



# ATTENDANCE POLICY

## Rationale

The Education Act (2006) requires that students of compulsory school age attend school until the completion of year 10 or until they turn 16 years of age, whichever comes first. Students are then required to participate in the Compulsory Participation Phase in education or training either:

- for two years beyond Year 10 or after turning 16; or
- until they have gained a Senior Certificate; or
- until they have gained a Certificate III; or
- until they have turned 17.

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

Gordonvale State High School expects all students to attend school each and every day. The attendance policy aims to:

- develop a positive school culture;
- identify absences quickly;
- follow-up promptly; and
- send clear messages to students and parents that attendance is vital.

## 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.

Gordonvale State High 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, each and 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; and
- believes attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community.

## Responsibilities

*School responsibilities:*

- Communicate high expectations of attendance to students, parents/careers, staff and the wider community.
- Monitor individual, group and whole school attendance patterns.
- Follow-up on absences with students and parents/carers.
- Provide support strategies to assist students in monitoring and improving their attendance.

*Student responsibilities:*

- Attend school each and every day. This includes attending all sports days and the last day of term.
- Arrive to school on time each and every day.
- Sign in for late arrival.
- Sign out for early departure.
- Provide an explanation from their parent/carer for any late arrival, early departure or absence.
- Attend all scheduled classes.



# Gordonvale State High School

## *Parent/Carer responsibilities:*

- Ensure their child attends school each and every day.
- Ensure their child arrives to school on time each and every day.
- Provide an explanation for any late arrival, early departure or absence for their child.
- Report any concerns regarding their child's attendance to school staff.

## **Reporting and monitoring attendance**

At Gordonvale State High School reports of student absence are taken seriously.

Parent/carers, members of the community and school staff may report absence, late arrival, early departure and truancy in the following ways:

- text message/telephone/email to the school office;
- logging absence on QParents;
- signed/dated note from the parent/carer sent to school with the student; or
- in person to the office.

### **Student is late to class:**

- Teacher allows student to enter the classroom
- Teacher changes ID attend to 'Late to class'
- Teacher follows up with conversation / detention
- Teacher records behaviour in OneSchool if this is a pattern of behaviour

### **Student leaves class without permission:**

- Teacher changes ID attend to 'Left class without permission'
- Student returns, teacher changes ID attend to 'Late to class'
- Teacher follows up with conversation / detention
- Teacher OneSchools the report as a minor Refusal to Participate in the Educational Program of the School.

### **Student is truant (out of class) sighted by staff member:**

- Staff member sights student out of class and requests student to show pass.
- Student does not have a pass and is taken to B13.
- Teacher aide Behaviour follows up.
- Teacher aide Behaviour checks daily inconsistencies reports and follows up next day.
- Student issued an appropriate consequence in accordance with the school's Student Code of Conduct:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> offence – Placed in RTR on internal withdrawal when found out of class for the remainder of the day. Student placed on after school community service ½ hour. (If student fails to follow staff directions this may lead to suspension)
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> offence – Placed in RTR on internal withdrawal when found out of class for the remainder of the day. Student placed on after school community service 1 hour. Referral to SWAT for additional support (If student fails to follow staff directions this may lead to suspension)
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> offence – Placed in RTR on internal withdrawal when found out of class for the remainder of the day. Student placed on Saturday community Service 3 hours. Student placed on a Discipline Improvement Plan (If student fails to follow staff directions this may lead to suspension)



- Consequences reset at the start of the school term.
- Parent/carer contacted to inform them of the offence and consequence.

### Student is truant (out of school) sighted by staff member:

- Staff member sights student out of school and alerts Teacher Aide Behaviour
- 1st offence – Placed in RTR on internal withdrawal for the remainder of the day if student returns, following day if they do not return. Student placed on after school community service ½ hour. (If student fails to follow staff directions this may lead to suspension)
- 2nd offence – May lead to school suspension.

## Roll Marking

Absence codes for full or part day absence

Type of Absence	Code	Explanatory notes
Entire day	A	Student was absent entire day.
Early (No Penalty)	E	Student left early, but within the final 2 hours of scheduled schooling. This will not count as an afternoon/half day absence.  If the student left earlier than 2 hours prior to the end of the scheduled school day, this will count as an afternoon/half day absence (see "P" code).
Late (No Penalty)	L	Student arrived late, but within 2 hours of scheduled schooling. This will not count as a morning/half day absence.  If the student arrived after the first 2 hours of the scheduled school day, this will count as a morning/half day absence (see "M" code).
Morning	M	Student was absent for the morning. This will count as a half day absence.
Afternoon	P	Student was absent during the afternoon. This will count as a half day absence.

Absence reason codes for reasonable reason

Reason why student is not physically present at school	Code	Explanatory notes	Counted as an absence
School activity	A	Student is participating in an authorised school activity for school purposes. May include participation in school choirs, youth parliament, or community service, or attendance at a hospital school.	No
Attendance not required	B	Student was not required to attend school on this day as it is not included in their educational program, or for a student with charge-related reasons the student has enrolled in a School of Distance Education or engaged in an educational program. This code also applies if the student is in a youth detention centre.	No
Excursion	C	Student is participating in an excursion which occurs outside the school grounds and is conducted, organised and/or approved by the school. Excursions could include part-day, full-day or multi-day class visits to venues outside the school or school camps.	No
Off Campus activity	F	Student is participating in an authorised activity that is away from the school campus. These activities may include flexible arrangements, attendance at a TAFE or other training provider course, participation in a VET activity or participation in a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship. These activities will be regular and ongoing.	No
Holiday	H	The parent, or the student if they are living independently, has informed the school that the student/family is taking a holiday. Note that holidays during the school term should be discouraged. If the absence is more than 10 consecutive days, an exemption is required.	Yes
Illness	I	The parent, or the student if they are living independently, has informed the school that the student is sick. This includes all references to ill health or reasons related to the health of the student. If a medical certificate has been provided this should be noted in OneSchool and kept on file. If a child is unable to attend school for a period longer than 10 consecutive school days, an exemption is required.  A child may be absent from school if the child is, or is a member of a class of persons that is, subject to a direction or order given about an infections or contagious disease or condition.	Yes
Natural Disaster	N	Student is unable to attend school due to an extreme weather event or other natural disaster.	No



Sorry Business	D	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students participating in sorry business.	Yes
Other	O	The principal has determined that the excuse provided by the parent or student (where the student is an adult or where it would be inappropriate to ask the parent) is reasonable. Principals must use the <u>Guidelines</u> to determine reasonable excuses and document these reasons. This code may be used for medical and dental appointments, religious observances, funerals, and legal matters.	Yes
Short suspension	P	Student is suspended for 1 to 10 days under s.283 of the EGPA.	Yes
Long suspension	Q	Student is suspended for 11 to 20 days under s.283 of the EGPA, or for a student with charge-related reasons, the student has not enrolled at a School of Distance Education or engaged in an educational program.	Yes
Suspension – recommended exclusion	R	Student is suspended with the recommendation for exclusion under s.293 of the EGPA.	Yes
Sport (Representative Sport)	S	Student is representing their school, district, region, state or nation at a sporting event recognised by the school.	No, if representing their school, district, state or region.  Yes, in all other circumstances.
Sport (Non-representative)	O	Student is participating in sporting activities that are not endorsed by the school and is not representing the school, district, region, state, or nation.	Yes
Work experience	W	Student is participating in an approved work experience program.	No
Exemptions	Z	Student has an exemption from schooling.	No

## Strategies

At Gordonvale State High School we promote 90% attendance by:

- rewarding of outstanding attendance through 'Positive Behaviour for Learning' initiatives including House Cup;
- ensuring consistent follow-up with students and parents/carers; and
- providing support strategies to assist students in monitoring and improving their attendance.

## Responses to absences

Gordonvale State High School takes the following actions in response to student attendance:



## Roles and Responsibilities:

	Attendance Officer	Community Education Counsellor / Youth Support Coordinator / Guidance Officer	Classroom Teacher	Head of Department (Student Services)	Deputy Principal	Principal
<b>Positive Behaviour for Learning</b>						
<b>Absences</b>	<p>Send absence text every morning to notify parents and establish reason for student absence.</p> <p>Monitor unmarked classes and inconsistencies and notify teachers.</p> <p>Draft 'Unexplained Absence' letters (Appendix One) and distribute to House Coordinators in: W6 Term 1 W1 &amp; W6 Term 2 W1 &amp; W6 Term 3 W1 &amp; W6 Term 4</p>		Mark roll identifying student absence.			
<b>85% to 90% attendance</b>			Phone home to discuss progress in curriculum area.			
<b>75 - 85% attendance</b>	<p>Organise daily report 3 or more consecutive days unexplained – for allocated TA to call.</p> <p>Participate and lead information at fortnightly attendance meeting with relevant staff (DP, HODSS, CEC, YSC, TPO, GO, Clontarf)</p>	<p>Participate in fortnightly attendance meeting relevant staff (DP, HODSS, CEC, YSC, TPO, GO, Clontarf)</p> <p>Complete set tasks from attendance meetings.</p>	Phone home to discuss progress in curriculum area.	Participate in fortnightly attendance meeting relevant staff (DP, HODSS, CEC, YSC, TPO, GO, Clontarf)	Participate in fortnightly attendance meeting relevant staff (DP, HODSS, CEC, YSC, TPO, GO)	Line Management – DPEW Attendance data updates.
<b>Less than 75% attendance and not contactable</b>	Develop and manage attendance class dashboard. (TA access)	Conduct home visits as determined at attendance meeting.		<p>Conduct home visits as required.</p> <p>Conduct 'Attendance Support Meeting' (Appendix Five) with student and parent/carer as determined from attendance meeting</p>	<p>Liaise with GO to support FNQ referral regional as required.</p> <p>Implement stage one of Enforcement of Attendance process (years 7 to 10) with Principal approval.</p> <p>Implement stage one Cancellation of Enrolment process (years 11 to 12) with Principal approval.</p>	<p>Liaise with FNQ regional office support as required.</p> <p>Approve and implement Enforcement of Attendance process (years 7 to 10).</p> <p>Approve and implement Cancellation of Enrolment process (years 11 to 12).</p>

## Consultation





# Gordonvale State High School

The Gordonvale State High School Attendance Policy was developed in consultation with the school community, including:

- Teaching and non-teaching staff
- Student Council
- P&C

## Review

The Gordonvale State High School Attendance Policy will undergo annual minor updates to reflect changing circumstances, data and staff.

A fulsome review is conducted every four years in line with the scheduled review process for the School Planning, Reviewing and Reporting cycle.

## Endorsement

The Gordonvale State High School Attendance Policy has been informed by:

- Education (General Provisions) Act 2006
- Department of Education: Every Day Counts
- Department of Education: Managing Student Absences and Enforcing Enrolment and Attendance at State Schools
- Department of Education: Roll Marking in State Schools



## APPENDIX ONE

Day Date

Dear Parent/Carer

Our records indicate that your child was absent on the dates listed.

As the Department of Education and Training requires written explanations for all student absences would you please **sign the slip below and return it to the school** office explaining the reasons they were away from school.

It is school policy and a matter of student welfare, to write to all parents when students have had unexplained absences.

Yours sincerely

Name  
Principal

*To be completed by parent/carer and returned to the school*

Students Name: **Name**

Student ID: **ID Number**

Year Level: **Year**

Parent/Carer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date	Reason	Date	Reason
Date		Date	
Date		Date	
Date		Date	
Date		Date	



## APPENDIX TWO Years 7 to 10

Day Date

Dear Name

### **STUDENT ATTENDANCE LESS THAN 85%: Name**

Research shows that student attendance at school is directly related to student achievement and life outcomes after school. Students with high levels of attendance generally achieve well at school and experience positive life outcomes including going on to further education, training or employment. Students with low levels of attendance generally struggle to achieve satisfactory results at school and often experience difficulty finding an appropriate pathway after school.

Student absence is not an issue which can be dealt with solely by the school. It requires the support of parents/carers and the community if it is to be successfully addressed.

Your child is in the compulsory learning phase. The Queensland Education Act states that students in the compulsory learning phase must attend school. The Queensland Government states that students are in this phase until they turn 16 or complete year 10, whichever is sooner.

The school attendance policy requires students' attendance to be at or above 90% with no unexplained absences. School records indicate that your child has had a significant number of absences from school. Please see the attached attendance record for specific details. The school is aware some of these absences may have valid explanations.

**To discuss your child's attendance and strategies for improvement, I would like to meet with you and your child on Day Date Time.**

If you are unable to make this appointment, please contact the school on 4043 3222 to make alternative arrangements.

If you fail to attend this meeting or make alternative arrangements, the school may initiate formal Enforcement of Attendance processes.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Name  
Head of Department Student Services Years

Name  
Principal





## APPENDIX THREE Years 11 to 12 – Under 17 Years of Age

Day Date

Dear Name

### **STUDENT ATTENDANCE LESS THAN 85%: Name**

Research shows that student attendance at school is directly related to student achievement and life outcomes after school. Students with high levels of attendance generally achieve well at school and experience positive life outcomes including going on to further education, training or employment. Students with low levels of attendance generally struggle to achieve satisfactory results at school and often experience difficulty finding an appropriate pathway after school.

Student absence is not an issue which can be dealt with solely by the school. It requires the support of parents/carers and the community if it is to be successfully addressed.

Your child is in the compulsory participation phase. The Queensland Government states that young people must be engaged in education, training or employment (twenty-five hours per week) after compulsory schooling until they gain either a Senior Certificate / Certificate III / Certificate IV or turn 17.

The school attendance policy requires students' attendance to be at or above 90% with no unexplained absences. School records indicate that your child has had a significant number of absences from school. Please see the attached attendance record for specific details. The school is aware some of these absences may have valid explanations.

**To discuss your child's attendance and strategies for improvement, I would like to meet with you and your child on Day Date Time.**

If you are unable to make this appointment, please contact the school on 4043 3222 to make alternative arrangements.

If you fail to attend this meeting or make alternative arrangements, the school may initiate formal Cancellation of Enrolment processes.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Name  
Head of Department Student Services Years

Name  
Principal



**APPENDIX FOUR**  
**Years 11 to 12 – Over 17 Years of Age**

Day Date

Dear Name

**STUDENT ATTENDANCE LESS THAN 85%: Name**

Research shows that student attendance at school is directly related to student achievement and life outcomes after school. Students with high levels of attendance generally achieve well at school and experience positive life outcomes including going on to further education, training or employment. Students with low levels of attendance generally struggle to achieve satisfactory results at school and often experience difficulty finding an appropriate pathway after school.

Student absence is not an issue which can be dealt with solely by the school. It requires the support of parents/carers and the community if it is to be successfully addressed.

Your child has completed the compulsory education and participation phases and is choosing to be enrolled at this school.

The school attendance policy requires students' attendance to be at or above 90% with no unexplained absences. School records indicate that your child has had a significant number of absences from school. Please see the attached attendance record for specific details. The school is aware some of these absences may have valid explanations.

**To discuss your child's attendance and strategies for improvement, I would like to meet with you and your child on Day Date Time.**

If you are unable to make this appointment, please contact the school on 4043 3222 to make alternative arrangements.

If you fail to attend this meeting or make alternative arrangements, the school may initiate formal Cancellation of Enrolment processes.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Name  
Head of Department Student Services Years

Name  
Principal



## APPENDIX FOUR

### Attendance Support Meeting

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_

Year Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Item	Example	Term One	Term Two	Term Three	Term Four
Total number of days absent:	4				
Total number of days present:	14				
Days in the term to date:	18				
Attendance percentage:	78%				
Reasons for absence:	<p><i>Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February – slept in, stayed up late playing computer games.</i></p> <p><i>Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February – slept in, stayed up late playing computer games.</i></p> <p><i>Monday 15<sup>th</sup> February – slept in, went away for the weekend.</i></p> <p><i>Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> February – sick, no medical Certificate provided.</i></p>		<p><i>Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February – don't know.</i></p> <p><i>Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February – can't remember.</i></p> <p><i>Monday 15<sup>th</sup> February – sick, I think.</i></p> <p><i>Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> February – don't know.</i></p>		
Strategies for improvement :	<p><i>Get ready for school the night before including: organising uniform, packing school bag and making lunch.</i></p> <p><i>Stop playing computer games at 8.00pm.</i></p> <p><i>Go to bed at 9.00pm.</i></p> <p><i>Set an alarm clock for 7.00am.</i></p> <p><i>Allow only one snooze cycle each morning.</i></p>		<p><i>Come to school.</i></p> <p><i>Try harder.</i></p> <p><i>Do better.</i></p>		
Monitoring date:					