



# Attendance and Absences

From the Department of Education procedure [Managing student absences and enforcing enrolment and attendance at state schools](#)

Each parent of a child who is of compulsory<sup>1</sup> school age has the legal obligation to ensure their child is enrolled and attends a school full-time on every school day for the educational program in which the child is enrolled, unless the parent has a [reasonable excuse](#).

## Notifying the School of Absences

The safety and wellbeing of students are the highest priorities for our school. Parents need to know if their child hasn't arrived at school, and schools need to know when and why a child is absent.

Please provide a reason for your child's absence before or as early as possible on the day of the absence by:

- **Emailing** [absences@brookfieldss.eq.edu.au](mailto:absences@brookfieldss.eq.edu.au) and your child's class teacher (be aware that the teacher may be away and may not receive the message)
- **Phoning** 3374 7360 (absence line) or Phoning 3374 7333 and choosing Option 1
- Using **QParents**

Family reasons	<p>Student is absent due to family circumstances beyond the influence of the student. The parent is aware that their child is absent and an explanation has been provided to the school.</p> <p>Where these absences are persistent and regular, staff members should discuss the situation with the parent and/or student to determine if additional supports and/or strategies are required to strengthen engagement and improve attendance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moving house</li> <li>• Transport issues</li> <li>• Family member is ill or in hospital</li> </ul>
Holiday	<p>The parent 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. Refer to <a href="#">Exemptions from compulsory schooling and compulsory participation</a>.</p>	
Illness and medical appointments	<p>The parent, or the student if they are living independently (available to DoE employees only), has informed the school that the student is sick.</p> <p>Where these absences are persistent and regular, schools may request that documentary evidence (e.g. medical certificate) is provided. If a medical certificate has been provided, this should be noted in OneSchool and kept on file.</p> <p>If a student is unable to attend school for a period longer than 10 consecutive school days, an exemption is available. Refer to <a href="#">Exemptions from compulsory schooling and compulsory participation</a>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All references to ill health or reasons related to the health of the student (including <a href="#">mental health</a>),</li> <li>• Absences to attend medical/dental/health professional appointments during school hours</li> <li>• School refusal (i.e. student refusing to go to school due to a fear of attending school or anxiety about leaving home)</li> </ul>
Other	<p>The principal has determined that the excuse provided by the parent or student (where the student is independent, an adult, or where it would be inappropriate to ask the parent) is reasonable, however the existing absence reason codes are not suitable to use for the excuse provided.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Religious observances</li> <li>• Funerals</li> <li>• Legal matters (i.e. attending court)</li> <li>• Non-representative sport events / sports events not endorsed by the school</li> </ul>

For absences less than two hours, the absence will not be counted irrespective of the reason given.

## Unauthorised Absences

Unauthorised absences are those in which the excuse given for a student absence is deemed as unreasonable by the principal. These include leisure activities, shopping, visiting friends and relatives with no extenuating circumstances, celebrating birthdays, fishing, truancy.

## Long or Frequent Illnesses

Please ensure your child has seen a doctor and ask for a medical certificate to provide to the school for long or frequent illnesses.

<sup>1</sup> A child should be enrolled in and attend school from the beginning of the school year in the year that they turn compulsory school age (six years and six months).



### **For Absences of More than 10 Days**

Refer to [Exemptions from compulsory schooling and compulsory participation](#).

If travelling, please apply for [Home Education](#) or [Distance Education](#) prior to applying for an Exemption. An Exemption will only be considered if Home Education or Distance Education are not possible.

### **Accessing Support for Your Child's Attendance**

Please speak with your child's class teacher in the first instance regarding concerns and support for your child's attendance. Should you have continued concerns, please contact the Deputy Principal for your child's phase of school's (Prep to Year 3 or Year 4 to 6).

The Department of Education has information on supporting your child's attendance in the [Every Day Counts](#) section of their website.

The Raising Children network also has information on:

- [starting](#) school
- [going](#) to school
- children's [sleep](#)
- [morning](#) routines
- children [not wanting](#) to go to school

### **Following Up on Absences**

State schools are required to notify parents on the same day that any student is absent from school without explanation. At Brookfield State School, parents/carers will receive an SMS same day notification. It is also recognised that for any notification process to be effective, parents will need to ensure the school has current mobile phone contact details.

Authorised officers in schools (principals, deputy principals, and heads of campus):

- inform parents of their legal obligations about enrolment and attendance
- implement strategies to manage student enrolment and absences
- monitor student absences
- continue to follow up unexplained absences as practicable with parents/carers
- continue to work with regional office staff and other local resources to engage with the student and their family with the aim of returning the student to school
- manage processes for enforcing parental obligation in regard to attendance.

Class teachers contact parents to express concern, seek reasons for the absence with accompanying evidence if appropriate (eg medical certificate) and offer support for unexplained or unsatisfactory absences or patterns of absences for example:

- when a student is absent for three or more consecutive school days;
- where there is a persistent pattern of unexplained absences or absences without reasonable excuses;

Steps to enforce the parental obligation that a child of compulsory school age attends on every school day, for the educational program in which the child is enrolled. Steps may include:

- assessing reasons for absence and determining if they are reasonable or not
- offering support to the family to improve attendance or implement alternative arrangements
- issuing notices, and
- seeking consent from the regional director to prosecute.