



# Attendance Policy

Department of Education Policy, Procedure or Law aligned to this policy

Managing student absences and enforcing enrolment and attendance at state schools procedure:

<https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/managing-student-absences-and-enforcing-enrolment-and-attendance-at-state-schools-procedure>

Education (General Provisions) Act 2006:

<https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2006-039>

## Policy Overview

The desired attendance rate range at Nirimba State Primary School is between 95 – 100% each term or overall for the year.

The attendance policy provides clear and explicit expectations and responsibilities for managing student attendance at Nirimba State Primary School.

All students are required to attend school every day unless there is a reasonable excuse provided by a parent or primary carer as to why their child can't attend school for any length of time.

Students are required to attend every lesson whilst in the care of Nirimba State Primary School staff.

The school will work together with parents, carers, students and occasionally external organisations to encourage and support regular school attendance.

It is important that students, staff, parents or carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school. Nirimba State Primary School:

- Has high expectations for student attendance and that all children have a right to a great education.
- Will promote key messages of "Every Day Counts," celebrating and rewarding excellent student attendance at school.
- Believes all students who are enrolled at Nirimba State Primary School will attend school all day, every day unless there is a genuine and/or reasonable reason related to absenteeism.
- Will regularly monitor student attendance and work with parents and carers encourage and promote regular attendance at school.
- Believes truanting and chronic absenteeism could potentially place a student in unsafe situations and may impact their future life outcomes.
- Believes regular school attendance is everyone's responsibility.

## Nirimba State Primary School

- Inform parents of their legal obligations in regard to enrolment and attendance.
- Implement strategies to manage student enrolment, absences, chronic absenteeism, school refusal and truancy using the guidelines set out in the Every Day Counts policy.

- 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 (generally 88% or less).
- Take reasonable steps to follow up unexplained absences as soon as possible or ideally within three days of the absence.
- When applicable, work with regional and other local resources to re-engage students and their families with the aim of returning the students to school.
- Follow established processes for enforcing parental obligation in regard to: enrolment, attendance, compulsory participation.

## Students

- Must be at school each and every day prepared for work and learning unless a reasonable excuse has been provided by a parent or carer.
- Will be accountable for their attendance and participation in learning.
- Are expected to be in class on time and remain in their lessons.
- Must remain at school during school hours unless they become unwell or are collected by a parent or carer to attend an appointment.
- Ensure all missed school work is completed, when applicable.

## Parents or Carers

Each parent of a child who is of compulsory school age has the legal obligation to ensure their child is enrolled and attends school, on every school day for the educational program in which the child is enrolled, unless the parent has a reasonable excuse for their child's absence.

From time to time a student may be absent from their educational program. Parents must provide a satisfactory reason for these absences in every instance and as soon as possible.

The department strongly encourages families not to schedule holidays during school time. This minimises the disruption to student learning. If you need to schedule holidays during school time, please contact the Principal or Deputy Principal in advance to talk about arrangements.

If a parent chooses to withdraw their child or children during school time to go on holiday, the school staff are not obligated to provide school work or complete summative assessments that would otherwise have been completed at school.

For any absence of longer than 10 school days, an application for exemption needs to be submitted to the Principal. Application forms are available from the administration office.

The table below identifies examples of reasonable and unreasonable reasons for student absenteeism:

Reasonable	Unreasonable
Natural Disaster	Birthdays
Representative Sport / Arts	Shopping
Illness	Movies
Funeral	Visiting Friends or Families at their home
Legal Obligations	Friends or Family visiting your home
Suspension or Exclusions	Minor appointments e.g. Haircuts

## Responding to Absences

- Nirimba State Primary School utilises a same day notification system via a text message to the number you provided during the enrolment of your child or children. Parents or carers should respond to this message providing a reason for their child's absence from school. For example:

**Valid Response:** *"Jack Smith Year 1C illness and medical appointment" (reason provided)*

**Invalid Response:** *"Jack Smith Year 1C away" (no reason provided)*

- An absence letter with details of unexplained absences will be sent to parents who do not respond to the text messages and provide a reason for their child's absence from school.
- Phone calls will be made by school staff to follow-up absences when there is irregular attendance or where there is no response to text messages or letters sent by the school.
- There will be on-going monitoring of student attendance percentages and the school will respond promptly to patterns of irregular attendance or where there are no reasons provided by parents or carers.
- Where there is a persistent pattern of unexplained absences or absences without reasonable justification, a student's attendance can be considered unsatisfactory. The Principal may commence legal processes against parents or carers to enforce regular school attendance:
  - The Principal or Deputy Principal will contact parents or carers, requesting reason for absence and offering support to engage student with their schooling.
  - If the child is still not attending regularly after three weeks (15 school days) from the first attempt to contact parents, a Notice to both parents outlining parents' legal obligation will be posted and they will be invited to meet with school to discuss the situation. If a meeting does not occur with the parents and there is no change in circumstances within one week (five school days) of sending the Notice. OR If a meeting does occur with the parents but there is no change in circumstances within one week (five school days) of this meeting:
  - A Warning Notice advising parents of their legal obligations will be posted and an offer to meet to discuss support available to address failure to attend will be extended by the school. If there is no change in attendance one week (5 school days) after the Warning Notice is sent, an Authorised Officer will request Performance, Monitoring and Reporting Branch to conduct a search for information regarding enrolment and attendance to ensure the child is not enrolled at another state school (including School of Distance Education).
  - Checks with Home Education Unit whether the child is registered or provisionally registered for home education.
  - Advises Regional Office they wish to seek the Director-General's consent to prosecute.
  - Where unsatisfactory attendance still continues, the Principal may commence processes associated with Enforcement of Compulsory Schooling and Compulsory Participation. The Principal is able to seek advice from Central Office Legal & Administrative Law Branch regarding consent to prosecute parents or carers.

**P&C President Name :** Nadine Mackle

**Principal Name:** Steven Moore

**P&C President Signature:** 

**Principal Signature :** 

**Endorsement Date :** 9<sup>th</sup> September, 2021

**Date :** 9<sup>th</sup> September, 2021