



Helensvale State High School Attendance Policy 2021

To be read in conjunction with the
Student Code of Conduct

We **ASPIRE** for each and every student to succeed.
We **BELIEVE** in One Student, One Community, Many Futures.
We **VALUE** respect, responsibility, resilience.

1. Rationale

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

Research shows that regular attendance is integral to successful academic, employment and social outcomes. Accordingly, it is important that students, staff and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of regular student attendance.

Helensvale State High School:

- Believes all eligible children should be enrolled at school and attend school all day, every school day.
- 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 academic performance, future employability and life choices.

In addition HSHS is committed to promoting the key messages of the state-wide initiative *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/carer, community and student attitudes to school attendance. It requires the support of both parents/carers 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.

2. Compulsory Schooling

Each parent/carer of a child who is of **Compulsory School Age** must ensure that the child is enrolled at a State school or non-State school and attends on every school day for the educational programs in which the child is enrolled unless the parent/carer has a reasonable excuse. A child is of **Compulsory School Age** if the child is at least 6 years and 6 months, and less than 16 years. However, a child is no longer of compulsory school age if the child has completed Year 10.

Each parent/carer 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/carer has a reasonable excuse.

A young person's compulsory participation phase starts when the person stops 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 years.

Where parents/carers 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*.

3. Responsibilities

School Responsibilities:

- Regularly inform students, staff and parents/carers about the Helensvale State High School Attendance Policy and Procedures (including the Policy and Procedures for late arrival, early departure and truanting) and make this publicly available through the school's website and newsletters.
- Monitor student attendance daily through marking the roll at the beginning of each lesson.
- Notify parents/carers of any unexplained absence, requesting a satisfactory explanation for their child's absence.
- Notify the Year Level Dean when concerned that the explanation for student absence is unsatisfactory.
- Discuss individual attendance with students and offer support and help to parents and students when school attendance has become a problem.
- Provide students with school work when they are absent for legitimate extended periods of time.
- Notify the relevant authorities if non-attendance persists.

Parent/Carer Responsibilities:

- Ensure that their child attends school on every school day for the program in which they are enrolled.
- Provide a satisfactory explanation for all absences, that is, any time during which a student is not attending or participating in their educational program.
- Contact the school prior to any planned absence. Where this is not possible, parents must provide the reason for any absences prior to 10.00am on the day of absence, or within 2 days of the student's return to school. This should take the form of a medical certificate for regular illness absences or a satisfactory explanation for the absence.
- Contact Administration if student absence is to be for an extended period of time (e.g. family reasons or illness). The school is not obliged to provide work for a student/s whose parents/carers voluntarily take them on holidays during a school term/s. However, we will endeavour to do so if given sufficient notice.
- Contact a school Guidance Officer or Year Level Dean if a student is refusing to attend school. Initiate or attend meetings to seek support and discuss their child's attendance or participation in their educational program.
 - Provide a written note (signed and dated) to Student Hub, if their child requires a Leave Pass to leave school early.
 - Provide a written note (signed and dated) from parents/carers explaining their lateness.
 - Advise the school of any change of address or phone numbers to ensure school records are accurate. Up to date data is essential in an emergency.

Student Responsibilities:

Students must be at school by 8.45am every day. Students arriving after 8:55am must report to Student Hub.

- Students who have been absent for a whole or part of the day must bring an explanatory note from their parents/carers to Student Hub.
- Students wanting to leave school early must present a note from their parents/carers to Student Hub prior to 8.45am or at break times. They will be given a Leave Request Pass to show the teacher of their class when they have to leave. After leaving class, they are to report to the Student Hub to officially sign out.
- Students must never leave school grounds without a parent present and without signing out formally through Student Hub.
- Students must be on time to class. Students arriving late will be issued with detention. In time-tabled classes, this is the responsibility of the teacher.

- Regularly discuss attendance with Year Level Dean or Head of Department Positive Behaviour. Ensure absence records are accurate and all absences have been explained by parents/carers.

4. **Strategies to Promote Attendance:**

At Helensvale State High School we promote 100% attendance by:

- Valuing the philosophy 'It's not OK to be away'.
- Adopting connected approaches with parents, carers and the community.
- Rewarding and recognising students who show improved attendance, reach set benchmarks and/or obtain 100% attendance records for the term and the whole year.
- A commitment to the accuracy of roll marking, follow up of unexplained absences and referral where necessary.
- Setting consequences for truancy and persistent lateness.
- Applying individual responses and support for those students who are facing barriers to their attendance.

5. **Procedures**

Notification of Student absences

Helensvale State High School has a dedicated line to receive messages regarding student absences and late arrivals.

Please note this line is for **SMS only**, not voice messages.

Please send an SMS to **0457 478 277** in the following format:

- Students full name.
- Date & duration of absence, or expected time of arrival.
- Reason for absence/lateness.

Please use this as your preferred method of notification and add this number to your contacts. The school will continue to request advice from parents/carers for unexplained absences if you have not notified us. Notifying the school will minimise the need for these investigations.

Alternatively, you can advise us by email: 2184_studentabsences@eq.edu.au

Procedures for late arrivals

Parents/carers should advise the school if their student is going to be late, prior to their arrival, by sending an SMS to **0457 478 277** or by giving them a signed and dated note. Students who arrive late to school after 8.55am are required to report to Student Hub, present their ID card and obtain a Late Pass. If a student has no valid reason for the lateness, they will be automatically issued with a detention. It is expected that students who are late will provide a note or phone call from their parents/carers explaining their lateness to avoid the detention. Once a valid reason has been received from a parent/carer, the detention will be removed.

Students who continually arrive late to school will be required to attend an interview with the Year Level Dean and their parents/carers. Students who do not sign in or out of school correctly will be treated as truanting and issued consequences accordingly as per Helensvale State High School's Student Code of Conduct for Students.

Procedures for early departures

Students are not permitted to leave school during school hours without providing a dated and signed letter of permission from parents/carer. A parent/carer must be present to collect the student.

- Students wishing to depart early must report to student Hub and present their parent/carer

permission note at the beginning of the school prior to 8:45am or during break times.

- A Leave Request Pass will be issued to the student noting the time and date of the early departure.
- The student must show the class teacher the Leave Request Pass before leaving their class.
- The student must then report to the Student Hub counter prior to departure.
- Students **WILL NOT** be allowed to leave early without presenting a Leave Request Pass and having a parent/carer present.

An appropriate Leave Request Pass will be issued to the student for:

- Appointments to doctors, dentists or other urgent appointments. Appointment cards, doctor's letters or medical certificates will be required.

Please be advised:

- That there are no phones in classrooms to contact teachers and/or students so the only way a student will be permitted to leave class early is by **prior arrangement** with Student Hub.
- Students are unable to leave class, unless previously organised, due to the impact these interruptions have on individual and class learning time. If unforeseen circumstances occur, we are happy to attempt to contact students during break times to issue a pass, enabling them to be released from class.
- The student must be collected from Student Hub by a parent/carer or someone listed as an emergency contact, from the Student Hub office only.

For your information, we can attempt to contact students during the following break times:

Monday

- 10.05am – 10.20am

Tuesday – Friday

- 11.20am – 12.05pm
- 1.15pm – 1.45pm

Please note we are unable to do "call outs" for students when Block Exams are taking place.

Procedures for Truancy

Teacher will monitor and track student attendance within their curriculum lessons and notify Student Hub if a student has been marked present earlier in the day but is absent from their lesson without authorisation. Classroom teacher will issue consequences for truancy in the first instance.

An Absence Report will be generated and provided to the relevant school personnel such as Year Level Deans and Curriculum HODs on a weekly basis. Students found to be truanting on and off school grounds will be disciplined under the school's Student Code of Conduct.

Students Presenting To Sick Bay

- If a student feels unwell during lesson time, they **MUST NOT** contact their parent/carer directly. They must report it to their teacher who will then send them to Sick Bay in Student Hub
- If a student feels unwell during break time they must go to Sick Bay.
- The student will be assessed and if necessary, the parent/carer will be contacted to collect their child. If we are unable to make contact with the parent/carer, the emergency contact person will be called or the student will be allowed to rest for 15 minutes before returning to class.
- It is vitally important that your contact details are up to date and you check your phone for messages. Please be aware our number appears as a private number if you miss our call, but we will leave a voice message wherever possible.
- Students will not be permitted to sign out of school without a parent/carer present.

6. Attendance Policy Clause for Students with a Disability or Diagnosed Medical Condition.

On occasion students with a disability and or students with a diagnosed medical condition may require

higher absenteeism from school than a child without a disability or medical condition. Such absences would be advised by the students' parents/carers as they would for a child without a disability or medical condition. In addition students with a disability or diagnosed medical condition may require planned and flexible timetabling in order to access the school environment. In this case a **Flexible Arrangement: Assessment, Plan and Agreement** would be made.

A Flexible Arrangement may be proposed by a parent/carer, a student, or the school. The student's case manager/teacher(s) will assess the student's needs, expected learning outcomes and suitability of the education provider. The case manager/teacher(s) will then provide advice to the principal. The principal will decide whether to approve the proposed flexible arrangement. If the student is of a compulsory school age, a parent/carer must give written consent to the arrangement which will be uploaded to OneSchool. If the student is in the compulsory participation phase, he or she must sign the agreement.

Related Resources

[Every Day Counts](#)

[Departmental Policies and Procedures](#)

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

[Roll Marking in State Schools](#)

[Exemption from Compulsory Schooling \(For absence more than 10 consecutive school days\)](#)

[Application for exemption for a child or young person enrolled in a Queensland state school](#)