Nanango SS

Attendance Policy

Every Day Counts
Rationale

At Nanango State School we believe schools should provide a safe, success orientated and caring environment. We believe that students need to attend school **EVERY DAY** of the school year in order to participate fully and gain maximum benefit from schooling. Regular attendance equips children to access a full education, enabling them to reach their full potential in forging a bright future.

At Nanango State School we hold to the belief that **Every Day Counts**. We are

- committed to ensuring that program delivery of equitable education aligns with this belief. Thus, this attendance policy aims to uphold the notion that a day of school missed, is a missed opportunity for learning and personal growth
- endeavouring to monitor the attendance of every student and regard any absence as of prime concern
- of the belief that early detection and assessment of the causes of school non-attendance and the provision of organisational structures, which are responsive to the needs of students, is vital

Every member of the school community is expected to meet the requirements of attendance and work to the best of their ability and skill, consistently and with integrity. This policy document clearly outlines the roles and expectations of all stakeholders as to responsibilities in the matter of regular school attendance.

The Principal

Mr Lyal Giles.
Our Beliefs about Attendance

Non-attendance is of serious concern. It has a direct impact on the learning opportunities and the social and emotional development of the student. It is important that students, staff and parent/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school. Nanango State School

- believes that our school can attain an attendance of 95% or better

- is committed to promoting the key messages of Every Day Counts
  http://education.qld.gov.au/everydaycounts

- believes all children should be enrolled at school and attend school all day, every school day
  http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/about/enrolling.html

- 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

- believes attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community

Student attendance is everyone's business at Nanango State School.
Responsibilities

Parents/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 9.30 a.m. 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 the Principal or nominated staff member if the student absence is to be for an extended period of time (e.g., significant family reasons or illness).
- Contact the Principal, or nominated staff member 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 verbal explanation to the classroom teacher, if their child is required to leave school early.
- Provide a written note (signed and dated) or verbal explanation 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 data is essential in an emergency.

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.
- Report to the classroom if arriving to school after 9:00 am and provide a late note from the administration office explaining their lateness.
- Ensure all missed school work is completed.

School Responsibilities:

- Regularly inform students, staff and parents/carers about the Nanango State School Attendance Policy and Procedures (including the Policy and Procedures for late arrival, early departure and truancy) and make this publicly available through the school’s website, newsletters and enrolment package.
- Monitor student attendance daily through marking the roll at the beginning of each day and in the afternoon in all classes using electronic roll marking. (A paper roll will be used in the event of a substitute Teacher).
- Notify parents/carers of any unexplained absence, requesting a satisfactory explanation for their child’s absence.
- Notify the Principal or nominated officer 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 concern.
- Provide students with school work when they are absent for legitimate extended periods of time.
- Notify the relevant authorities if non-attendance persists.
- Act upon relevant regulations for matters of unresolved truancy.
The Law and Attendance

Under the Education (General Provisions) Act of 2006, each parent with a child who is of compulsory school age must (chapter 9) –

SS. 176

(a) ensure the child is enrolled at a State school or non-State school; and
(b) ensure the child attends the State school or non-State school, on every school day (italics ours), for the educational program in which the child is enrolled; unless the parent has a reasonable excuse

SS. 239

(1) Each parent of a young person in the compulsory participation phase must ensure the young person is participating full-time in an eligible option, unless the parent has a reasonable excuse.


Strategies for improving attendance

Nanango State School utilises a number of key strategies for improving and maintaining student attendance. It involves –

(a) all staff believing and promoting the philosophy that Every Day Counts at school
(b) understanding that Parents/Caregivers are the first and foremost educators of their children’s lives; that as educators we have a privileged opportunity to facilitate the educational and social emotional growth of all students under our care
(c) building relationships with Parents/Caregivers and the extended community
(d) supporting families with issues that concern them; providing opportunities to extend support through resources from within the school and outsourcing agencies
(e) a rigorous monitoring of individual student attendance and early intervention
(f) integrity toward follow-up procedures relating to matters of truancy
(g) abiding by Education Queensland regulations and policies
Tracking Student absence flowchart

**Student Absence**

Explained
- Parent/Caregiver provides reason; written or verbal.

  Reasonable
  - Authorised Excuses
    - Illness
    - Specialist appointments
    - Natural disasters
    - Significant family issue
    - Representing school in sports
    - School excursions
    - Significant cultural event
    - Suspensions

  Unauthorised Excuses
    - Recreation e.g. fishing, hunting, camping
    - Visiting friends or relatives
    - Birthdays
    - Shopping
    - Tiredness from school or non-school event
    - Bullying
    - Believed it to be a ‘Student free day’

Unexplained
- Parent/Caregiver to provide reason within 2 days

  Reason given
  - No Response
  - Teacher communicates with Parent/Caregiver
  - No Response
  - Pursued by Absentee Officer
  - No Response
  - Principal considers matter of truancy; pursues Education Queensland policy procedures

Patterns of unauthorised absences
Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What do I have to do if I arrive with my child after 9:00am, or need to pick them up early?

A. All late arrivals and early departures must present through the front office of administration. Parents/Caregivers must accompany the student to and from the office. A brief explanation is all that is required when asked by office staff for a reason for the late arrival or early departure. Arriving on time for school each day is important, as it minimises disruption to the student’s day and optimises learning. It is preferred that students not be removed from class early; if at all possible make appointments after school hours.

Q. Do I have to give a reason for an absence?

A. YES. The Education (General Provisions) Act of 2006 requires that a parent provides a reasonable excuse if the student is unable to attend a school day. We understand that some matters are very private, thus we’d encourage a conversation with the Class Teacher or Principal. If no reasonable excuse is given, it is registered as an unauthorised absence.

Q. Do I have to let the school know if our family is having a long weekend or a vacation?

A. YES. All planned time off school needs to be discussed with the principal prior to the event. If the event is considered unreasonable, then it will be marked as an unauthorised event. Holidays exceeding 10 consecutive school days in length require authorisation from the Principal. In this case an application toward exemption from schooling will be processed.

Q. What methods are there for me to report my child’s absence?

A. There are a number of ways to report an absence. You can –

- inform the Teacher in person
- write a note of explanation
- respond to the SMS message
- provide a medical certificate in cases of illness
- use the school telephone message bank
- use the school AP to report an absence

Q. Does my child have to attend the last day of each school term?

A. YES. The last day of each school term is a normal school day.