In the event of an unexplained absence or an unexplained late arrival, parents/carers will receive an SMS message from the College indicating that the student is either not at school or has arrived without explanation. This message will read:

"UCSC records show (Name) is absent today (date). Please provide a reason by reply SMS or by phoning 5580 7570

Or

"UCSC records show (Name) arrived late today at (9.10 am), (Date). School starts at 8.40 am.

Parents/carers will reply by SMS explaining the absence. When they reply, they are to include the student's name and Class/PBL/Form teacher, the date of absence and the reason for absence.
If a parent has not replied to the SMS message or not phoned the college absence line, then, on returning to college after an absence students must bring a note to their Class/PBL/Form teacher to explain the absence.

Attendance: Student Responsibilities

- Students must be at college by 8.35am every day. Students arriving late must report to Student Services.
- Students who have been absent for a whole or part of the day must present an explaination (note/text message/email) from their parents/carers to their Class/PBL/Form teacher.
- Students wanting to leave college early must present a note from their parents/caregivers to Student Services before 8.40am. They will be given an Early Leave pass to show the teacher of their class when they have to leave. After leaving class, they are to report to administration to officially sign out. Students must be collected from the Administration Building by an authorised adult.
- Students must be on time to class. Students arriving late will be issued with a consequence. In time-tabled classes and PBL/Form, this is the responsibility of the teacher (Secondary).
- If a student arrives late after 8.40am without a parent/carer explaination they will be given an immediate detention at morning tea that day, supervised by the Deans in the Hub (Secondary).

JUNIOR SCHOOL ABSENCES PROCEDURES

Teacher Responsibility

Morning roll marking:

1. Line students up at the classroom as per the College Non-negotiables;
2. Teacher marks the roll accurately twice daily (8.50am and 2pm). Teacher must do a head count to ensure accuracy;
3. Collect information (absence notes, permission forms, etc.) and return to the office where necessary;
4. Teacher is to follow up with students/parents to obtain an absence note for any unexplained absences, check to see if there has been a phone call, text or email the day the student returns (ID Attend). Teacher to record contact home on Oneschool, refer relevant DP of contact and notify office of any absences that have been explained. Explained absences are emailed to: office@uppercoomerasc.eq.edu.au;
5. Teacher to inform and remind students of the number of days they have been absent at regular intervals thoughout the year. (Refer to College Data Plan for intervals)

Out of class for other reasons:
1. Teachers must provide at least 24 hours-notice of excursions and send a list of students involved to student services, and email notification to teachers;
2. The roll must be marked for absence and attendance and submitted to student services before departure where possible.
3. Staff members requiring students for set activities must notify the necessary staff before the event or provide a note to explain their absence.

Junior School Student Services
1. Sign students in late through ID Attend;

Deputy Principal Responsibility

1. Discuss attendance concerns with class teachers and monitor;
2. Ensure teachers are following up on days absent;
3. Monitor attendance and consistency across year levels;
4. Contact home students with attendance concerns;
5. Contact parents of students who are persistently late;
6. Conduct Form 4 Attendance Interviews with families;
7. Refer to Student Wellbeing Team if required;

Sub-school Principal

1. Monitor students who receive Form 4 & 5;
2. Liaise with Attendance Officer regarding Form 5;
3. Conduct meeting and monitor students who receive Form 5;
4. Students who do respond to Form 5 - refer to South East region office.

JUNIOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

ABSENCES

LATE TO SCHOOL

Student

Signs in at office and text sent home to parent/guardian

Teacher

Follow up next day to get note; Monitor students that have 90% - 95% Present + Approved Absences - contact home and inform student services of explained absences

Persistently late

Student identified with falling attendance and receives appropriate attendance letters

Refer to student welfare if needed

Attendance Officer

- Monitors absence data and ensures teachers are addressing student absences (as above)
- Monitors students that have less than 90% total absence and ensures consistent application of the below steps.
- Referral of students to Welfare Team where required

Deputy Principal

DP monitors students that have less than 90% total absence

- determine what is contributing to absence
- contact home and inform student services of explanation

STUDENT WELFARE TEAM

STUDENT SERVICES

Below 85% Total Absence

Student Services issues Absences Warning Letter to parent/guardian

Form 4

10 days absent or more (non-consecutive) from first date of contact—Student services issues Form 4 notice—Organises meeting for DP with parent/guardian

Automatic Referral to Student Welfare Team

INACTIVE

15 days absent consecutive

Unable to contact parent/guardian on multiple occasions

Student Services makes student enrolment inactive

Form 6

For Parental Behaviours: Sub school Principal refers absence onto regional office as per departmental policy

Form 5

Student services issues Form 5 and refers to Sub-school Principal

School Refusal

Continued absence due to student behaviour, not parent, consequences to be issued in accordance with School Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students

SECONDARY SCHOOL ABSENCES PROCEDURES

Teacher Responsibility
Morning roll marking:

1. The music starts at 8.35am and this is the signal to move to morning PBL class;
2. Line students up at the allocated room as per the College Non-negotiables;
3. As students enter the room, uniform must be checked;
   - Send students who breach the uniform policy to the Uniform Correction Room. Remember to mark them present on the roll.
4. Students must enter the allocated room and sit at a desk. There should be quiet while the teacher marks the roll accurately. Teacher should do a head count to ensure accuracy
5. Students who are late to PBL/Form must have a late slip from the Student Services before being allowed to enter the classroom;
6. Teacher must ensure daily notices are read;
7. Collect information as necessary (absence notes, permission forms, etc.) and send to administration. Distribute any student communication as necessary;
8. PBL/Form teacher is to follow up with students to obtain an absence note, check to see if there has been a phone call, text or email the day the student returns (ID Attend/ID Web);
9. In weeks 5 & 10, display the Attendance Health Check Data in PBL/Form classroom and discuss with students;
10. PBL/Form teacher contacts home for any students that have unexplained absences. Explained absences are then emailed to office@uppercoomerasc.eq.edu.au;

Subject Class roll marking:
1. Mark the roll every day at the start of the lesson accurately;
2. Log into ID Attend, find the class and mark students who are present. Confirm with a head count;
3. Late students need to be marked as present but late in ID Attend/ID Web;
4. Persistent lateness needs to be dealt with first by the classroom teacher, then by the year level Dean of that class;
5. Do not mark students present if they are not physically in the room unless they have shown you a pass out;
6. If for some reason ID Attend/ID Web does not work, complete a paper roll and send to Student Services (Attendance Officer) as soon as it is completed;
7. Students who attend class who have not been marked present during the day must be sent to the office to be signed in late;
8. All roll marking must be done at the beginning of the lesson. Supply/cover teachers need to mark either a paper roll or use ID Attend/ID Web to mark the teacher's class that they are covering;

Lateness:
1. If a student arrives late the teacher must change the roll, note on ID Attend/ID Web, and issue a consequence as per class rules and expectation;
2. If a student is persistently late, contact parents and refer to the year level Dean for further consequences;
3. All lateness to class should be recorded on ID Attend/ID Web.

Truancy:
1. If a student is absent from your class and has been marked present earlier in the day, you are responsible for following up to ascertain where the student was and issue a consequence as per your classroom behaviour plan. Parent contact needs to be made and the truancy recorded in One School;
2. A second truancy needs to be referred to the year level Dean where an afterschool detention (ASD) will be negotiated between the parent and the year level Dean;

3. If a student does not attend the ASD, the Year Level Dean makes a phone call to explain to the parents that if the student does not attend the next scheduled ASD there will be consequences for failing to follow instructions according to the RBPS. One School contact recorded;
4. Further truancy will be dealt with in accordance with the College Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students;

<u>Out of class for other reasons:</u>

1. Teachers must provide at least 24 hours-notice of excursions and send a list of students involved to the AO, and email notification to teachers;
2. The roll must be marked for absence and attendance and submitted to the Attendance Officer before departure where possible. Phone or email attendance if the departure is off campus;
3. Staff members requiring students for set activities must notify the necessary staff before the event or provide a note to explain their absence.

ALL STUDENTS OUT OF CLASS REQUIRE A SIGNED OUT-OF-CLASS PASS AT ALL TIMES

Year Level Deans Responsibility

1. Discuss Attendance Health Check Data with PBL teachers;
2. Ensure teachers are following up on partial absence and days away;
3. Monitor students with below expected attendance. Determine reasons for non-attendance (i.e. truancy/lateness) and:
   - Contact home to explain absences. Email absences to: office@uppercoomerasc.eq.edu.au;
   - Issue consequences for 2 or more truancy referred by class teacher on OneSchool;
   - Refer to Student Support Team if required.
4. Supervise after school detention as part of semester roster:
   - Record attendance on ID Attend;
   - Send out attendance list to follow up of non-attenders;
   - Provide community service activities.
5. Conduct stage one non-progression meeting with students not meeting attendance requirements.

Deputy Principal Responsibility

1. Monitor attendance and consistency across year levels;
2. Conduct stage one non-progression meeting with students not meeting attendance requirements.
3. Conduct Form 4 Attendance Interviews with families.

Sub-school Principal

1. Monitor students who receive Form 4 & 5;
2. Liaise with Student Services regarding Form 5;
3. Conduct meeting and monitor students who receive Form 5.
4. Students who do respond to Form 5 - refer to South East region office or start cancellation process.

SECONDARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

ABSENCES

LATE TO SCHOOL

TRUANCY

Student Services

Issues Attendance Data for weeks 5 and 10 of every term to PBL Teachers to complete the Attendance Health Check.

Student

Signs in at office and text sent home to parent/guardian

Teacher

Follow up
Issue consequence
Phone Home & OneSchool

Teacher

Follow up next day to get note;
Monitor students that have 90% - 95% Present + Approved Absences - contact home and inform student services of any explained absences

Persistently late

Student identified with falling attendance and receives appropriate attendance letters

3rd Truancy

Refer to DEAN through OneSchool
DEAN issues afternoon detention

Attendance Officer

- Monitors absence data and ensures teachers are addressing student absences (as above)
- Monitors students that have less than 90% total absence and ensures consistent application of the below steps.
- Referral of students to Welfare Team where required

Further Truancy

Refer to DEAN and GO
Case management and support plan

Issue further consequence according to RBPS

STUDENT SERVICES

Below 85% Total Absence

Student Services issues Absences Warning Letter to parent/guardian

Cancellation of Enrolment

Refer to relevant DEAN/DP for Stage 1 AONC through

cancellation process.

STUDENT WELFARE TEAM

Form 4

10 days absent or more (non-consecutive) from first date of contact—Student services issues Form 4 notice—Organises meeting for DP with parent/guardian

Automatic Referral to Student Welfare Team

INACTIVE

15 days absent consecutive

Unable to contact parent/guardian on multiple occasions

Student Services makes student enrolment inactive

Form 5

If no change—Student services issues Form 5 and refers to Sub-school Principal

School Refusal

Continued absence due to student behaviour, not parent, consequences to be issued in accordance with School Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students

Form 6

Sub school Principal refers absence onto regional office as per departmental policy

Attendance Officer

1. Sign in students who are late to the College;
2. Send home absence text at 9.30am;
3. Send home late text at 10.00am;
4. Generate daily absence report (partial & whole day) and email to staff;
5. Attendance Health Check Data (weeks 5 & 10)
   a. Individual classes
   b. Whole cohort for DPs
   c. PBL classes for year level Deans;
6. Absence warning letter sent for students not meeting attendance requirements;
7. Send home 95% and above letters;
8. Support Deputy Principals in the sub schools with attendance data collection and collation;
9. Issue Form 4 - students with 15 days absence in total (not consecutive) – organise meeting time with relevant DP;
10. Issue Form 5 - if no change or response after 5 days - refer to Sub-school Principal;
11. Highlight students not meeitng attendance requirements in years 11 & 12 (or age 16) for cancellation of enrolment process with year level DP;

TYPES OF ABSENTEEISM AND POSSIBLE RESPONSES

Terms	Examples	Possible Responses
Chronic absenteeism	Persistent or habitual absence or lateness Students with high levels of absences, variously defined as 10% or more school days absent Parents may provide explanations for absences, but these explanations may be considered unreasonable.	Parents and family members play an important role in assisting the student to reintegrate back and remain engaged in school. Schools may wish to: • Notify parents of their legal obligations and the importance of schooling and of continuity in learning from the early years. • Notify parents of the need to meet learning achievement standards or the possibility of non-progression • Encourage parents to participate in parenting skills training (e.g. organisational skills). • Encourage the development of supportive networks with other parents (e.g. establish a parents club). • Encourage parents to seek support from and communicate regularly with teachers and the school.
School refusal	A form of chronic absenteeism Parents often are aware of the absenteeism but are unable to address it Students who are almost completely unwilling or unable to attend school because of: • their past school experiences • psycho-social reasons related to clinical levels of anxiety • a developed habit of absence	The school gathers information about the student and family to help understand the nature of and reasons for the absences. The school implements strategies to address issues like learning problems or bullying where appropriate. School support staff such as Guidance Officers, Youth Support Coordinators or nurses may be involved. Where appropriate the school refers students and parents to relevant professionals (e.g. counsellors and psychologists) for programs according to the individual student's needs. Solutions may require whole-of-government intervention and support, as for truancy (see below).
Truancy	Disengagement from school May be accompanied by alienation from the school culture Unexplained absences from school perhaps without the knowledge of the parent/s	Where the reasons for truancy pertain to aspects of the school (e.g. poor relationships with teachers), the school implements strategies to address these aspects. The school alone may not be able to address all of the needs of the student (e.g. domestic violence at home, child abuse, etc.). Schools should work with the family and liaise with other agencies such as: • Department of Child Safety, • Department of Communities, • Queensland Police Child Protection Investigation Unit, and • Other relevant non-government organisations.

Learning Pathways to the Future