Rationale

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

Enoggera State School expects that all enrolled students attend every school day, unless a reasonable excuse exists.

Enoggera State School’s attendance policy aims to document our school’s approach to improving school attendance.

School community beliefs about the importance of attending school

It is important that students, staff and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school. Enoggera 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

School responsibilities:

- inform parents of their legal obligations about enrolment and attendance
- implement strategies to manage student enrolment, absences, chronic absenteeism, school refusal and truancy
- monitor student absences and identify when a student is absent for three or more consecutive days, or where there is a pattern of persistent unexplained absences, or where a student’s attendance rate is reasonably considered unsatisfactory
- take reasonable steps to follow-up unexplained absences as soon as possible, or ideally within three days of the absence
- determine whether explanations provided for student absences are reasonable, or not, and ensure that correct codes are used
- continue to work with regions and other local resources to engage with the student and their family with the aim of returning the student to school
- follow appropriate processes for enforcing parental obligation in regard to:
POLICY: Managing Student Attendance

Student responsibilities:

- remain at school for the full day once he/she arrives
- hand in to the classroom teacher written notes provided by the parent providing notification / reason for absence
- comply with school’s late arrival and early departure procedures

Parent responsibilities:

- ensure their child arrives at school or commences their educational program on time every day
- ensure their child attends school or their educational program every school day
- minimise disrupting their child’s school day so their child has the best opportunity to learn
- contact the school prior to any planned absences
- provide an explanation (preferably in writing) for each absence, either before or as soon as possible within 2 days of the child’s return to school, in accordance with the school’s communication processes. This may take the form of:
  - a medical certificate
  - a written explanation note containing the student’s name, date of absence(s) and reasons for absence(s)
  - a verbal explanation to the school through either a phone call or visit to the school
  - any other form of communication agreed by the Principal.
- ensure their child follows the school’s recommended processes and procedures for late arrival and early departure.

**Strategies**

At Enoggera State School we promote 100% attendance by:

- improving communication between school, home and the community
- helping parents and caregivers understand their responsibilities in relation to school attendance
implementing processes to monitor student attendance to ensure early identification of, and support for, students who are not attending regularly.

**Responses to absences**

At Enoggera State School, we are committed to achieving the following targets in improving attendance:

- 95% attendance rate
- Less than 5% students with chronic absenteeism (defined as <85% attendance)

When a student is absent without explanation for 3 days has been identified, Enoggera State School will take the following actions:

- Classroom teacher will make contact with parents to ascertain reason for, and possible support needs, to encourage a return to school
- If absence continues, classroom teacher will notify school administration who will then make contact with parents to inform them of their obligations and identify support options to encourage a return to school

When a pattern of absences has been identified, Enoggera State School will take the following actions:

- 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 Officer or School Chaplain may be involved.
- Where appropriate the school refers students and parents to relevant professionals (e.g. counsellors and psychologists) for programs according to the individual student’s needs.
- Encourage parents to seek support from and communicate regularly with teachers and the school
- The school alone may not be able to address all of the needs of the student (e.g. domestic violence at home, child abuse, etc). Schools should work with the family and liaise with other agencies such as:
  - Department of Child Safety,
  - Department of Communities,
  - Queensland Police Child Protection Investigation Unit, and
  - other relevant non-government organisations
At Enoggera State School the consequences or impacts of unexplained or unauthorised absences might include the following:

- Discussions between parents and classroom teacher, school principal and/or other support personnel to develop action plan to improve child's attendance at school
- Involvement of external agencies in supporting the child and/or family to encourage attendance
- Enforcement of parental obligation in regard to enrolment, attendance and/or compulsory participation utilising appropriate DETE processes

**Reporting and monitoring attendance**

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

- Telephone: 07 3550 1333
- Email: admin@enoggerass.eq.edu.au
- Written: Handed in to school office or posted to P.O. Box 217, ALDERLEY 4051

Student absences are recorded in OneSchool applying the following procedures:

- Classroom teachers are to mark the roll twice per day; morning (prior to 12pm) and afternoon (after 12 pm).
- Administration Officers will ensure relief staff manually record absences and will then enter this data into OneSchool within 3 days.
- Reasons for absences, provided by parents, will be entered into OneSchool during regular roll marking procedures; OR if reason unknown at time of absence, classroom teacher will edit the reason code within 3 days of being informed.

**Some related resources**

*Every Day Counts*

*Departmental Policies*

*Managing Students Absences and Enforcing Enrolment and Attendance at State Schools*

*Roll Marking in State Schools*