



# Carbrook State School Attendance Policy *Every Day Counts*

## **Rationale**

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

Carbrook State School expects students to attend school every day of the school year unless prevented by reasonable circumstances (see definitions).

Carbrook State School's attendance policy aims to maximise the learning outcomes for all students.

## **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.

Carbrook State School:

- is committed to promoting the key messages of [Every Day Counts](#) an *Education Queensland initiative*
- 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.

## **Carbrook Definitions**

### **Absence**

Non-attendance during any part of the school day is considered as absenteeism. Arrival after 10.50am and departure before 1pm are recorded as half day absences.

### **Reasonable Circumstance**

A reasonable circumstance for absence is when it is deemed to be in the best interest of the health and/or wellbeing of the child or school for a student to not attend e.g. illness. In some cases, this judgement may need to be substantiated by a medical professional and a medical certificate provided, especially after 3 consecutive days of absence. Other absences should be kept to a minimum.



## Targets

	Targets
Number of students not attending more than 85% of school days	0
School Overall Attendance	95% = 10 days a year
Unexplained Absences	0

## Strategies

At Carbrook we promote 100% attendance by:

- Providing a quality education for all students, catering for diverse needs and interests.
- Maintaining a safe and caring school environment.
- Promoting a shared vision of high attendance with all stakeholders, based on our commitment to student learning.
- Implementing consistent responses to addressing absences.
- Monitoring and tracking student attendance and setting attendance goals in class
- Communicating weekly updates on attendance for each year level on parade

## Responsibilities

### School/Teacher responsibilities:

- Maintain accurate attendance records. When a student has had 3 consecutive days of absence from school, the class teacher is to ring the parents.
- Implement effective processes related to absenteeism including monitoring attendance and response to attendance concerns.
- Implement an acknowledgment process for attendance:
  1. Weekly acknowledgement: a trophy presented to a class on parade in P – 2 & 3 - 6 that has the highest attendance percentage for the previous week
  2. Term acknowledgement: term certificates for students who've reached the school attendance of 95% or greater and term certificates for students who are on there way to reaching the school attendance target
  3. Semester acknowledgement: all students who have met or exceeded the target of 95% will have their name placed in a draw for the chance to win a family movie pass (in each year level).
- Contact parents and carers if the school is concerned about a child's attendance including late arrivals and early departures.



- Implement strategies to promote a safe and supportive school environment including the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support.

#### **Student responsibilities:**

- Attend school regularly, on time (instruction begins with roll call at 8:50am), ready to learn and take part in school activities.

#### **Parent / Caregiver responsibilities:**

- Send their children to school every school day except when reasonable circumstances prevent this.
- Inform school of reason for any absence as soon as possible and respond to SMS message sent by the school
- Inform the school in advance if there is a foreseeable extended absence.
- Collaborate with the school, using open, positive communication, to attempt to resolve any issues that may negatively impact student attendance.

### **Reporting Absences**

At Carbrook State School reports of absence or truanting are taken seriously and processes in accordance with the *Education Act* followed. Students, parents, members of community and school staff may report an absence in the following ways:

- Absence Line – Parents encouraged to ring **32090860** and can leave a message.
- Correspondence either verbally or in writing to classroom teacher
- Email - [the.principal@carbrook.ss.eq.edu.au](mailto:the.principal@carbrook.ss.eq.edu.au)
- Discussion with Principal or Deputy Principal
- In writing to Principal or Deputy Principal

### **Attendance Alert – Same day student absence notification**

The safety and wellbeing of students are the highest priorities for the Department of Education and Training, the Queensland Government and Carbrook State School.

At Carbrook State School we have implemented a same day notification system for all student absences.

All class rolls are marked at 8:55am and 2.15pm each day. Parents who have contacted the school absence line on 32090860 and explained their child's absence prior to 8:55am of the day of absence will be recorded as an explained absence on the class roll prior to the teacher marking the roll for the school day. Students, where no explained reason for absence has been received will be marked as absent on the current school day on the electronic rolls. Parents of these students that fall into this category will receive immediate notification via a SMS message. Parents are to reply to the SMS message providing a reason for absence and this is then recorded on

OneSchool.

If a reasonable excuse is not received to explain the reason for the student absence via the SMS message, an email will be sent to parents as a follow up notification to provide a reasonable excuse for student absence.

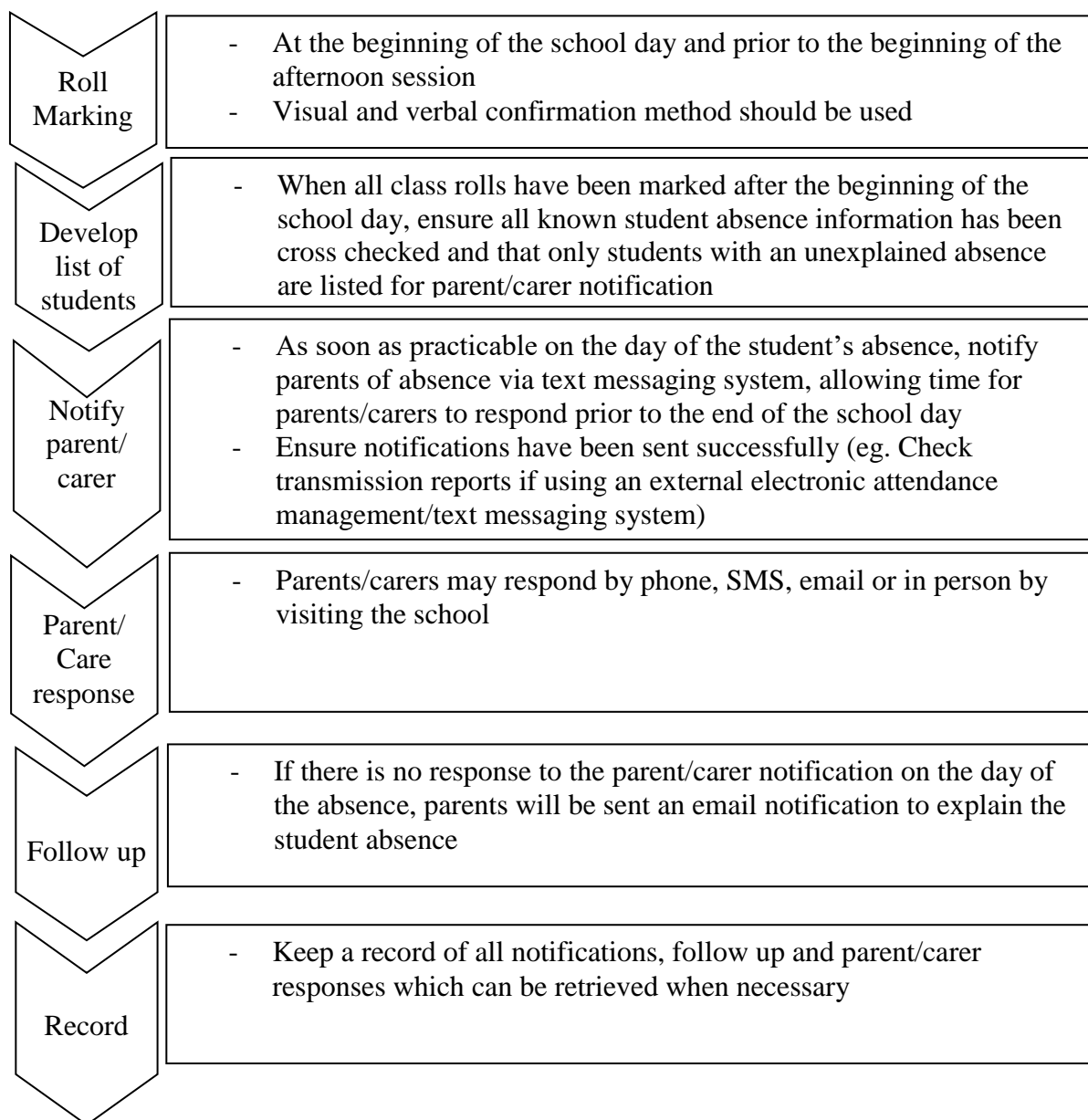
All students that do not arrive by the first bell at 8:50am, must report to the office to receive a late slip. The student is then to provide the teacher with this late slip so this can be recorded on the class roll. Any student being collected prior to 3:00pm must have a parent report to the school office to receive an early slip which is to be provided to the class teacher. No teacher is permitted to dismiss a child from school without an early slip or unless special circumstances permit.

Students that fall into the following categories will receive an immediate SMS message, followed by a phone call by the school administration

- Students that present a concerning pattern of absence (may include late arrivals and early departures)
- Indigenous students
- 'Kids in Care'
- Other as determined by school leadership team



# Same day student absence notification – flowchart



## Procedure for Tracking and Responding to Student Absence

**Class Teachers** – Accurately maintain attendance records twice during the school day. This process involves electronic marking of the class roll on the OneSchool platform. Student absences must be annotated according to explanation. Rolls are diligently marked at 8:55am and 2:15pm every day.



**Administration Staff** – Record details of student absence from the absence phone line and inform teachers. SMS message sent to parents to explain student absence. If no response provided for the student absence by the parent/carer, an email is sent to parents following up on student absence



**Class Teachers** – Absences of 3 consecutive days are followed up by the class teacher on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day. Request explanation for unexplained absences using the One School generated *Explanation of Absence* note. Information provided on explanation note to be transferred to OneSchool to ensure electronic rolls are accurate. Returned hard copies *Explanation of Absence* note or other correspondence are to be kept in a designated folder in classroom and archived at the end of each school year.



### Class Teacher Refers to Principal or Deputy Principal:

- **3 or more unexplained absences over a term**
- **A concerning pattern of absence (may include late arrivals and early departures)**
- **And/or 8 or more absences in one Semester.** Teachers to use professional judgement about the reasonableness of the absences based on information provided.



### Principal or Deputy Principal selects appropriate response.

Response to unexplained or unauthorised absences may include: parent/carer contact; referral to Student Support Services and/or formal processes as per Education Queensland policy up to and including referral by the Director General for prosecution under the Education (General Provisions) Act.

Absent students refer to students who are not present, when the daily roll is marked at 8.55am and 2.15pm.

Any child who has not attended school should return with a note from their parents/ guardians stating the dates of and reason for their absence.

- Teachers are required to pursue the reason for the child's absence; this can be done in the first instance by the issue of *Explanation of Absence* note (Appendix A).
- If no note is presented and if the child has been away for more than 5 days Administration notification is required.
- Teachers are required to retain any written correspondence pertaining to absenteeism and retain in class records for the duration of the school year. Please note these documents are official school records and could be subpoenaed.
- Any prolonged or unexplained absenteeism or absenteeism of a regular pattern is to be reported to Administration.
- An *Absence Line* is available for parents wanting to notify the school of absenteeism by phone – Parents will need to ring 32090860 a recorded voice mail facility is activated.
- abide by school's policy regarding access to school grounds before, during and after school hours
- reinforce the *Building Quality Habits* program to build positive relationships

## Some related resources

### Every Day Counts

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

Included document: [Guidelines to address chronic absenteeism, school refusal and truancy](#) - Types of absenteeism and possible responses

### Departmental Policies

#### Managing Student Absences and Enforcing Enrolment and Attendance at State Schools

<http://ppr.det.qld.gov.au/education/management/Pages/Managing-Student-Absences-and-Enforcing-Enrolment-and-Attendance-at-State-Schools.aspx>

#### SMS-PR-017: Enforcement of Compulsory Schooling and Compulsory Participation Phase

<http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/students/smspr017/>

#### SMS-PR-029: Managing Student Absences

<http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/students/smspr029/>

#### SMS-PR-036: Roll Marking in State Schools

<http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/students/smspr036/>



## Appendix A

### Standard Explanation of Absence Letter

**A version of this letter on school letterhead is available on the school network for use by school staff.**

Dear Parent / Caregiver

Our records indicate that \_\_\_\_\_ has  
Student Name

\_\_\_\_\_ unexplained absences.  
Number of Absences

**Please forward an explanation to the school within the next week.** If you require details of dates, please contact your child's class teacher or the administration staff.

At Carbrook State School we view every school day as important in enabling students to reach their educational potential. Research shows that higher rates of attendance at school are related to higher achievement.

More information about the state wide attendance initiative, "Every Day Counts" can be found at <http://education.qld.gov.au/everydaycounts/>.

Thank you for your assistance with this matter.

Yours sincerely

Class Teacher