



# Attendance Policy: Claremont Special School

## Rationale:

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

At Claremont Special School we believe every child can learn and that Every Day Counts for our students. It is a school expectation that students attend every day (Monday to Friday from 8:50am – 2:40pm). Regular school attendance is vital and missing school days can have a big impact on a child's future. Missing one day a fortnight (which is 90% attendance) means a student will miss four full weeks by the end of the year. By Year 10 this means that they will have missed more than an entire year of school. While sickness and family emergencies may impact on school attendance our aim at Claremont Special School is that all students will attend more than 95% of the time.

## 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. Claremont Special 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 attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community

## Responsibilities:

### School responsibilities:

- Ensure school is a safe, welcoming and a supportive learning environment for students
- Contact parents and carers as soon as possible if the school is concerned about the child's school attendance and punctuality
- Have a clearly articulated roll marking process
- Clearly identify and communicate the roles and responsibilities of all staff involved in the roll marking process
- Provide clear ongoing message to staff about the importance of effective roll marking
- Provide clear and regular messages to the school community about the importance of:
  - Parents/carers notifying the school when a child is going to be absent and how this should happen e.g. attendance line, email, text or written note
  - Having up to date parent/carer and emergency contact details recorded at the school
- Inform the school community about same day student absence notification and how the school will alert parents/carers
- Have a clearly articulated same day notification process that covers:
  - How the daily list of students who are an unexplained absence will be created



- What other sources of absence data (e.g. notes, phone messages) will be checked, by whom, and by what time
  - Who is responsible for the notification process
  - How notifications will be made e.g. SMS, email, phone call
  - When the notifications are likely to be made
  - How, where and by whom parent responses will be recorded
  - Contingency plans in the event that usual processes cannot be followed or electronic systems are temporarily not available
  - How follow up will occur if the school does not receive a response from the parent/carer to the initial notification
- Clearly identify and communicate the roles and responsibilities of all staff involved in the notification process
  - Include relevant information about same day notification in staff induction, including temporary and casual staff
  - Provide staff with ongoing support and training

**Student responsibilities:**

- Attends school every school day for the educational program in which they are enrolled, on time, ready to learn and take part in school activities

**Parent/ Carer responsibilities:**

- Ensure their child attends school on a full time basis, and will notify the school if their child is absent
- Notify the school on the day of absence prior to school commencing so that the class teacher/administration is aware of the child's absence. There is a dedicated absentee line available (PH: 38135333). Parents identify the reason for the illness e.g. sick
- Complete an Application for Exemption form for more than 10 days leave from school e.g. holiday
- Respond in a timely manner to the text message identifying their child is absent from school if the school has not been provided a valid reason for the absence. If parents/carers have not notified the office on the day of absence by text/phone re an absence, a reason must be provided on the child's return to class. If no communication is received, the student's absence will be marked on the class roll as "unauthorised" for Department of Education purposes
- Ensure their child arrives at the commencement of school day program. If a student misses more than ½ hour at the beginning or end of the school day, it is classed as a ½ day absence
- Notify the bus/taxi service if your child is not attending school
- Provide the principal or deputy principal written advice if their child is leaving the school prior to the conclusion of the day with a person other than the parent. No student will be permitted to leave the grounds except on approved school activities unless a valid reason for the absence is presented to the principal or deputy principal
- Ensure their child attends school on a regular basis. Parents will be contacted by the principal or representative if their child has not attended school for long unexplained periods. If the absence continues the school will follow departmental processes to address the non-attendance
- Complete the late arrivals and early departures on the Administration iPad with a detailed reason for the late arrival and/or early departure



## Strategies:

At Claremont Special School we promote 100% attendance by:

- Sending letters home monthly informing parents/carers if their child's attendance is below 90% and a congratulatory letter if their child's attendance is above 95%
- Providing end of term whole school assembly certificates and newsletter announcements for students with 95% and higher attendance rate for the term with no unexplained absences
- Promote the links between school attendance and attainment to all members of the school community
- Establish and publicise an attendance target and report identifying progress towards the target on websites and in newsletters
- Provide a resource pack and visuals to support parents with strategies at home to encourage school attendance
- Ensure PBL focus lessons include school expectations i.e. I can learn when I come to school.
- Provide staff with regular reports on attendance and progress towards the school's targets. Discuss data trends and the underlying reasons for absences at the school during staff meetings

## Responses to absences:

At Claremont Special School, we are committed to achieving the following targets in improving attendance:

- Improved attendance > 90% by the end of semester 1 2020
- Improved attendance > 95% by the end of semester 2 2020

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

- Class teacher will contact the parent/carer about the unexplained absences or pattern of absences
- When the absences continue the Principal or the Deputy Principal will make contact with the parents/carers to discuss the absence.

At Claremont Special School the consequences or impacts of continued unexplained or unauthorised absences will include the following:

- Parents/Carers will be asked to attend a formal meeting with the Principal and/or Deputy Principal to discuss rectifying the unexplained or unauthorised absences

## Some related resources:

### **Every Day Counts**

<https://everydaycounts.education.qld.gov.au/>

### **Departmental Policies and Procedures**

[Managing Student Absences and Enforcing Enrolment and Attendance at State Schools](#)

[Roll Marking in State Schools](#)

