



# Sandgate District State High School ATTENDANCE POLICY

## PURPOSE

The Education General Provisions Act 2006 requires that children of compulsory school age\* must be enrolled and attend school on every day. (\*Schooling is compulsory for children from 6 years and 6 months until they turn 16, or they complete Year 10 – whichever comes first).

## AIMS

- To maximise student learning opportunities and performance by ensuring that students attend school regularly and without unnecessary absences.
- To prepare students and instil work ethics that reflect workplace standards.

Sandgate District State High School is dedicated to supporting all students to achieve success. Education is a sequential process. Absences often mean students miss important stages in the educational development. Absenteeism contributes significantly to student failure.

Our target is for all students to have attendance above 95% and all absences explained. If your student is absent from school, please notify the school on the day of absence:

- By phoning the student absence line on 3869 9802
- Via your parent *Compass* account
- Via your QParents account
- By email on the day of absence at [studentabsence@sandgatedistrictshs.eq.edu.au](mailto:studentabsence@sandgatedistrictshs.eq.edu.au)
- Or by writing a note (signed and dated) and having it delivered to the school by the student or a sibling. School will contact the parent/carer by phone to ensure validity of written note.

If your student has a prolonged absence or more than 10 days due to illness or family commitments, please contact the school to apply for an **Exemption from Compulsory Schooling**. It is important that supporting documentation and evidence are attached to the application (medical certificate, overseas flight details etc).

## ABSENTEEISM

Teachers will report unexplained student absences to the Attendance Officer, through their roll marking on Compass. Text messages will be sent to the nominated parent's/carer's mobile each morning if a student has been marked absent or late (without contact from a parent/carer) for school. The administration team will request that communication be made and will target support structures where required if there is continued absenteeism. If school communication is not responded to, the school may engage with other government agencies and take disciplinary actions to ensure your student re-engages with school.

## RESPONSES TO ABSENCES

When a student is absent without notification, when a student is absent for three or more consecutive school days, where there is a persistent pattern of unexplained absences or absences without reasonable excuses or where a student's attendance is reasonably considered unsatisfactory by the Principal, Sandgate District State High School will take the following actions:

- Attendance officer will contact parent/carer by text message.
- Ongoing absences will be monitored and reviewed by the Attendance Officer and Year Level Coordinators.
- School will offer support to family to ensure student's attendance improves. If this is a welfare or wellbeing issue, then the Year Level Coordinators will initiate the start of a referral and support form. Attendance will still be required during the referral process.
- Authorised officer at the school considers whether an exemption to schooling, flexible arrangement or alteration to a student's education program is appropriate and required.
- If the child is still not attending regularly after two weeks (10 school days) of the first attempt to contact parents, an authorised officer at the school sends by registered post, a Notice (**Form 4 – Failure to attend (s.178(2))**) to both parents outlining parents' legal obligation and inviting both parents to attend a meeting to discuss the situation.
- Authorised officer at the school keeps a copy of the Notice (Form 4) and records date, time and by whom letter was posted.

If after sending the Notice (Form 4):

- A meeting occurred with the parents, but there is no change in circumstances within one week (5 school days) of this meeting; or
- A meeting did not occur with the parents, and there is no change in circumstances within one week (5 school days) of sending the Notice;
- An authorised officer at the school sends by registered post a Warning Notice (**Form 5 – Failure to attend (s178(4))**) advising parents of their legal obligations and offering a meeting to discuss support available to address failure to attend.

## TRUANCY

- Student attendance will be monitored daily through an electronic marking system – *Compass*. This is regularly monitored by the Attendance Officers, teachers and parents can also access *Compass* to view their student absences.
- Year Level Coordinators will either telephone or email, notifying parents/carers of the absence.
- Students to be found truanting will be disciplined under the school's Student Code of Conduct for Students.
- Truanting is regarded as serious conduct prejudicial to the good order and management of the school.
- Truancy can place a student in unsafe situations and impact on their future employability and life choices.
- Truancy can impact significantly on students' learning and wellbeing.

## LATE ARRIVALS AND EARLY DEPARTURES

To ensure accurate school attendance records and to provide a safe and secure environment, student who arrive late must sign in at the front office. There should be an explanation via either:

- By phoning the student absence line on 3869 9802
- Via your parent *Compass* account
- Via your QParents account
- By email on the day of absence [studentabsence@sandgatedistrictshs.eq.edu.au](mailto:studentabsence@sandgatedistrictshs.eq.edu.au)
- **In writing** upon late arrival

Students who arrive during Morning Connect should proceed straight to their Connect class to have their name marked. If a student is late with no explanation, a detention will be issued.

Students repeatedly late to class will be referred to their respective Head of Department. Students repeatedly late to school will be referred to their respective Year Level Deputy Principal.

If departure prior to the end of the school day is required students must sign out at the front office. Students should have a **letter from a parent/carer** explaining this variation, once again ensuring their safety. This will then be followed up by a phone call from one of our Administration team members. Other explanations can be via:

- By phoning the student absence line on 3869 9802
- Via your parent *Compass* account
- Via your QParents account
- By email on the day of absence [studentabsence@sandgatedistrictshs.eq.edu.au](mailto:studentabsence@sandgatedistrictshs.eq.edu.au)

## STUDENTS WHO BECOME SICK

When a student becomes sick during the day, the student should see their class teacher. If necessary, the class teacher will refer the student to the Administration Office who will then contact the parent/carer to collect the student.

## EXCURSIONS/VARIATION TO SCHOOL ROUTINE

Students must be able to demonstrate a pattern of regular attendance before they will be permitted to attend an excursion (if it is not related to assessment) or represent the school. Students in positions of added responsibility (e.g., School Captains) may have their positions rescinded should their attendance rate become unacceptable. Extenuating circumstances will be considered by a Deputy Principal.

- Once an excursion has been approved, the excursion organiser is to create an excursion roll in *Compass* **three** days before the date of excursion and send the list to the Attendance Officer. This will allow the Attendance Officer to update any students who may not be attending the excursion

- Attendance Officers can also assist in creating an excursion roll in *Compass*, however if there are any further changes after this time, they need to be given directly to attendance officers.
- Excursion/VSR organiser marks roll in *Compass* prior to leaving school.
- When excursion organiser cannot mark electronically (e.g. internet down), they are to scan list, phone call in absences or anomalies prior to departure, or mark a paper roll.

## KEY POINTS

- If you withdraw a student from their usual class, you must communicate this with the timetabled teacher/s/Attendance Officer and alter the roll in *Compass*
- If you withdraw groups of students from usual classes, you must communicate with **all staff** and **the attendance officer** and alter the roll in *Compass*
- If you change classrooms, you must note this change in *Compass*.

## ROLL MARKING PROCEDURES

### Teacher Process for recording absences and managing attendance

Teachers use visual and verbal confirmation when recording whether a student is present or absent (i.e. call each student's name, await a verbal response from the student and sight the student who provided the response, count the students present match the number marked present) as per Education Queensland Roll Marking policy. Class and Connect rolls are official school documents which can be called upon in Law Courts and are audited yearly.

### Classroom Teachers responsibilities include:

- Ensuring a roll is marked for each class including supervisions
- Completing electronic roll marking using *Compass* within the first 10 minutes of the class
- **Ensuring that at no time teachers display the Compass screen via a projector or show students whilst marking as this displays sensitive personal information about students.**
- Checking on student wellbeing
- Marking a hard copy roll/ emailing roll to Attendance Officer in the first 10 minutes when electronic rolls are not working
- Managing consequences for students late to class without reasonable explanation
- Checking date and time on late slip, issued by the Student Counter, of any students entering/exiting class
- Managing repeated unexplained student absence by contacting home and recording contact on OneSchool
- Updating/recording attendance as unjustified if a student truants class

## **Truancy and Late to class**

If a student is late to class with no valid reason or late slip, the following process is followed:

- If the student arrives late to class, the *Compass* roll will be marked as present and a note recorded beside the student's name: Late - Time of arrival, reason for late arrival
- A restorative conversation with class teacher and the student may make up lost time during the first available lunch break
- If the lateness to class is frequent, the class teacher will set appropriate consequences, record the action and the class teacher will contact home regarding the incident on OneSchool

If a student is truant with no valid reason, the following process is followed:

- *Truancy - Whole lesson and Leaving the Classroom without Permission:* The Year Level Coordinators will contact home, notifying parents/carers of the unexplained absence. Students to be found truanting will receive a detention from the Year Level Coordinator. Students who receive three or more detentions per term will be referred to the Year Level Deputy Principal

If students are persistently truant or late to class, students may be placed on a monitoring card for one to two weeks. These can be issued by YLC's or Deputy Principal's.

## **Inconsistencies in Roll Marking/Unmarked Rolls**

- Attendance officer emails out unmarked rolls email after each period to relevant teachers. Teachers to rectify immediately.
- Attendance officer emails class teacher and Head of Department a reminder of any unmarked rolls at the end of the day. Teachers are required to peruse this and report any anomalies to Attendance Officer. Teachers amend *Compass* by 4:00pm each day and follow up class attendance with student.
- Should rolls remain unmarked the Year Level Deputy Principal's will discuss as breach of Staff Code of Conduct and managing performance.

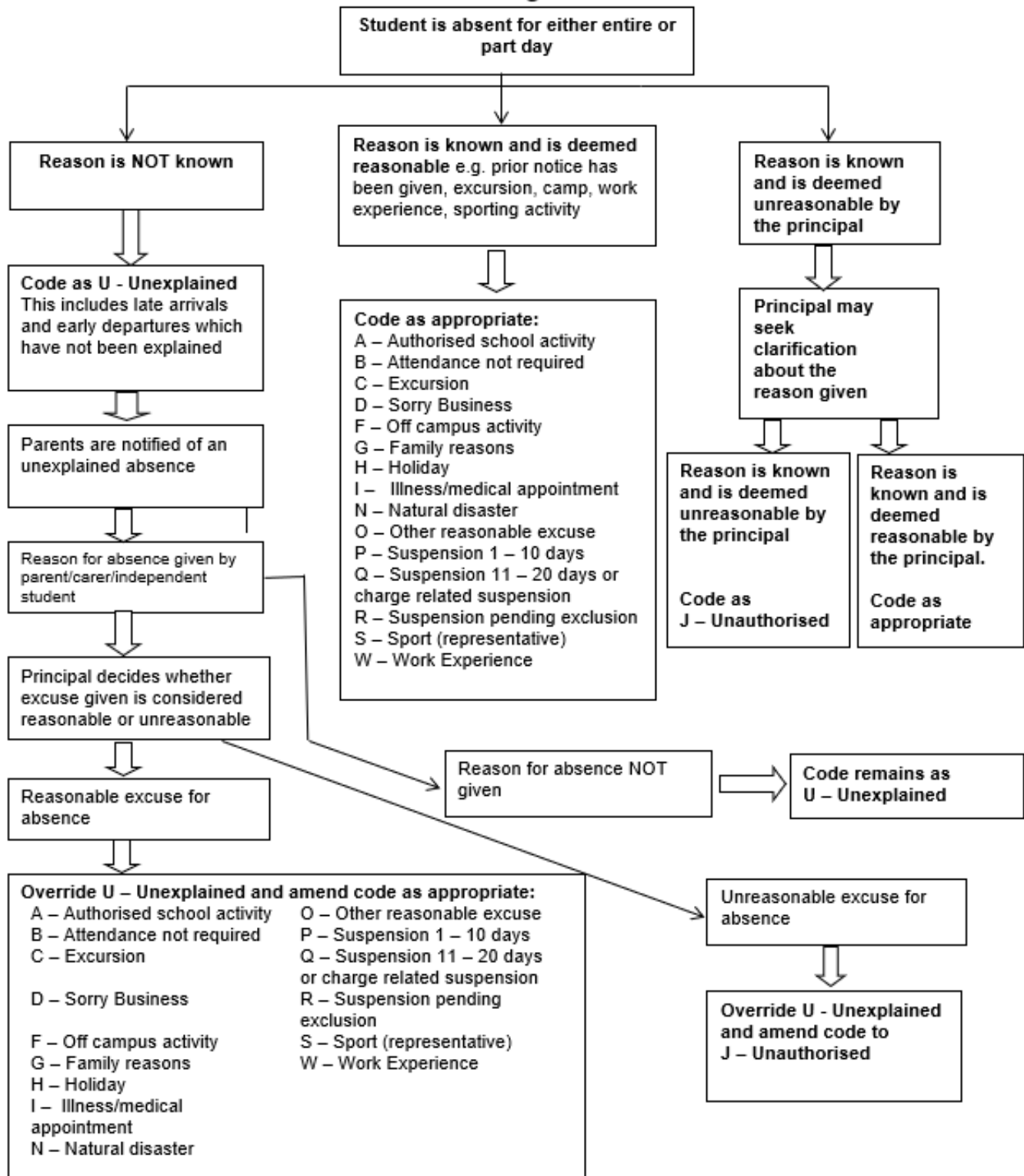
## **APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1: Roll Marking in State Schools
- Appendix 2: Same day student absence notification
- Appendix 3: Following Up Student Unexplained Absences
- Appendix 4: Application for exemption for a child/young person enrolled in a state school or a child/young person not enrolled at any Queensland school
- Appendix 5: Absence codes for full or part day absence
- Appendix 6: Absence reason codes for reasonable excuse
- Appendix 7: Guidelines for determining whether excuses for student absences are considered reasonable excuses
- Appendix 8: Guidelines for recording attendance of student's who are enrolled
- Appendix 9: Truancy Flowchart
- Appendix 10: Following up Late Students

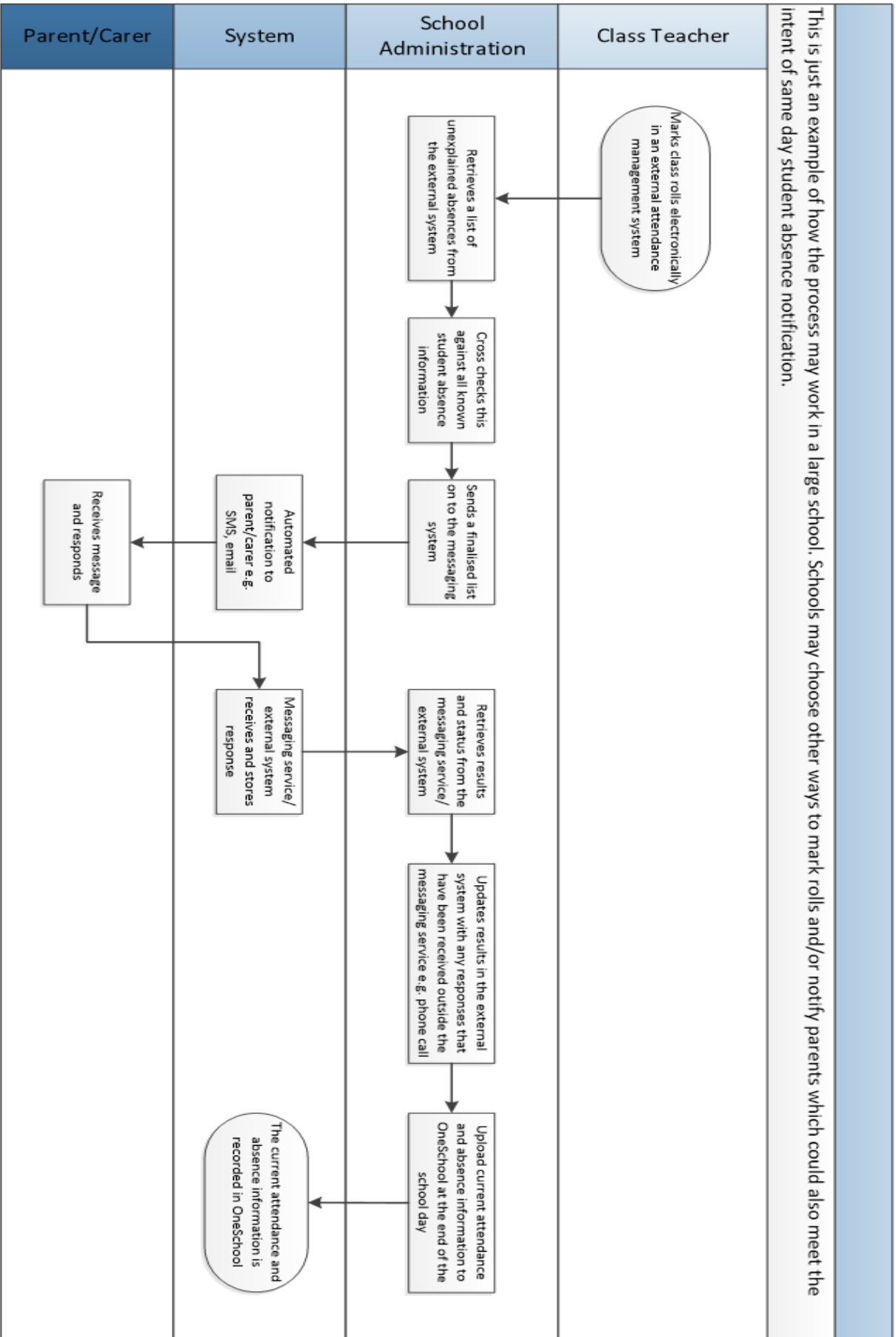
## **APPENDIX 1**

# Roll marking in state schools

## Flowchart for recording student absences



# Same day student absence notification



## APPENDIX 3

### Following Up Student Unexplained Absences

We are dedicated to ensuring a safe and supportive learning environment, including when students can't be at school. It is an important aspect of our duty of care to know where students are even when they are absent from learning at school.

It is an expectation that all absences are explained and parents are encouraged to contact the absence line on 3869 9802, *Compass*, QParents or email on [studentabsence@sandgatedistrictshs.eq.edu.au](mailto:studentabsence@sandgatedistrictshs.eq.edu.au) when your student is away.

Please be aware that the school will continue to communicate unexplained absences to parents/carers by the following:

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Process</b>
On the day of absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bulk SMS messages to advise parents of non-attendance daily</li></ul>
3 days or more OR 3 consecutive days per fortnight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A phone call to the parent/carer</li></ul>
4 or more consecutive days OR 5 days per fortnight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A formal letter 1 will be emailed to the parent/carer</li></ul>
If after sending Letter 1, but there are no changes to circumstances within one week (5 school days)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A formal letter 2 will be emailed to the parent/carer</li></ul>
10 days or more in a term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A phone call to the parent/carer</li><li>• <b>A Notice - Form 4 – Failure to attend (s.178(2))</b> will be generated and sent by registered post</li></ul>
15 days or more in a term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A phone call to the parent/carer</li><li>• <b>A Warning Notice - Form 5 – Failure to attend (s178(4))</b> will be generated and sent by registered post</li></ul>
No change in Attendance after 20 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enforcement of attendance process commences</li></ul>

## **Exemptions from compulsory schooling and compulsory participation**

### **Information for parents and students**

#### **What is an exemption and why do I need it?**

Every parent of a child of compulsory school age or young person in the compulsory participation phase has a legal obligation to ensure their child is enrolled at and attending school or participating in an eligible option.

Parents can apply for an exemption from this obligation when their child cannot (or it would be unreasonable in all the circumstances) attend school or participate in an eligible option for a period of more than 10 consecutive school days.

For information on situations where an exemption may be granted, please refer to [Circumstances where an exemption is not required, and where an exemption may or may not be granted information sheet](#).

If your child is exempted from compulsory schooling, or the young person is exempted from compulsory participation, you are excused from your obligation in relation to compulsory schooling or compulsory participation for the period of the exemption.

The school principal is not responsible for providing an educational program to your child during the approved exemption period; however, they may provide advice on other educational options available.

#### **Who decides to grant or not grant an exemption?**

Decisions about exemptions are made by the principal of the school the student attends.

#### **Applying for an exemption at Sandgate District State High School:**

You are encouraged to discuss with Your Year Level Deputy Principal whether an application for exemption is a suitable option for your student's circumstances. The school will provide you with an application form for an exemption (attached). It is important that supporting documentation and evidence are attached to the application.

Once you have completed the application, please email to: [principal@sandgatedistrictshs.eq.edu.au](mailto:principal@sandgatedistrictshs.eq.edu.au)  
The agreement may also be delivered to the office or mailed, addressing to the Principal.

When a decision about the exemption has been made, you will be informed in writing whether or not the exemption has been granted and if any conditions have been imposed. If you are not satisfied with the decision made, you can make a submission for the decision to be reviewed.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact your student's Deputy Principal for assistance.

Yours sincerely

Andy Stergou

Principal

## Application for exemption for a child or young person enrolled in a Queensland state school

This form is to be used for a child/young person who is currently enrolled in a Queensland state school to apply for an exemption from **compulsory schooling** or from the **compulsory participation phase**.

**Compulsory schooling** commences when a child is at least 6 years and 6 months old and ends when they turn 16 or complete Year 10, whichever is sooner.

A young person's **compulsory participation phase** starts when they stop being of compulsory school age (i.e. turns 16 or completes Year 10 whichever comes first) and ends when the person:

- gains a Certificate of Achievement, Senior Statement, Certificate III or Certificate IV; or
- has participated in eligible options for 2 years after the person stopped being of compulsory school age; or
- turns 17.

The following table lists eligible options and their provider:

Eligible option	Provider
an educational program provided under the <i>Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld)</i>	a state school
an educational program provided under the <i>Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2001 (Qld)</i>	a non-state school
a course of study under the <i>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (Cwlth)</i>	a registered higher education provider
a course of vocational education and training provided under the <i>National Vocational Education and Training Regulatory Act 2011 (Cwlth)</i>	a registered training organisation
an apprenticeship or traineeship under the <i>Further Education and Training Act 2014 (Qld)</i>	a registered training organisation
a departmental employment skills development program under the <i>Further Education and Training Act 2014 (Qld)</i>	the chief executive administering the <i>Further Education and Training Act 2014</i>

### How to complete this form:

- Part A is to be **completed and signed by the parent, or by the young person if it would be inappropriate in the circumstances to require the signed consent of the parent (i.e. the young person is living independently of their parents)**. All supporting material should be attached to the application for consideration.
- Part B is to be **completed by the principal of the state school** for consideration and approval.

### Please note:

- An exemption from compulsory schooling is not required if the student is enrolled in the Preparatory Year and they are not yet of compulsory schooling age.
- No exemption is required from compulsory schooling if the student will be undertaking an apprenticeship or traineeship.
- If the principal declines to approve the application, an information notice outlining the decision, reasons for the decision and information about seeking a review of this decision will be given.

## Application for Exemption

### Privacy Notice

The Department of Education is collecting the information on this form to determine if a student is entitled to an exemption from compulsory schooling or an exemption from compulsory participation. This collection is authorised by ss.186 and 245 of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006. Information from this form may also be disclosed to third parties as required or authorised by law. If you have concerns about the handling of your personal information, please contact the school principal in the first instance.

**(Please type or print clearly and COMPLETE ALL SECTIONS)**

Part A - To be completed by the parent/carer and/or young person			
Name of student in full			
Date of birth			
Name of school	Sandgate District State High School		
Year level			
Name of parent/carer			
Postal address			Postcode
Home phone		Mobile phone	
Email address			
How many school days are you seeking an exemption for?		Period for which exemption is sought (insert dates)	Start:
			End: (this should be the date immediately prior to you/your child's return to school or eligible option)
Reason/s for seeking exemption  Why you/your child cannot attend school, or why it would be unreasonable in all the circumstances to require you/your child to attend school?  (please provide details or attach supporting documentation)			
Signature of parent/carer		Date	
Signature of student (only if in the compulsory participation phase)		Date	

Please forward the completed application form and any attachments to the school principal for consideration and approval. Written notification of the decision regarding this application will be sent to the parent/carer and/or young person.

Uncontrolled copy. Refer to the Department of Education Policy and Procedure Register at <https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/exemptions-from-compulsory-schooling-and-compulsory-participation-procedure> to ensure you have the most current version of this document.

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## Part B - To be completed by the school principal (internal purposes only)

<b>Application for exemption from:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Compulsory schooling <input type="checkbox"/> Compulsory participation	
<b>Is the student in Year 10 or 15 years of age?</b> If 'Yes', a Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority student learning account should be established, if it has not already been done so, prior to an exemption being granted	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> QCAA Account Number
<b>Decision (please tick whichever is appropriate)</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> I grant an exemption for this student and the parent/carer and/or young person has been advised.  _____ Signature of principal <span style="float: right;">Date</span>  Andy Stergou Name of principal		
<input type="checkbox"/> I do not grant an exemption for this student. <input type="checkbox"/> I grant an exemption with the following condition/s: <input type="checkbox"/> I grant an exemption with the following change/s to what has been requested: <input type="checkbox"/> I grant a partial exemption (for students in the compulsory participation phase only)		
<p><b>NOTE:</b> My decision, materials considered, findings of fact and reasons for my decision are set out in an information notice, which has been sent to the young person and/or parent/carer, as required by the <i>Education (General Provisions) Act 2006</i>.</p> _____ Signature of principal <span style="float: right;">Date</span>  Andy Stergou Name of principal		

## APPENDIX 5

Absence codes for full or part day absence Type of Absence	Code	Explanatory notes
Entire day	A	Student was absent entire day.
Early (No Penalty)	E	<p>Student left early, but within the final two hours of scheduled schooling. This will not count as an afternoon/half day absence.</p> <p>If the student left earlier than two hours prior to the end of the scheduled school day, this will count as an afternoon/half day absence (see "P" code).</p>
Late (No Penalty)	L	<p>Student arrived late, but within two hours of scheduled schooling. This will not count as a morning/half day absence.</p> <p>If the student arrived after the first two hours of the scheduled school day, this will count as a morning/half day absence (see "M" code).</p>
Morning	M	Student was absent for the morning. This will count as a half day absence.
Afternoon	P	Student was absent for the afternoon. This will count as a half day absence.

## APPENDIX 6

### Absence reason codes for reasonable excuse

Off campus activity	F	Student is participating in an authorised activity that is away from the school campus. These activities will be regular and ongoing in nature.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Flexible arrangements</a></li> <li>• Attendance at a TAFE or other training provider course</li> <li>• Participation in a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship</li> <li>• Attendance at a Positive Learning Centre</li> </ul>	Yes	No
Family reasons	G	<p>Student is absent due to family circumstances beyond the influence of the student. The parent is aware that their child is absent and an explanation has been provided to the school.</p> <p>Where these absences are persistent and regular, principals should discuss the situation with the parent and/or student to determine if additional supports and/or strategies are required to strengthen engagement and improve attendance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moving house</li> <li>• Transport issues</li> <li>• Family member is ill or in hospital</li> </ul>	Yes	Yes
Holiday	H	The parent, or the student if they are living <a href="#">independently</a> (available to DoE employees only), has informed the school that the student/family is taking a holiday. Note that holidays during the school term should be discouraged. If the absence is more than 10 consecutive days, an exemption is available. Refer to <a href="#">Exemptions from compulsory schooling and compulsory participation</a> .		Yes	Yes

Illness and medical appointments	I	<p>The parent, or the student if they are living <a href="#">independently</a> (available to DoE employees only), has informed the school that the student is sick.</p> <p>Where these absences are persistent and regular, schools may request that documentary evidence (e.g. medical certificate) is provided. If a medical certificate has been provided, this should be noted in OneSchool and kept on file.</p> <p>If a student is unable to attend school for a period longer than 10 consecutive school days, an exemption is available. Refer to <a href="#">Exemptions from compulsory schooling and compulsory participation</a>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All references to ill health or reasons related to the health of the student (including <a href="#">mental health</a>),</li> <li>• Absences to attend medical/dental/health professional appointments during school hours</li> <li>• School refusal (i.e. student refusing to go to school due to a fear of attending school or anxiety about leaving home)</li> </ul>	Yes	Yes
Unauthorised	J	<p>The excuse given for a student absence is deemed as unreasonable by the principal. The reason (with any supporting evidence) as to why an explanation is considered to be unreasonable must be documented in OneSchool.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leisure activities</li> <li>• Shopping</li> <li>• Visiting friends and relatives</li> <li>• Celebrating birthdays</li> <li>• Fishing</li> <li>• Truancy</li> <li>• Any other reason for absence that the principal does not consider to be reasonable</li> </ul>	No	Yes

Natural disaster	N	<p>Student is unable to attend school due to an extreme weather event or other natural disaster.</p> <p>This code may be used whether or not the student is continuing with school work while absent from school, and may be used for full or part-day absences.</p>		Yes	No
Other	O	<p>The principal has determined that the excuse provided by the parent or student (where the student is <a href="#">independent</a>, an adult, or where it would be inappropriate to ask the parent) is reasonable, however the existing absence reason codes are not suitable to use for the excuse provided.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Religious observances</li> <li>• Funerals</li> <li>• Legal matters (i.e. attending court)</li> <li>• Non-representative sport events / sports events not endorsed by the school</li> </ul>	Yes	Yes
Short suspension	P	<p>Student is suspended for 1 to 10 days under s.283 of the EGPA.</p>		Yes	Yes
Long suspension	Q	<p>Student is suspended for 11 to 20 days under s.283 of the EGPA, or for a student with charge-related reasons who has not enrolled at a school of distance education or engaged in an educational program.</p>		Yes	Yes
Suspension pending exclusion	R	<p>Student is suspended pending an exclusion decision by the principal.</p>		Yes	Yes

Sport (Representative)	S	<p>Student is representing their school, district, region, state or nation at a sporting event which is recognised by the school (refer to <a href="#">Queensland School Sport</a> for the full list of representative sports).</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> If non-representative sport, use Code O (Other).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australian football</li> <li>• golf</li> <li>• swimming</li> <li>• water polo</li> <li>• multi-class events in aquathon, cross country, track and field</li> </ul>	Yes	No
Unexplained	U	No reason has been given for the student's absence.		No	Yes
Work experience	W	Student is participating in a <a href="#">work experience program</a> approved and organised by the school.		Yes	No
Exemptions	Z	<p>Student has been granted an exemption from schooling. Refer to <a href="#">Exemptions from compulsory schooling and compulsory participation</a>.</p> <p>Refer to <a href="#">Guidelines for recording attendance of students who are enrolled but not attending school and cannot be located, and students who have been granted an exemption from schooling</a></p>		Yes	No

*\*For absences less than two hours (i.e. E or L code from [Table 1](#)), the absence will not be counted irrespective of the reason given.*

<b>Reason why student is not physically present at school</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Explanatory notes</b>	<b>Counted as an absence*</b>
School activity	A	Student is participating in an authorised school activity for school purposes. May include participation in school choirs, youth parliament, or community service, or attendance at a hospital school. Refer to the Guidelines.	No
Attendance not required	B	Student was not required to attend school on this day as it is not included in his/her educational program.	No
Excursion	C	Student is participating in an excursion which occurs outside the school grounds and is conducted, organised and/or approved by the school. Excursions could include part-day, full-day or multi-day class visits to venues outside the school or school camps.	No
Off Campus activity	F	Student is participating in an authorised activity that is away from the school campus. These activities may include flexible arrangements, attendance at a TAFE or other training provider course, participation in a VET activity or participation in a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship. These activities will be regular and ongoing.	No
Holiday	H	The parent, or the student if they are living independently, has informed the school that the student/family is taking a holiday. Note that holidays during the school term should be discouraged. If the absence is more than 10 consecutive days, an exemption is required. Refer to <a href="#">Exemptions from Compulsory Schooling and Compulsory Participation</a> .	Yes
Illness	I	The parent, or the student if they are living independently, has informed the school that the student is sick. This includes all references to ill health or reasons related to the health of the student. If a medical certificate has been provided this should be noted in OneSchool and kept on file. If a child is unable to attend school for a period longer than 10 consecutive school days, an exemption is required. Refer to <a href="#">Exemptions from Compulsory Schooling and Compulsory Participation</a> .  A child may be absent from school if the child is, or is a member of a class of persons that is, subject to a direction or order given about an infections or contagious disease or condition.	Yes
Natural Disaster	N	Student is unable to attend school due to an extreme weather event or other natural disaster.	No

Sorry Business	D	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students participating in sorry business. Refer to <a href="#">Guidelines</a> .	Yes
Other	O	The principal has determined that the excuse provided by the parent or student (where the student is an adult or where it would be inappropriate to ask the parent) is reasonable. Principals must use the <a href="#">Guidelines</a> to determine reasonable excuses and document these reasons. This code may be used for medical and dental appointments, religious observances, funerals, and legal matters.	Yes
Short suspension	P	Student is suspended for 1 to 10 days under s283 of the EGPA.	Yes
Long suspension	Q	Student is suspended for 11 to 20 days under s283 of the EGPA or for charge related reasons.	Yes
Suspension – recommended exclusion	R	Student is suspended with the recommendation for exclusion under s293 of EGPA.	Yes
Sport (Representative Sport)	S	Student is representing their school, district, region, state or nation at a sporting event recognised by the school.	No, if representing their school, district, state or region. Yes, in all other circumstances.
Sport (Non-representative)	O	Student is participating in sporting activities that are not endorsed by the school and is not representing the school, district, region, state, or nation.	Yes
Work experience	W	Student is participating in an approved work experience program.	No
Exemptions	Z	Student has an exemption from schooling. Refer to <a href="#">Exemptions from Compulsory Schooling and Compulsory Participation</a> .	No

**Table 2 – Absence reason codes for reasonable excuse**

**Table 3 – Absence reason codes for unexplained or unreasonable excuses**

*\*For absences less than 2 hours (i.e. E or L code from Table 1), the absence will not be counted irrespective of reason given.*

<b>Reason why student is not physically present at school</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Explanatory notes</b>	<b>Counted as an absence*</b>
Unexplained	U	No reason has been given for the student absence	Yes
Unauthorised	J	The excuse given for a student absence is deemed as unreasonable. The reason (with any supporting evidence) as to why an explanation is considered to be unreasonable must be documented.	Yes

## APPENDIX 7

### **Guidelines for determining whether excuses for student absences are considered reasonable excuses**

Pursuant to s176(1) of the Education General Provisions Act (EGPA) 2006, 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 program in which the child is enrolled unless the parent has a reasonable excuse. Pursuant to s239(1) of the Education General Provisions Act (EGPA) 2006 a parent of a young person in the [compulsory participation phase](#) must ensure the young person is participating full-time in an eligible option, unless the parent has a reasonable excuse.

***A student who is participating in one of the following activities must be recorded as not physically present at the school site but will not be recorded as absent for the purpose of report cards or school attendance data:***

**School activity (Absence Reason Code A)** – A student will not be considered absent when they are participating in an authorised activity for school purposes. Examples include students performing in school choirs, bands or dance groups, students participating in a youth parliament or council, or students participating in community service. Students attending a hospital school should also be marked with Code A. Upon discharge from hospital, the hospital school should advise the usual school of any variations in the student’s attendance. Code A should be replaced with Code I (Illness) for days when the student has not participated in the education program at the hospital school due to illness.

**Excursion (Absence Reason Code C)** – A student will not be considered absent when they are participating in an excursion which occurs outside the school grounds and is conducted, organised and/or approved by the school. Excursions include part-day, full-day or multi-day class visits to venues outside the school, and school camps.

**Natural Disaster (Absence Reason Code N)** – A student will not be considered absent if they are unable to attend school due to an extreme weather event or other natural disaster. This code may be used whether or not the student is continuing with school work while absent from school, and may be used for full or part-day absences.

**Off Campus Activity (Absence Reason Code F)** – A student will not be considered absent if they are participating in an authorised activity that is away from the school campus. These activities may include flexible arrangements, attendance at a TAFE or other training provider course, or participation in a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship. These activities will be regular and ongoing in nature.

**Sport – Representative (Absence Reason Code S)** – A student will not be considered absent when they are representing the school, district, region, state or country at a sporting event approved by the school. For non-representative sport, see below.

**Work experience (Absence Reason Code W)** – A student will not be considered absent when they are participating in a work experience program approved and organised by the school. Work experience programs are available for students 14 years or older. Schools must ensure appropriate work experience agreements have been completed before students participate in work experience.

**Exemption (Absence Reason Code Z)** – The student has been formally exempted for this absence and is recorded in the school’s exemption register.

**Attendance not required (Absence Reason Code B)** – The student was not required to attend school on this day as it is not included in his/her educational program. This may include part-time students or students whose educational program does not require their attendance on particular days.

***The following circumstances will be considered absences for which a reasonable excuse has been given:***

**Illness (Absence Reason Code I)** – It is reasonable that a child may be absent from school when they are genuinely too ill to attend. On any single day of absence due to illness, or as soon as possible within 2 days of the student's return to school, a parent should provide the school with an explanation for the absence, in line with the school's agreed processes for notifying of student absence. This may take the form of a written explanation note containing the student's name, date(s) of absence(s) and reason for absence(s), a verbal explanation through either a phone call or visit to the school, or a medical certificate.

If the absence is more than 10 consecutive school days, an exemption is required. Refer to [Exemptions from Compulsory Schooling and Compulsory Participation](#).

[Infectious or contagious disease \(Absence Reason Code I\)](#) – It is a reasonable excuse for a child to be absent from school if the child is, or is a member of a class of persons, that is subject to a [direction or order given about an infectious or contagious disease or condition](#).

**Medical or dental treatments or procedures (Absence Reason Code O)** – In some circumstances it may be reasonable for a student to be absent to attend a medical or dental appointment during school hours, however, parents should be encouraged to make these appointments out of school hours if possible. These absences should be documented through the provision of a written or verbal explanation from a parent.

**Holiday (Absence Reason Code H)** – Holidays during terms should be actively discouraged. Parents should be encouraged to plan holidays during gazetted school holiday periods and student free days. If the absence is more than 10 consecutive school days, an exemption is required. Refer to [Exemptions from Compulsory Schooling and Compulsory Participation](#).

**Religious observance (Absence Reason Code O)** – In some circumstances it may be reasonable for a student to be absent to participate in a special religious observance. These absences should be documented through the provision of a written or verbal explanation from the parent.

**Sport – Non-representative (Absence Reason Code O)** – Principals should use their professional judgement to determine if it is reasonable for a student to be absent from school to participate in a sporting event where they are not representing their school, district, region, state or nation, taking into consideration the type of event and the organising sporting body.

**Suspension** – Suspension is a reasonable excuse for absence and the following applies:

- a student suspended for 10 days or less (**Absence Reason Code P**)
- a student suspended for 11 to 20 days **or for charge-related reasons (Absence Reason Code Q)**
- a student suspended with a recommendation for exclusion (**Absence Reason Code R**).

For all suspensions, the school's principal must take reasonable steps to ensure the student can continue their education.

**Law of the Commonwealth (Absence Reason Code O)** – It is a reasonable excuse for a child to be absent from school if a Law of the Commonwealth allows a child to carry on an activity other than attending school.

**Funeral (Absence Reason Code O)** – Attendance at a funeral may be considered as a reasonable excuse for absence. Parents should be encouraged to ensure their child misses as little school as possible. There may also be circumstances where a child is kept out of school due to grief for a close family member. In such circumstances, the school should work with families to encourage them to have the child attend school to maintain a sense of normalcy. These situations should be handled with respect and sensitivity and should be underpinned by the interests of the child.

**Sorry Business (Absence Reason Code D)** - Student is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and was required to be absent to participate in cultural activities related to a recent family bereavement. Parents should be encouraged to ensure their child misses as little school as possible. There may also be circumstances where a child is kept out of school due to grief for a close family member. In such circumstances, the school should work with families to encourage them to have the child attend school to maintain a sense of normalcy. These situations should be handled with respect and sensitivity and should be underpinned by the interests of the child.

**Legal (Absence Reason Code O)** – It is a reasonable excuse for a child to be absent from school where the child is required to attend court or fulfil other legal requirements.

***The following circumstances will be considered absences for which there is NOT a reasonable excuse given:***

**Unexplained absence (Absence Reason Code U)** – When no explanation for a student absence has been offered to the school by the parent, or the student if they are living independently.

**Leisure activities (Absence Reason Code J - Unauthorised)** – Undertaking a leisure activity such as shopping, visiting friends and relatives, or fishing, is not considered a reasonable excuse for an absence from school.

**Any other reason for absence (Absence Reason Code J - Unauthorised)** – The principal should use their professional judgement in determining whether other reasons given by the parent, or the student if they are living independently, are reasonable explanations for a student's absence. If the reason given is not a reasonable excuse, the principal should document the decision and record the absence with the Code J.

## APPENDIX 8

### Guidelines for recording attendance of students who are enrolled but not attending school and cannot be located, and students who have been granted an exemption from schooling

#### Purpose

These guidelines will assist state schools in Queensland to record information about students who are currently enrolled in a state school but have stopped attending school for a period of 15 or more consecutive school days and cannot be located. The guidelines will also assist schools in recording information about students who have been granted exemptions from state schools.

#### Background

- Schools treat a student's enrolment as having ended if one or more of the following circumstances arise:
- student has graduated
- student has no remaining allocation of semesters
- student has been excluded or their enrolment cancelled under the *Education (General Provisions Act) 2006*
- student has enrolled in another school
- student has died
- student has permanently moved interstate or overseas with no intention of returning
- there is reasonable evidence that the student, having voluntarily left the school, has no intention of attending the school again (e.g. school has been advised student has left the school to undertake an apprenticeship).

#### Inactive students

However, situations arise where an enrolled student ceases to attend school and all attempts to contact the parent and student are unsuccessful. As these students do not meet the criteria for their enrolment to be cancelled, they remain on rolls indefinitely and their non-attendance is reflected in student attendance data.

#### Exempt students

Students who have been granted an exemption from schooling do not meet the criteria for cancellation of enrolment as their absence from schooling is for a specific period of time (e.g. the length of the exemption) after which their enrolment will resume. An exemption simply removes the legal obligation of parents with regards to compulsory schooling for that period.

#### Process

OneSchool provides for schools to categorise a student's enrolment status as either:

- A – Active (enrolled and attending school regularly)
- D – Deceased
- F – Future (an application for enrolment process has taken place and the student is expected to enrol at the school at a particular point in time – e.g. first day of school year)
- L – Left (school is satisfied student has left school and will not be returning)
- N – Non-Attendee (student had a Future status but did not enrol when expected)
- I – Inactive (enrolled but not attending school and unable to be contacted).

#### Inactive students

In line with current Department of Education, Training and Employment policies regarding the monitoring of student absences, schools are required to follow-up unexplained absences as soon as possible but within three days of the absence. Parents are required to provide a reason for a child's absence within two days of their child's return to school.

Where a student has been absent from school for 15 or more consecutive school days and the school is unable to contact the parents to seek an explanation for the absence, the student's enrolment status may be changed from A – Active to I – Inactive. A decision to change a student's enrolment status to "I" should only occur after careful consideration and once processes outlined in Managing Student Absences and Enforcing Enrolment and Attendance at State Schools have been followed and the situation warrants it.

Students who have been allocated an "I" - Inactive enrolment status will be required to re-enrol at the school if they are eventually contacted and intend to return to school. The "I" code should not be backdated. Students marked with an enrolment status of "I" will appear on regional reports of students whose enrolments are inactive.

A school that has allocated a student an "I" status should continue to work with its regional office and local resources (such as Police, Child Safety Officers and other support organisations) to locate the student and their family, with the aim of the student returning to school.

If the student returns to school, a new enrolment form will be required before the student can be returned to an A – Active enrolment status. An enrolment form containing the student's details can be generated in OneSchool.

While a student's status is "I", the student will not appear on school rolls and therefore will not be marked as absent.

If a school is pursuing the prosecution of the parents for failure to attend, the student's enrolment status should stay as A – Active. A component of the prosecution process is being able to contact the parents and inform them of their legal obligation to ensure their child attends school regularly and to provide them with a warning notice advising that the school is seeking to obtain consent from the Director-General to prosecute.

### **Exempt students**

Where a student has been granted an exemption from schooling, the details of the exemption should be entered into the school's OneSchool exemption register. The exemption register will identify the student as absent, with an absence reason "Z" for the duration of the exemption. The student's enrolment status will remain as active.

Exemptions are not included in absence data.

Inactive and exempt students would not be included in February and August census counts.



## TRUANCY MANAGEMENT PROCESS



### CLASS TEACHERS CLASSROOM ATTENDANCE

#### Mark roll

**LATE STUDENTS:** Mark as present and record on Compass: *Late - time of arrival, reason for late arrival.*

#### Student leaves class without permission:

1. Contact home
2. OneSchool behaviour incident - **truancy**
3. Referral to YLC



### YEAR LEVEL COORDINATOR WHOLE LESSON TRUANCY AND LEAVING THE CLASSROOM WITHOUT PERMISSION

#### Follow up with student and teacher

#### 1ST OFFENCE:

Contact home  
Record behaviour - **truancy**  
Detention issued

#### 2ND OFFENCE:

Contact home  
Record behaviour - **truancy**  
2 detentions issued

#### 3 OR MORE OFFENCES

Contact home  
Record behaviour - **defiance**  
Refer to Year Level Deputy Principal



### DEPUTY PRINCIPAL REFERRAL PERSISTANT TRUANCY /DEFIANCE

#### Follow up with student

#### 3 OR MORE OFFENCES:

- Contact home
- Record Support and Intervention
- Refer to the Engagement Centre
- Monitoring card issued (by EC)

#### CONTINUED DEFIANCE

- Contact home
- Consequences in line with Student Code of Conduct



## APPENDIX 10

It is important that students, staff, and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school at

Sandgate District State High School

- Is committed to promoting the key messages of “Everyday 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 lifechoices
- Believes attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community.

**Just a little bit late doesn't seem much but.....**

<b>Student is only missing just</b>	<b>That equals....</b>	<b>Which is ...</b>	<b>And over 13 years of school that's ...</b>
10 mins per day	50 mins per week	Nearly 1.5 weeks per year	Nearly <u>half a year</u>
20 mins per day	1 hr 40mins per week	Over 2.5 weeks per year	Nearly <u>1 year</u>
Half an hour per day	Half a day per week	4 weeks per year	Nearly <u>1 and a half years</u>
1 hr per day	1 day per week	8 weeks per year	Over <u>2 and a half years</u>

**One or 2 days per week doesn't seem much but .....**

<b>If your student misses</b>	<b>That equals ...</b>	<b>Which is ...</b>	<b>And over 13 years of schooling that's ...</b>	<b>Which means the best your student might perform is ...</b>
1 day per fortnight	20 days per year	4 weeks per year	Nearly <u>1.5 years</u>	Equal to finishing in Year 11
1 day per week	40 days per year	8 weeks per year	Over <u>2.5 years</u>	Equal to finishing in Year 10
2 days per week	80 days per year	16 weeks per year	Over <u>5 years</u>	Equal to finishing in Year 7
3 days per week	120 days per year	24 weeks per year	Nearly <u>8 years</u>	Equal to finishing at Year 4

At Sandgate District State High School the consequences or impacts of unexplained or unauthorized absences might include the following:

- Detentions
- Behaviour monitoring cards
- Suspensions
- Cancellation of Enrolment (Senior Student)

It is an expectation that all absences are explained and parents are encouraged to contact the absence line on 3869 9802, *Compass*, QParents or email on [studentabsence@sandgatedistrictshs.eq.edu.au](mailto:studentabsence@sandgatedistrictshs.eq.edu.au) when your student is arriving late to school.

### Parent responsibilities:

- To actively support the school in ensuring their student/s attends school every day unless ill
- To provide a note, phone call, Compass/QParents notification, text or email to school if student is late
- To inform the school of all absences (preferably on the day of the absence), either by phone, text or email
- To give the school forewarning of any known future absences, in particular long absences
- To make informed decision about appropriate absences from school as every absence requires student to organise catch-up work. Invalid reasons for student absences include but are not limited to; staying home for birthdays, shopping, visiting family or to catch up on assessment.
- To provide a medical certificate for long-term absences or absences where assessment is missed (Refer assessment policy)
- Apply for exemption for long-term absences (Greater than 10 school days)

### **Strategies**

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

- Developing a positive school culture through School-wide Positive Behaviour Support
- Communicating high expectations of attendance
- Recording and following up student absences
- Monitoring student non-attendance
- Providing intervention and support
- Offering an engaging and differentiated curriculum
- Encouraging students to reflect on their own attendance data

### **Responses to Absences**

When a student is absent without explanation, Sandgate District State High School will:

- Send a text message to parent, notifying them of absence

When a student is absent without explanation for three days or a pattern of absences has been identified, Sandgate District State High School will:

- Contact the parent in writing to determine if there is a reasonable excuse for the absences
- If the school receives no response and the absence remains unexplained, the parent or carer may be contacted in writing, requesting them to attend an interview with the Year Level Deputy Principal
- For prolonged absences or persistent and/or unexplained absences, the school will follow the Enforcement of Attendance Process which may lead to intervention through the Department of Education and referral to the Queensland Police Service and Department of Child Safety.

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

- Detentions
- Added to non-representation list
- Referral to school support services
- Behaviour monitoring cards
- Referral to external agencies
- Suspensions
- Cancellation of Enrolment (Senior student)

### **Reporting and monitoring attendance**

At Sandgate District 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:

- Phone the absence line on 3869 9802
- Respond to text messages by clicking on link
- Email the school [studentabsence@sandgatedistrictshs.eq.edu.au](mailto:studentabsence@sandgatedistrictshs.eq.edu.au)
- Utilise Compass or QParents to submit absence online

*I have read and understood the Attendance Policy and agree to follow the responsibilities set out.*

---

*Student  
Signature*

---

*Date*

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*Parent/Carer  
Signature*

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*Date*

