BEING AT BOUNTY – EVERYDAY COUNTS

Bounty Boulevard State School Attendance Policy

Learning, Love and Laughter
Overview

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

Each parent of a young person in the compulsory participation phase has a legal obligation to ensure that the young person is participating full-time in an eligible option, unless the parent has a reasonable excuse.

Prosecution of one or both parents may occur if the parent(s) do not fulfil their legal obligation in regard to enrolment and attendance of their child at school. An authorised officer from either the school or region can see consent from the Director-General to prosecute for failure to enrol or attend. However there are a range of circumstances where the legal obligations of parents do not apply. When the prosecution officer must ensure that separate notices and General Briefing Note are prepared for each individual child (or young person).

From time to time a student may be absent from their educational program. Parents comply with their compulsory schooling or compulsory participation obligation by providing a satisfactory reason for these absences, unless the student is an adult or it is not appropriate to contact the student’s parents, in which case an explanation should be sought directly from the student. Parents should provide a reason for a child’s absence as soon as possible after the absence.

Rationale

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

Research shows that regular attendance is integral to successful academic, employment and social outcomes. Accordingly, it is important that students, staff and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of regular student attendance.

As Prep is recognised as the first year of schooling in Queensland, parents/carers whose children are enrolled in Prep should ensure they attend Prep on a full time basis.
Bounty Boulevard State School is committed to promoting the key messages of the Queensland State-wide initiative *Every Day Counts*.

**Everyday counts:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Every Day Counts in Prep because....</th>
<th>Every Day Counts at school because....</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• going to Prep every day makes sure all Queensland children get the most out of their important first year of school</td>
<td>• children achieve better when they attend school all day, every day</td>
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<td>• Prep gives children a head start for Year 1</td>
<td>• because going to school means getting a better chance at life</td>
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<tr>
<td>• going to Prep every day improves children’s reading, writing and maths</td>
<td>• because school helps children build social and emotional skills such as communication, teamwork and resilience</td>
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<td>• going to school every day builds a positive approach to learning</td>
<td>• because going to school is a legal requirement</td>
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<tr>
<td>• going to school every day strengthens your child’s independence and confidence</td>
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**Aims**

It is important that students, staff and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school. At Bounty Boulevard State School, we are committed to achieving the following targets in improving and maintaining attendance:

- A 94% average attendance rate for students across all year levels.

**Responsibilities**

**School responsibilities:**

- Regularly inform students, staff and parents/carers about the *Bounty Boulevard State School Attendance Policy* and make this publicly available through the school’s website and enrolment package.

- Monitor student attendance daily through marking the roll at the beginning of each day and at the beginning of the final session of the day, every day, using *OneSchool*.

- Notify parents/carers of any unexplained absence, requesting a satisfactory explanation for the child’s absence.

**Learning, Love and Laughter**
• Notify the Executive Team when concerned that the explanation for student absence is unsatisfactory.

• Discuss individual attendance with students and offer support and help to parents and students when school attendance has become a problem.

• Provide students with school work when they are absent for legitimate extended periods of time.

• Archive all communication related to student absence.

• Notify the Executive Team if non-attendance persists.

• 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.

Student responsibilities:

• Under the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006, students must attend school each day. They must be on time and have all necessary equipment.

• Never leave school during school hours without permission from parents/carers or the school and without obtaining an appropriate Early Departure Slip from the office.

• Report to the office if arriving to school after 8:55am and provide a note or explanation from parents/carers explaining their lateness.

• Ensure all missed school work is completed.

• Regularly discuss attendance with their class teacher.

Parent/Carers responsibilities:

• Ensure that their child attends school on every school day for the program in which they are enrolled.

• Provide a satisfactory explanation for all absences, that is, any time during which a student is not attending or participating in their educational program.

• Contact the school prior to any planned absence. Where this is not possible, parents must provide the reason for any absences prior to 10:00am on the
day of absence, or within 2 days of the student’s return to school. This may take the form of a medical certificate or a satisfactory explanation for the absence.

- Contact a member of the Executive Team if student absence is to be for an extended period of time (eg family reasons or illness) and request school work.

- Contact a member of the Executive Team if a student is refusing to attend school. Initiate or attend meetings to seek support and discuss their child’s attendance or participation in their educational program.

- Provide a written note (signed and dated) or an email to the class teacher, if their child requires a Early Departure Slip to leave school early.

- Provide a written note (signed and dated) from parents/carers explaining their lateness.

- Advise the school of any change of address or phone numbers to ensure school records are accurate. Up to date contact details are essential in an emergency.

**Strategies**

At Bounty Boulevard State School we promote 100% attendance by:

- Providing a school wide attendance reward program based on class attendance on a bi-termly basis.

- Encouraging student’s attendance and a certificate for a Never Late, Never Absent award on a termly basis.

- Providing a rich school experience for all students at Bounty Boulevard State School.

- Providing a welcoming, safe learning environment.

**Responses to Absences**

At Bounty Boulevard State School, student absences, lateness or truanting are taken seriously.

**Attendance**
If students are absent from school at any time, parents/carers should advise the school by 10:00am and provide a satisfactory explanation for the absence. They can do this by:

- Phoning the school office on 3482 1333 (extension ‘1’), preferably before 10:00am
- Write a note or send an email to the class teacher
- Email the school office on studentabsence@bountyboulevardss.eq.edu.au
- Deliver the message to the administrative officers in person at the school office.

Bounty Boulevard State School will maintain attendance records and monitor attendance of enrolled students through implementing the following procedures:

- Students are allowed to be at their classrooms at 8:40am to ensure that they are ready for the school day which officially begins at 8:55am. Student attendance is taken for the first time in all classes at 8:55am using OneSchool.
- Students continually late to class will be referred to the Executive Team by the administrative officers or the class teacher.
- Attendance records are completed at the start of the day at 8:55am and in the afternoon after second break at 2:00pm. Teachers will use OneSchool Roll Marking for all attendance procedures.

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

- When students are absent for three days a member of the Executive Team or an Administrative Officer will contact the parents/carers of the absent child and ask them to provided satisfactory reasoning for their child’s absence.
- If students are absent without explanation for 3 or more days in any given fortnight, an Absence Letter will be mailed home, reminding parents/carers of their obligations to ensure their child attends school on every school day and the requirement for providing satisfactory explanations for all absences. Parents are asked to provide the reason for the unexplained absences, sign and return the Absence Report to the child’s class teacher. Alternatively, they may phone a member of the Executive Team.
• Where there is a continuation of unexplained absences, or absences without satisfactory reasons, parents will be required to attend a meeting with the Principal to address issues contributing to these absences and to discuss implementation of appropriate strategies and support mechanisms.

• 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 the Department of Education, Training and Employment’s Legal & Administrative Law Branch regarding consent to prosecute parents/carers.

**Lateness**

At Bounty Boulevard State School, the school day begins at *8:55am*.

• Students who arrive late to school after *8:55am* are required to report to the office and provide an explanation to why they are late to school.

• If a satisfactory reason has not been explained to the Administrative staff, a member of the Executive Team will be contacted to discuss the child’s lateness with the child.

• Students will be issued a *Late Arrival Slip* which must be presented to their class teacher on admission to their class.

• Students who continually arrive late to school will be required to attend an interview with a member of the Executive Team.

**Leaving School During the Day**

At Bounty Boulevard State School, the school day finishes at *3:00pm*.

• Students are not permitted to leave school during school hours without providing a dated and signed letter of permission from parents/carers or a satisfactory reason has been provided to the Administrative Team.

• Parents/Carers must report to the school office first before a child can receive an *Early Departure Slip*.

• The *Early Departure Slip* must be presented to the class teacher or to a member of the Administrative or Executive Teams before the child is allowed to leave the school premises.
Appointments to doctors, dentists or other urgent appointments should be the only reasons students leave early.

Truancy

Truancy is treated as a very serious matter at Bounty Boulevard State School and if any truancy occurs, parents/carers of the truant child will be contacted immediately.

Unexplained and Explained Absences

Absences for which a satisfactory reason has been provided are considered explained absences, and the student’s enrolment is viewed as continuous. Undertaking a leisure activity such as shopping, visiting friends, fishing or camping, is not considered a satisfactory explanation for an absence.

An absence for which a satisfactory reason has not been provided is considered an unexplained absence.

Some related resources

Every Day Counts

Departmental Policies

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/