VIENNA WOODS STATE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Rationale

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

Vienna Woods State School expects every parent of a child who is of compulsory school age to ensure that the child is enrolled and attends school for every school day for the educational program in which the child is enrolled, unless the parent has a reasonable excuse.

Vienna Woods State School attendance policy aims to support families, students, staff and school to achieve full attendance to enable high quality learning.

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. Vienna Woods 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 truancy 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:

- Provide a safe and supportive school environment that promotes positive relationships
- Communicate high expectations of attendance through assemblies, school website, newsletters and enrolment package.
Monitor student non-attendance. Implement strategies for roll-marking, monitoring absences, identifying trends in non-attendance, following-up unexplained absences and improving overall attendance.

Take reasonable steps to follow-up unexplained absences as soon as possible, but within three days of the absence.

Approve exemptions of up to one school year, if appropriate.

Inform parents of their legal obligations about attendance.

Commence processes towards prosecution for poor attendance, if necessary.

Approve flexible arrangements if they are in the child's best educational interests.

Student responsibilities:

- Attend school every day unless there is a reasonable reason for non attendance
- Arrive before commencement of school day
- Come to school in the recognised school uniform and prepared to learn with all the necessary equipment.

Parent responsibilities:

- Ensure their child attends school every day
- Provide school with reason for any absence either by phone, written note or verbal advice
- Ensure their child arrives before the beginning of the school day
- Attend requested meetings to discuss a child's non attendance

Strategies

At Vienna Woods State School we promote 100% attendance by:

- Monitoring school attendance
- Providing information through newsletters and parent meetings of the importance of attendance
- School awards for attendance
- Actively engaging parents in our commitment to increase learning outcomes through positive behaviour and consistent attendance by presentations/reminders at P&C meetings, parent group & parade
Responses to absences

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

- 95% attendance rate for both indigenous and non-indigenous

When a student is absent without explanation for 3 days or a pattern of absences has been identified, Vienna Woods State School will take the following actions:

- Contact parent/caregiver for explanation of absence
- Arrange a meeting with parent to discuss absences and develop a plan to support family
- Initiate procedure as per Education Queensland policies and procedures should absences continue. At Vienna Woods State School the consequences or impacts of unexplained or unauthorised absences might include the following:
  - School contacts parents and arranges meeting to determine whether there is a reasonable excuse for not ensuring that their child attends school using the Director-General Guidelines for authorised officers on how to determine whether parents had a reasonable excuse for the purposes of ss.176 and 239 of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006.
  - School offers support to family to ensure child’s absence improves. All efforts, including records of meetings and conversations are documented on One School.
  - If the child is not attending regularly after three weeks (15 school days) of the first attempt to contact parents, the Principal at the school sends by registered post, a Notice (Form 4 – Failure to attend (s.178(2))) to both parents outlining the legal obligation and inviting both parents to attend a meeting to discuss the situation. Recorded on One School.
  - If no change to circumstances within one week (5 school days) the Principal 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. Recorded on One School.
  - Principal contacts Regional Office for further assistance to follow policy requirements.
Reporting and monitoring attendance

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

- Phone school absence line
- Provide a verbal or written explanation to class teacher or school office
- Email school office

Some related resources

*Every Day Counts*

*Departmental Policies and Procedures*

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

*Roll Marking in State Schools*