

# Bowen State High School

Prepared for all things



## Attendance Policy

Monday, 22 August 2022





## Rationale

All schools in Queensland are committed to providing safe and supportive learning environments for all students which address their educational needs. Bowen State High School endeavours to provide all students with a high-quality education that maximises the educational potential of each student. As a school, we recognise that there is a direct correlation between higher levels of attendance and better academic performance. Consequently, Bowen State High School expects all students to attend every lesson every day. This policy has been adopted to outline the expectations and responsibilities that the school, students, parents and caregivers have in relation to attendance. It also outlines the school's attendance strategies and procedures adopted to allow us the opportunity to achieve our aim.

### School community beliefs about the importance of attending school

It is important that students, staff, parents and caregivers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school. In order to reach this shared understanding, Bowen State High School:

- is committed to promoting the key message that **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 truancing can place a student in unsafe situations and impact on their future employability and life choices
- believes attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community.



As such, our school expects all students to aim for an attendance target of no less than 95% which is the equivalent of approximately 10 days absence for the entire school year.

## Responsibilities

Meeting attendance targets requires collaboration between all school staff, students, parents/caregivers, support agencies and the broader community.

The following steps are crucial if we are to be successful in improving our student attendance rate:

1. Set and promote high expectations of student attendance
2. Record and follow up student absences
3. Monitor student non-attendance and patterns of non-attendance
4. Develop a positive school culture
5. Collaborate with other agencies

### Student Responsibilities

- Attend school every day, all day; be on time and come prepared to learn
- Be accountable for attendance and participation
- Upon return from absence, provide form teacher with a note which has been signed and dated by a parent/caregiver stating the reasons for absences
- See teachers to catch up on work missed due to absences
- Negotiate, if applicable, a revised due date for submitting assessment items if the due date has lapsed. In year 11 and 12, a medical certificate may be required to support an extension.



### Parent/Caregiver Responsibilities

- Promote attendance at school with students by only allowing absences to occur for genuine illness, bereavement, or events of cultural significance
- Try to make non-urgent medical appointments out of school hours
- Contact the school if your child is refusing to come to school
- When required, support the implementation of tailored intervention strategies to address persistent absence
- Communicate reasons for absences to the school in a timely manner
- Submit an application for exemption for any absence of longer than 10 school days, to the Principal. Application forms are available from the Admin Office.

### School Responsibilities

Ensuring students are accounted for and safe is a key priority at Bowen State High School. Many staff are involved in the recording and tracking of attendance, including, but not limited to:

- The Principal, Deputy Principals, Heads of Department, Year Level Coordinators, Guidance Officer, Community Education Counsellor, Youth Support Coordinator, Chaplain, School Administration Officers, School-Based Youth Health Nurse and Teaching Staff.

These staff all contribute to effective monitoring of attendance at Bowen State High School and this is actioned through collaboration with parents/caregivers and the wider community, which is necessary to achieve high attendance rates for all students.

## Attendance Strategies

Bowen State High School aims to develop a positive school culture through ensuring a safe and supportive school environment that promotes positive relationships. Positive home/school relationships are recognised as being invaluable in improving school attendance and staff who make contact with parents/caregivers in relation to attendance, will offer support. We aim to address attendance with a common goal in mind of getting students to school so that they can achieve the best possible educational outcomes.

At Bowen State High School our engagement strategies aim to promote 100% attendance by:

- Engaging students through a quality curriculum designed to meet their individual needs
- Providing a supportive and positive environment through learning together where students are rewarded for their high attendance at school
- Setting whole-school achievable targets and engaging the school community in meeting those targets
- Targets consistently communicated to the school community through Facebook, newsletters, website, parades and via the school noticeboard
- Utilising a systematic monitoring and action process with clearly defined roles, responsibilities and timelines informed by data and linked to a strong action/review.

### Attendance Team

Additionally, Bowen State High School supports a dedicated Attendance Team for each Year Level that analyses data and develops strategies aimed towards improved attendance outcomes. Each Attendance Team includes Deputy Principals, Heads of Department and Year Level Coordinators who also draw on supplementary direction and support from the school Guidance Officer, Community Education Counsellor, and Youth Support Coordinator.



## Attendance Procedures

### Roll Marking Procedures

Every morning students attend Form Class to have the roll marked. If a student is not in attendance a text message is sent home by 10am to parents/caregivers to notify them of the absence.

If a student arrives late to school, they are to present to the Admin Office to have their name marked off the roll. The marking of the roll in each session every day is a very important responsibility as it informs the school where students are, and which students are not arriving to school and to class on time.

### Explaining Absences

All students must provide notification from a parent/caregiver when they are absent from school. Please note that for students of compulsory school age, there is a duty of care to establish the reasons for absence from school. For students of post-compulsory age, school staff have a responsibility to seek reasons for absences from school, although the responsibility for providing the information rests firmly on the students and parents/caregivers. Absences can be explained by:

- Responding to SMS notification
- Calling (07) 4786 9888 and leaving a message
- Bringing a note explaining the student's absence on the day they return
- Completing the absence explanation at the back of the student diary and handing it in to the Admin Office

### Late Arrivals

#### **Students Arriving Late to School – Applies after Form Class at 8.53am**

- Student signs in at the Admin Office – note or phone call provided to explain lateness
- Student proceeds to class with their 'late slip'

#### **Persistent Lateness to School**

The Year Level Coordinator will monitor the number of times students are late to school with or without an explanation.

If the student continues to be late, the Year Level Coordinator will contact the student and parents/caregivers to assist the family with any barriers contributing to lateness.

#### **Specific key processes and responsible staff:**

PROCESSES	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
<b>Monitoring attendance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daily roll marking</li> <li>• Attendance Team monitor decline in attendance weekly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form Teachers</li> <li>• Year Level Coordinators</li> <li>• Heads of Department</li> <li>• Deputy Principals</li> </ul>
<b>Daily absence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SMS sent at approximately 10am</li> <li>• Recording on OneSchool &amp; ID Attend</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Administration Officers</li> </ul>
<b>3 days of consecutive unexplained absences</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phone call home – recorded in OneSchool</li> <li>• Referral for follow up</li> <li>• Further support offered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year Level Coordinator</li> <li>• Attendance Team</li> </ul>



PROCESSES	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
<b>Truancy (&gt;15 minutes)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roll marking occurs in the first 10 minutes of every lesson</li> <li>Referral to Behaviour HOD and consequences issued</li> <li>Phone call home – recorded in OneSchool</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teaching Staff</li> </ul>
<b>Late to class (&lt;15 minutes)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roll marking occurs in the first 10 minutes of every lesson</li> <li>Phone call home – contact recorded in OneSchool</li> <li>Consequences issued by classroom teacher</li> </ul> <b>Persistent Late to class</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lateness continues over multiple occasions/weeks</li> <li>Referral to YLHOD and YLC – consequences issued</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teaching Staff</li> <li>Year Level HOD (YLHOD)</li> <li>Year Level Coordinator (YLC)</li> </ul>
<b>Enforcement process</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Triggered by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing poor attendance</li> <li>Ongoing decline in attendance rate</li> </ul> </li> <li>Attendance targets reviewed each term in weeks 4 &amp; 9</li> <li>Formal letters including Attendance Support Letter, Form 4 &amp; 5 will be posted home and referred to the Department of Education Regional Officer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deputy Principals</li> <li>Principal</li> </ul>

## Departmental Links

### 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>

### Every Day Counts

<https://education.qld.gov.au/initiativesstrategies/Documents/infographic-parents.pdf>

## DOES ATTENDANCE REALLY MATTER?

1 or 2 days a week doesn't seem much but...

If your child misses...	That equals...	Which is...	And over 13 years of school that's...
1 day per fortnight	20 days per year	4 weeks per year	Nearly <b>1.5 years</b>
1 day per week	40 days per year	8 weeks per year	Over <b>2.5 years</b>
2 days per week	80 days per year	16 weeks per year	Over <b>5 years</b>
3 days per week	120 days per year	24 weeks per year	Nearly <b>8 years</b>

If you want your child to be successful at school then  
**YES**, attendance does matter!

EVERY DAY COUNTS!