

Middlemount Community School

Attendance Policy

According to the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006, “Each parent of a child who is of compulsory school age must— (a) ensure the child is enrolled at a State school or non-State school; and (b) ensure the child attends the State school or non-State school, on every school day, for the educational program in which the child is enrolled; unless the parent has a reasonable excuse.” (Chapter 9, Part 1)

The Impact of Attendance on Student Outcomes

If your child is going to have an unavoidable extended absence, we ask that you consider the following:

- Long absences from school make “catching up” for students very difficult. While teachers do what they can to assist your child, our daily timetables are already very full and there is little “spare” time for catching students up.
- Long absences can cause additional stress and challenge the confidence of a student on their return to school, as they try to keep up with other students
- Research shows that poor school attendance is associated with:
 - ✓ lower academic achievement including literacy and numeracy
 - ✓ early school leaving
 - ✓ leaving school with fewer qualifications
 - ✓ reduced opportunities for students to learn and access educational resources, further limiting achievement
 - ✓ further absenteeism in higher year levels
 - ✓ increased alcohol, tobacco, and substance use in adolescents.

Explained Absences

From time to time a student may be absent from their educational program. Parents comply with their compulsory schooling or compulsory participation obligation by providing a satisfactory reason (<https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/roll-marking-in-state-schools-procedure>) for these absences, unless the student is an adult or it is not appropriate to contact the student’s parents, in which case an explanation should be sought directly from the student. Parents should provide a reason for a child’s absence as soon as possible after the absence. Explanations for student absences can only be given by a parent or guardian.

Unexplained Absences

Students with unexplained absences will receive a letter to take home, each term. We ask that parents provide explanations for the listed absences and return the letter to the office. This will help us to keep our records up to date. The School identifies unexplained or unsatisfactory absences or patterns of absences as, for example:

- 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;
- where a student’s attendance is reasonably considered unsatisfactory by the principal.

Long Absences (more than three days)

If your child is going to be unavoidably absent from school we ask that parents follow these guidelines.

Primary students

1. Notify your child's teacher and the office at least one week prior to the absence.
2. Speak with the teacher to discuss your child's learning needs during the absence. Teachers are not responsible for providing an educational program during a long absence and will do so only if:
 - The nature of the work being covered can be easily and conveniently provided to the student. In primary, only basic English and Maths will be provided.
 - One week's notice is given so that the teacher can prepare appropriate learning materials. Shorter notice than this makes it very difficult for a teacher to develop meaningful work.
 - Work is collected in person by the parent. Work can only be emailed if prior arrangements have been made and the nature of the work allows it to be emailed.
3. Ensure that your child completes the set work during the absence.
4. Speak with your child's teacher when your child returns to school. If your student requires additional catch-up work, the teacher will seek your support to ensure that this is completed at home as homework.

Assessment tasks will not be given as take home work, unless the teacher deems this appropriate. Where students have missed work or assessment, they will be given a result based on the available information. This may mean an absent student will receive an "N".

Secondary students

1. Notify the Secondary Head of Department (HOD) and the office at least one week prior to the absence.
2. Speak with Classroom Teachers to discuss your child's learning needs during the absence. He will discuss with you the assessment due during and after the absence and notify teachers. Teachers are not responsible for providing an educational program during a long absence and will do so only if:
 - The nature of the work being covered can be easily and conveniently provided to the student.
 - One week's notice is given so that the teacher can prepare appropriate learning materials. Shorter notice than this makes it very difficult for a teacher to develop meaningful work.
 - Students in years 8-12 are expected to speak with their teachers and collect all classwork and assessment tasks which are due during and after the absence.
3. Ensure that your child completes the set work during the absence.
4. Speak with Classroom Teacher again after the absence to ensure that your student has been able to meet all the necessary assessment requirements.

Senior Phase students are reminded that significant absences from school may result in them not qualifying for the Queensland Certificate of Education. All of our senior phase students have signed agreement requiring a minimum 85% attendance.

These guidelines are designed to ensure that an absence has minimal impact on a child's learning and that students are able to re-engage with curriculum confidently on their return to school.

Exemptions from Compulsory Schooling and Compulsory Participation

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

Situations where an application for an exemption may be made include:

- Illness
- Family reasons
- Cultural or religious reasons

If your child is exempted from compulsory schooling, parents are excused from your obligation in relation to compulsory schooling or compulsory participation.

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

Applying for an exemption

Parents are encouraged to discuss with the school whether an application for exemption is a suitable option. The school can provide you with an application form for an exemption. It is important that supporting documentation and evidence are attached to the application.

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.

Roll Marking Procedures

Rolls are marked, during the following periods:

	Primary	Secondary
8.25am – 8.40am	Class teacher, using OneSchool.	Class teacher mark rolls for each session, using OneSchool.
12:50pm - 1.10pm	Class teacher, using OneSchool.	Distance Education students email office staff to notify of their location, subject and length of session.

Students who arrive after 8.40am must be sent to the office to collect a late note.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Class Teacher	Mark rolls on OneSchool. Ensure students who are late (after 8.40am) collect late notes. Collect written/verbal explanations for absences from parents and send to the office via email. Contact parents when a student is absent for three days (on the third day) for an explanation and record this as a contact on OneSchool.

	Report any student who has had three consecutive days absent to DP. Rectify or report any errors in roll marking.
Office staff/Attendance Officer	Check roll marking status every morning and afternoon and send reminder emails to teachers. Report all unmarked rolls at 2:30pm to the HOD. Enter data from paper rolls into OneSchool each day when required. Ensure rolls up to date including those for emergency procedures. Print a weekly report of unexplained absences and contact parents to obtain explanations. Goal – 0 unexplained absences. Print a fortnightly report of students who have attendance rates below 90% and report to Deputy Principal. Goal – 100% of students attend >85%. Send out text messages to parents regarding absences. Contact parents of all students who arrive late for explanations. Make immediate contact with parents of “at risk” students who have been marked absent.
Wellbeing Committee	Case manage secondary students, referred by the Deputy Principal/Principal, who are attending less than 85%.
Deputy Principal	• Parents are contacted and necessary actions/supports put in place to improve attendance and these are documented on OneSchool. • Ensure that students who arrive late at school have valid reasons (liaise with office staff) and repeat offenders make time up at lunchtimes. • Phone home and organise interviews with parents and refer to a case manager via Wellbeing Committee.
Principal	Manage “Exemptions” process. Case manage students whose attendance has fallen below 80%.

Managing Absenteeism

Absence Concern	Action	Responsible Officer
3 consecutive days absent, unexplained	Make phone call home to parents. Send home Attendance Flyer via email.	Deputy Principal Office staff
Attendance is < 90%	Send initial non-attendance letter home to parents. Record contact on OneSchool. Send home Attendance Flyer and Infographic via email.	Deputy Principal Office staff
Attendance is < 85%	Send letters of concern home to students with Attendance Flyer and Infographic. Phone home and organise interviews with parents. Identify barriers to attendance and offer support. Refer to a case manager via Wellbeing Committee. Record all contact on OneSchool. Monitor attendance every day and make contact immediately if student is absent. Record contact on OneSchool.	Deputy Principal Case Managers
Attendance is < 80% OR Attendance is not improved following intervention	Manage student absences and enforce enrolment and attendance procedures when required (https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/managing-student-absences-and-enforcing-enrolment-and-attendance-at-state-schools-procedure). (https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/managing-student-absences-and-enforcing-enrolment-and-attendance-at-state-schools-procedure).	Deputy Principal/Principal