



# **PARKHURST STATE SCHOOL**

## *Student Attendance Guidelines*

## Rationale

All Queensland schools are committed to providing safe and supportive learning environments that address every learners' educational needs. Parkhurst State School expects that all learners will attend the educational program delivered every school day. Parkhurst State School's attendance policy aims to ensure that all learners are given the best opportunity to learn by outlining the responsibilities of the school, parents and students in managing attendance issues.

At Parkhurst State School we are committed to achieving the following targets in improving attendance ...

A **96%** or better average attendance rate for all learners every year.

## Our School Vision

Our shared school vision of "every Parkhurst Learner is literate, numerate, safe, happy and learning **every day**" reinforces the significance we place on learning and the need for regular student attendance in order to engage and achieve.

Each of our school values (5Rs) outlined in our school's work **Code of Behaviour** align and stress the importance we place on daily learner attendance.



**R**espect (for ourselves, others and our learning)

**R**esponsibility (leadership and safety)

**R**igour (excellence and effort)

**R**esilience (every day is a brand new day)

**R**elationships (between ourselves with others)

## Shared Beliefs about the Importance of Attending School

It is important that all learners, staff, parents and carers have a shared understanding regarding the importance of attending school.

Parkhurst State School ...

- is committed to promoting the key messages of '**Every Day Counts**'
- believes all children should be enrolled at school and attend school all day, every school day
- monitors, communicates and implements strategies to improve regular school attendance
- believes truanting 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.

## Responsibilities

At Parkhurst State School, we believe the 'Villages raises the Child'. This mantra reinforces the need for all stakeholders to work in partnership to ensure every child attends school every day. As a result of this, all stakeholders have individual responsibilities to address absenteeism as well as recognising and celebrating exemplary attendance as outlined below ...

## **School Responsibilities**

- implement **Student Attendance Guidelines and Policy**
- ensure all staff follow **electronic roll marking procedures** twice each day (morning and afternoon) using OneSchool
- develop and sustain a safe and supportive school environment that promotes positive relationships, including the implementation of programs to develop social skills and providing support mechanisms for families (including; access to the school's Guidance Officer, Queensland Police Service, Department of Child Safety, Child Youth Mental Health Service and other available local community services)
- class teachers to consistently record and follow up all student absences, particularly **three consecutive absences** by telephone calls to parents/carers
- monitor school student attendance data to identify absenteeism trends and individual students with high levels of absenteeism
- promote high expectations of school attendance to the school community
- implement strategies to manage student enrolment, absences, chronic absenteeism, school refusal and truancy using the **Guidelines to address chronic absenteeism, school refusal and truancy** and the **Every Day Counts** materials available from the OnePortal site
- follow appropriate processes for enforcing parental obligation in regard to enrolment, attendance and, compulsory participation
- ensure parents and carers submit written applications for exemptions to state schooling for absences of ten consecutive school days and greater
- celebrate and acknowledge exemplary class attendance each week and individual learner attendance each Term

## **Student Responsibilities**

- attend school regularly unless there is a valid reason
- provide notes to teachers or from teachers to parents to reduce number of unexplained absences
- remind parents to email, phone or return a note when absent from school

## **Parent/Carer Responsibilities**

Each parent of a child who is of compulsory school age has the legal obligation to ensure their child is enrolled and attends a state school or a non state school, on every school day for the educational program in which the child is enrolled, unless the parent has a reasonable excuse.

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** 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.

Parents and carers must ...

- ensure that their child is enrolled at school and regularly attends the educational program provided at Parkhurst State School
- ensure their child/ren arrive/s on time and are ready to learn
- provide an explanation of all absences to the school within 24 hours of absence. This can be done via the following methods ...
  - **Administration** 07 4924 6555
  - **Absentee Line Telephone** 07 4924 6566
  - **Email** admin@parkhurstss.eq.edu.au

- A **letter** to the class teacher on student return from absence with accompanying medical certificate for multiple days with illness
- by **meeting** with the Principal in cases of regular non attendance, regular unexplained absences and follow up; and when parents have concerns about their child/ren's attendance.

## Strategies

At Parkhurst State School we promote 100% attendance by ...

- communicating the importance of attending school every day, through assembly, school newsletter items, school website, Facebook and classroom discussions
- creating and sustaining safe and supportive school and classroom environments that encourage children to attend school every day
- providing rich and stimulating learning experiences in all classrooms that encourage students to learn and achieve
- staff showing interest and concern for student welfare and following up with absences that have been unexplained
- expecting all parents to explain **all** absences
- the principal regularly sending home **Unexplained Absence Letters** for parents/carers to explain student absences
- recognising 'Every Day Counts' Champions each Friday to acknowledge five consecutive days of attendance
- random prizes and awards provided by Principal for individual and class effort
- **100% Attendance** is recognised and celebrated through the presentation of Certificates at the end of each Term at the Assembly of Excellence
- the top three classes who have demonstrated excellent **attendance** percentages are presented certificates and prizes to acknowledge their collective efforts. Percentages are communicated in the Newsletter to raise awareness
- all 100% student attenders to participate in a Rewards Day at the end of the year

## Responses to Absences

At Parkhurst State School, we are committed to achieving the following targets in improving attendance ...

- **no** unexplained absences for the school year
- a **schoolwide** attendance target of **96%**
- a minimum **weekly class** attendance target of **93%**
- 100% follow up by school staff within three days to ensure all students who are absent have phoned, emailed or called the school
- Administration Team will call parents/carers of all students following five consecutive days of unexplained absence

When a student is absent without explanation for **three days** or a **pattern of absences** has been identified, Parkhurst State School will take the following actions ...

- the parent/carer will be contacted by the Class Teacher or Administration Staff (by letter, email or telephone call) to determine if there is a reasonable excuse for the absence/s (Director General's Guidelines ss176 and 239 of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006
- all **contact and attempted contact** with parents regarding student absences will be recorded in OneSchool
- if the student is still not attending school regularly, the school will follow the processes for managing student attendance as outlined in the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 – SMS-PR-043. This includes the reporting of persistent and/or unexplained absences to Education Queensland, the Queensland Police Service and the Department of Child Safety.

## Reporting and Monitoring Attendance

### Reporting Procedures

At Parkhurst State School reports of absence or truancy are taken seriously. Students, parents, members of community and school staff may report an absence in the following ways ...

1. When a student is absent without explanation for three days or a pattern of absences has been identified, Parkhurst State School will take the following actions ...
  - Class teacher attempts to make contact with parent/carer. Record as 'contact' on One School and/or record an explanation of absence

### OR

2. Where there is a persistent pattern of unexplained absences or absences without reasonable excuses and is reasonably considered unsatisfactory by the Principal ...
  - Class Teacher consults with Administration about next steps to take
  - Administration commences 'compulsory' schooling processes by ...
    - a) Attempting to make contact with parent/guardian, requesting reason for absence and offering support to engaging student with their schooling. All telephone calls, meetings, access to support services and other meetings to be recorded on OneSchool under 'Record of Contact
    - b) If the child is still not attending regularly after three weeks (15 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
    - c) Contact to be made with Regional Office to inform them of processes taking place.
    - d) 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.
    - e) If there is no change in attendance a week (5 school days) after the **Warning Notice (Form 5) was sent, Authorised Officer ...**
      - requests Performance, Monitoring and Reporting Branch to conduct a search (approval for search to be given by Regional Director or Assistant Regional Director) for information regarding enrolment and attendance to ensure the child is not enrolled at another state school (including School of Distance Education); and
      - checks with Home Education Unit whether the child is registered or provisionally registered for home education; and
      - advises Regional Office they wish to seek the Director-General's consent to prosecute.

### Monitoring Procedures

1. Alert systems are in place with OneSchool to email the Administration Officer each day of non attendance of students deemed 'requiring monitoring'.

2. At the end of each fortnight, Administration is to print an Absence Report from OneSchool to identify students to be 'monitored' at risk of being absent for ten or more days.
3. At the end of each month, students identified with having ten or more days absent are provided with a school letter reminding parents of their legal responsibilities in reference to compulsory schooling.
  - telephoning or emailing the school
  - making an appointment with the Principal at a time that is mutually convenient;
  - discussing the issue or concern with the school Guidance Officer

## ***Related Resources***

### **Every Day Counts**

<http://education.qld.gov.au/everydaycounts/index.html>

### **Departmental Policies and Procedures**

Managing Student Absences and Enforcing Enrolment and Attendance at State Schools  
Roll Marking in State Schools

# Appendix One – School Specific ‘Every Day Counts’ Resources

**Every day counts**  
Is your child at school today?  
[www.education.qld.gov.au/everydaycounts](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/everydaycounts)



You must:

- Enrol your child at school
- Send your child to school every day
- If your child is away from school, make sure you tell the school.

Children do better when they go to school all day, every day




every **second**  
of every **minute**  
of every **hour** of  
every **session**  
of every **day**

**counts at**  
Parkhurst State School



**‘Every Day Counts’ Champion**




Well Done, \_\_\_\_\_  
for being here **every** day this week !  
**Date** \_\_\_/\_\_\_/2013

Sample Slip



**100% Attendance**

Presented to  
**Ima Learner**  
for showing outstanding  
**attendance** over the past Term.  
Congratulations and well done !



*L. Walker*  
Lyle Walker  
PRINCIPAL

Thursday March 28<sup>th</sup> 2013

Assembly of Excellence  
100% Attendance Certificate

Parkhurst State School  
**Awesome Attenders**  
Recognising the excellent combined  
Term Three attendance of **95.2%**  
by  
**Year 6/7L**



*L. Walker*  
Lyle Walker  
PRINCIPAL



Assembly of Excellence  
Highest Attending Class Award



**Queensland  
Government**