



Grand Avenue State School



Attendance Plan and Policy 2023 - 2024

Rationale

Grand Avenue State School strongly believes that consistent, full-time attendance and punctuality on each school day are important characteristics of successful students. Our school community expects all students to attend school every day unless there is a reasonable explanation that the student cannot attend. Grand Avenue acknowledges that being on time and prepared to learn gives our students the best chance of success in the classroom as well as for their academic futures. Our students demonstrate active citizenship within our school community by committing to attending school.

This Attendance Plan and Policy has been prepared in accordance with and in reference to:

- Grand Avenue's vision and values; creating a culture of high expectations and a sense of belonging for our students and staff to grow, achieve and succeed;
- maximising the benefit to parents, carers, teachers, students and the school community.

At Grand Avenue State School, we value:

- Quality Relationships – reflected in the respect, care and compassion we have for each other.
- High Achievement – reflected in us individually doing our best and taking personal responsibility for our own learning.
- Meaningful Communication – reflected in our desire to understand each other and be an inclusive community where everyone enjoys a sense of belonging.
- Integrity – features in all interactions with one another.

Useful Links

- [DoE Initiative Every Day Counts](#)
- [The Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006, Chapter 9 Parts 1, 2, 3, and 4 and Chapter 10 Parts 1, 2, 3, and 4](#) and
- Departmental policies and guidelines
 - [Managing Student Absences and Enforcing Enrolment and Attendance at State Schools](#)
 - [Roll Marking in State Schools](#)
 - [Exemptions from Compulsory Schooling and Compulsory Participation](#)



School Community Beliefs Regarding the Importance of Attending School

Grand Avenue State School acknowledges the importance of all students, staff, parents and carers sharing a clear, common understanding of how vital attending school every day is for every student.



Grand Avenue:

- 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 that it is a parents' and carers' responsibility to ensure that their child attends school on every school day for the educational program in which he/she is enrolled
- 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
- 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
- believes absenteeism could place a student in unsafe situations and impact on their education, future employability and life choices
- believes attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community

Every Day Counts Information for Parents

Every Day Counts is a Department of Education (DoE) state-wide initiative addressing the issue of student attendance at school. The initiative is designed to assist in ensuring a positive and committed attitude by students, parents, schools and community members toward consistent, full time school attendance. It requires the support of all parties within the school community to successfully manage student attendance.



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
- Truancing 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.

While most students attend school consistently, there are a small number of students who are absent from school without an acceptable reason. Under the law, you must make sure your child is enrolled and attends school on all school days unless there is a reasonable excuse. Schools must monitor attendance of students and follow up with parents and carers any unexplained absences. If your child does not want to go to school, or is missing school without you knowing, contact Grand Avenue State School immediately for assistance and support.

Parents and carers can access comic books and short video clips to help them promote school attendance with their child on the [Every Day Counts Website](#).

Early Warning Signs of Absenteeism

At Grand Avenue we are committed to identifying early warning signs of irregular attendance at school by our students.

Some early warning signs include:

- Arriving late for school
- Leaving school early on a regular basis
- Excessive days absent (either explained or unexplained)
- Learning Difficulties
- Issues with peers
- Difficulties transitioning from one school to another
- Health issues experienced by the student and/or a family member



Celebrating Great Student Attendance

At Grand Avenue we recognise outstanding attendance by celebrating with students and the community at the end of each term through:

- Celebrations promoted through social media, assemblies and certificates.
- Classroom BINGO reward system encouraging attendance every day.
- 100% Attendance Awards each term.



Student Attendance - Parent/Carer Responsibilities

If a student is going to be absent from school parents/carers should:

- Advise the school via QParents at <https://qparents.qld.edu.au> or phone 3372 0560 to report the absence and reason why the student will not be attending that day.
- Send an email to studentabsence@grandavenuess.eq.edu.au explaining the absence prior to or on the first day of the absence.
- Provide a note explaining the absence prior to or on the first day of the student returning to school.
- Respond as soon as possible to the school issued text message if student is absent without explanation.
- Parents/carers wanting their child to leave school early must sign the student out at the front desk in the Administration Building and the student will be called to the Administration Office. In the interest of child safety, no student will be able to exit the classroom unless this procedure has been followed.

Extended absences from school, whilst not recommended, are sometimes unavoidable. Absences for a period of **more than 10 school days** require approval from the Principal. Parents/carers must contact the School Administration and complete an Application for Exemption. A copy of a travel itinerary must also be provided to support the application. Should the extended absence be due to medical reasons, a medical certificate must be provided.

Please note that our school is not obliged to provide work for a student/s whose parents/carers voluntarily take them on holidays during a school term/s.

Student Attendance - Student Responsibilities

At Grand Avenue, students should adhere to the following:

- **Be at school by 8.45 am every day. Students arriving after 8.45 am must report to the Administration Office..**
- Explain their reason for being late and collect a late slip from the Administration Office before going to class.

Students must be on time to class. Students persistently arriving late will be followed up by the relevant Deputy Principal.

Student Attendance - Teacher/Case Manager Responsibilities

- All staff provide a welcoming and respectful culture within the school community. Teachers begin the day with a warm, connected open classroom. Building relationships and a mutual understanding of the lives of all students. The first 15 minutes of the day is for a check-in to follow up student wellbeing, ready for learning and social and emotional learning.
- If a child arrives late to class after 8.45 am without having obtained a late slip, they must be referred to the Administration Office.
- Teachers will mark their class rolls promptly at 9:00 am and 2:00 pm on OneSchool on each school day. If for some reason OneSchool cannot be accessed, teachers are to mark a paper roll. If a parent/carer informs the teacher of a student's absence they are to update this information on OneSchool or pass this message onto the office.
- If a teacher recognises a pattern in a student's absences or is concerned about a student's lack of attendance, they should attempt to communicate that concern with the parent/carer. An example of this could be – "I am just calling to check on student name, as we have noticed that they have been absent from school, is there anything we can do to assist?" This can also be modelled by the DP if you are unsure of what to do.
- If this attempt at communication is unsuccessful, the matter should then be referred to the relevant Deputy Principal.
- No student can leave early from school unless an official confirmation from the Administration Office is provided. Students must walk to the office for collection, to minimize parents/carers walking around the school.
- Consistently reinforce attendance expectations with students and parents/carers.
- Celebrate positive student attendance engage in the school wide attendance programs on a regular basis.

Student Attendance - Enrolment/Attendance Officer Responsibilities

Grand Avenue State School Enrolment/Attendance Officer will:

- Follow up any rolls that are unmarked.
- Generate daily absence text messages.
- Manage incomplete roll marking data and inform Deputy of regular offenders.
- From 1.00pm each day, contact parents/carers via phone who have not responded to unexplained text message. This contact must be recorded on OneSchool, and a referral added to include the relevant Deputy Principal and the Teacher outlining the contact made.
- Follow up on students whose parents/carers have been unable to be contacted for three consecutive days. Generate Absence Alert letters and refer to relevant Deputy Principal.

- Attend weekly Attendance Meetings with Principal and Leadership team to analyse attendance processes and student data. Discuss strategies to assist families with students demonstrating a pattern of reduced attendance.
- Notify the Deputy Principal immediately if there are any students who have 5 continuous days of unexplained absences and refer to the Principal any students who have 15 or more continuous days of unexplained absences.
- At the end of each term, send the *Every Day Counts* email to all families advising their child/ren's attendance rate for the term.
- Generate 100% attendance certificates to be distributed to relevant students early each term to recognise and celebrate their 100% attendance during the previous term. (To be distributed Week 9 in Term 4.)
- Include information about the attendance policy in enrolment packs.

Student Attendance - Deputy Principal and Principal Responsibilities

Grand Avenue State School Deputy Principals will:

- Discuss data trends and the underlying reasons for absences at your school during weekly leadership meetings and regular staff meetings.
- Place any student approaching the phase of chronic absenteeism on an individual attendance plan.
- Establish and publicise an attendance target and report progress toward that target in the newsletter, on the school website and social media site.
- Ensure that parents of **Prep** students understand the importance of attending school every day.
- Advise the Principal if a student's continued absences require a **Notice (Form 4 - Failure to attend (s 178(2))**, generated via OneSchool. Deputy Principal to meet with parents/carers to discuss.
- If attendance concerns continue, **Warning Notice (Form 5 – Failure to attend (s 178(4))**, generated via OneSchool. Letters to approved by Principal.

Grand Avenue State School Principal will:

- Monitor any student whose absenteeism reaches 15 days of continuous absenteeism or chronic absenteeism. Principal also to monitor students who are experiencing school refusal. (This is to be recorded on One School).
- Include frequent and consistent messages about the importance of attendance in all communications with the school community including assemblies, noticeboards, websites, Facebook pages, flyers and at staff meetings. Emphasise the importance of attendance at the beginning of each year, with reminders throughout the year.
- Encourage open dialogue with staff, students, parents, and the community to identify potential improvements and new ideas for monitoring attendance.
- Chair weekly Attendance meetings with Leadership team and Enrolment/Attendance Officer to analyse attendance processes and student data.
- Approve the use of **Notice – (Form 4 - Failure to attend (s 178(2))** and **Warning Notice (Form 5 – Failure to Attend (s 178(4))**.



Forms of Absenteeism

Examples	School Responses
Chronic Absenteeism	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistent or habitual absence or lateness • Students with high levels of absences, variously defined as 20% or more school days absent • Parents may provide explanations for absences, but these explanations may be considered unreasonable. 	<p>Parents and family members play an important role in assisting the student to reintegrate and remain engaged in school. Schools may wish to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify parents of their legal obligations and the importance of schooling and continuity in learning from the early years • If appropriate and applicable, encourage parents to participate in parenting skills training or to link with outside agencies • Encourage the development of supportive networks with other parents (possibly via the class parent representatives) • Encourage parents to seek support from and communicate regularly with teachers and the school.
School Refusal	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents often are aware of the absenteeism but are unable to address it • Students who are almost completely unwilling or unable to attend school because of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - their past school experiences - wellbeing or mental health reasons related to clinical levels of anxiety - a developed habit of absence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school gathers information about the student and family to help understand the nature of and reasons for the absences. • The school implements strategies to address issues like learning problems or bullying where appropriate. • School support staff such as Guidance Officers to be involved. • Where appropriate the school refers students and parents to relevant outside agencies for programs according to the individual student's needs. • Solutions may require whole-of-government intervention and support, as for truancy (see below).
Truancy	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents often are aware of the absenteeism but are unable to address it • Students who are almost completely unwilling or unable to attend school because of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - their past school experiences - wellbeing or mental health reasons related to clinical levels of anxiety - a developed habit of absence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where the reasons for truancy pertain to aspects of the school, the school implements strategies to address these aspects. • The school alone may not be able to address all of the needs of the student (home environment, social and emotional wellbeing and/or mental health). Schools should work with the family and liaise with other agencies such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department of Child Safety, - Department of Communities, - Queensland Police Child Protection Investigation Unit, and - Other relevant non-government organisations.

Roll marking in state schools

Flowchart for recording student absences

