



Attendance Policy

ATP2019-1.0

Purpose:	The purpose of this policy is to ensure Arcadia College complies with legislation applying to compulsory school age and compulsory participation phase requirements for children and young people in Queensland. The policy outlines the importance of school attendance, the responsibilities of Arcadia College, students and parents/caregivers in regards to student attendance and school strategies to promote positive attendance.	
Scope:	This policy applies to Arcadia College, it's employees, students, parents and caregivers in regards to student attendance at Arcadia College.	
Status:	Approved	Supersedes: N/A
Authorised by:	College Governing Body Chairperson / CEO	Approval Date: 19 th December 2018
References:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017 (Qld) • Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) • Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld) • Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2017 (Qld) 	
Reviewed:	2 Years	Next Review: 19 th December 2020
Responsibility:	Executive Principal	Point of Contact: Head of Welfare
Policy Owner:	College Governing Board	

Policy

As a school dedicated to re-engaging students with education, Arcadia College is committed to supporting our students and their parents/caregivers in maintaining attendance rates above 85%.

Under [s176 of the Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006](#), the parents of a child or young person, who is of compulsory school age or in the compulsory participation phase must ensure they are enrolled at a school and that they attend every school day for the educational program in which they are enrolled, unless the parent has a reasonable excuse.

This Attendance Policy aims to ensure all students are given the best opportunity to learn by outlining the responsibilities of the school, parents and students in managing attendance issues.

School community beliefs about the importance of attending school:

It is important that students, staff and parents/carer givers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school. Arcadia College:

- 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 truancing can place a student in unsafe situations and impact on their future employability and life opportunities
- believes attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the school and wider community

Responsibilities

School responsibilities:

- Use school management system, TASS, to record and monitor student attendance and identify all unexplained absences (daily) and patterns of absenteeism for individual students
- Notify parents/caregivers daily of unexplained absences via automated text messaging in the TASS school management system
- Follow up on all unexplained absences within three days
- Record all communication with parents/caregivers in regards to student absences
- Follow all legislation regarding student absences alongside Independent Schools Queensland guidelines in managing student absences.
- Enforce the parental obligation that a child of compulsory school age or compulsory participation phase attends on every school day
- Follow attendance plan processes for repeat student absences and patterns of absenteeism, lateness or early departures
- Manage applications for exemptions from student attendance and follow exemption processes
- Communicate effectively with the school community, students and their parents/caregivers regarding attendance expectations and processes at Arcadia College
- Provide ongoing case management for chronic absentees including attendance support plans developed with students and their parents/caregivers
- Provide an educational program that gives students a reason as to why they should attend every day

Student responsibilities:

- Attend school each day unless there is an acceptable reason for the absence
- Arrive to school on time each day and attend for the full school day unless an acceptable reason is provided
- Engage in support strategies to maintain positive attendance when required

Parent/caregiver responsibilities:

- Ensure their child is enrolled in a school and attends on every school day, for the educational program the child is enrolled in
- Ensure the child arrives at school on time each school day and attends for the full school day unless an acceptable reason is provided
- Notify the school of any planned absences
- Provide an explanation (preferably in writing), if not beforehand then within 2 days of the child's return to school, each time their child is absent from school. This may take the form of a medical certificate, written explanation or a verbal explanation to the school through either a phone call or visit to the school.
- Apply for an exemption from student attendance for absences between 10 and 110 school days
- Work with the school support team to develop and action an individual attendance plan if the student is showing patterns of absenteeism. This includes meeting parent/caregiver requirements within the plan as agreed with the school.

Strategies:

At Arcadia College we promote 100% attendance by:

- Implementation of Attendance Policy and Attendance Plan
- Development of a safe and supportive school environment that promotes positive relationships including the implementation of programs to develop social skills, resilience and positive wellbeing for our students
- Consistently recording and following up on unexplained absences and repeat absences of all students
- Monitoring school attendance data to identify absenteeism trends and individual students with high levels of absenteeism
- Promote high expectations for school attendance to the school community by communicating that higher school attendance is associated with higher student achievement (in class, school newsletter, parent meetings, school website)
- Provide interventions for students and families for students with attendance rates lower than 85% including individual attendance support plans for High Concern (Level 3) students. See Appendix 3. This includes students with patterns of late arrivals or early departures.
- Provide strong support networks, both internal and external, for students and their families
- Reward system for students with positive attendance rates above 85%.
- Incentive system for students with low attendance rates who meet their attendance goals throughout the term
- Create a strong family and community network that values attendance and supports student, parents and caregivers

Reporting and monitoring attendance:

At Arcadia College, reports of absence or truanting are taken seriously. Students, parents, members of community and school staff may report an absence in the following ways:

- Parents/caregivers to contact the school via phone: 07 5655 1800 or email: attendance@arcadia.qld.edu.au to notify school of student absence
- Parents/caregivers are to provide an explanation (preferably in writing), if not beforehand then within 2 days of the child's return to school, each time their child is absent from school. This may take the form of a medical certificate, written explanation or a verbal explanation to the school through either a phone call or visit to the school.
- Admin staff to record all absentee data in TASS school management system along with all parent communication relating to absences
- Front line staff contacted in regards to student absences are to notify admin staff of all information relating to student absences as soon as practicable.
- Front line staff are to notify parents/caregivers and students of the appropriate notification channels for absences when required
- Youth Workers to monitor attendance data for patterns of non-attendance on a weekly basis and pass information to Head of Welfare and Youth Workers responsible for following up student attendance
- Admin staff are to update the absentee spreadsheet each week as required
- Admin staff to follow up all unexplained absences within three days with a phone call or email to parents/caregivers.
- Youth Workers and Head of Welfare to monitor Attendance Support Plan goals and outcomes

Roll Call Procedures

The roll call is to be completed by the relevant Youth Worker or Teacher three times throughout the day at the commencement of each class or elective session.

Session 1 (Roll Call)

Morning Tea

Session 2 (Roll Call)

Lunch

Session 3 (Roll Call)

It is a Child Protection requirement to ensure that parents/guardians are notified in the event that a student/s abscond from the school site or whilst on excursions. This must be completed either by a staff member or via administration immediately.

Relevant information is to be included in the student/s TASS file and attendance. A text can be sent out as a notification to the parent/guardian about the unexplained absence.

Students who arrive late to any session throughout the day will require a late slip from reception prior to returning to class.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Exemptions from Student Attendance

Appendix 2: Exemption Procedure

Appendix 3: Attendance Intervention Procedure

Appendix 4: Managing Student Absences & Enforcing Enrolment & Attendance

Appendix 1: Exemptions from Student Attendance

What is an exemption from attendance?

An exemption from attendance excuses parents from their legal obligation under the EGPA to ensure that their child:

- Is enrolled at or attends a school, if of compulsory school age, or
- Is participating full-time in an eligible option, if in the compulsory participation phase.

Parents may apply and exemptions may be granted under Chapter 9, Part 3 of the EGPA for students of compulsory school age. Full or partial exemptions for students in the compulsory participation phase may be granted under Chapter 10, Part 5 of the EGPA.

Exemptions may be granted by Principals for absences of between 10 and 110 schools' day in a year (a cumulative total for the year). Governing bodies must now keep a record of each decision made by the Principal regarding an application for exemption for a period of at least 5 years.

Parents will not be liable for prosecution in relation to failure to enrol or attend:

- When an exemption has been granted; or
- While an application for exemption is being processed; or
- For a period of 14 days after an exemption decision is made; or
- Until the exemption application lapses.

When should an exemption be sought?

An exemption from compulsory schooling or the compulsory participation phase should be sought by parents when a student cannot attend or it would be unreasonable in all the circumstances for them to attend school or participate in an eligible option, for a period of **more than 10 consecutive school days**, due to the circumstances outlined below.

A partial exemption may also be available if a student in the compulsory participation phase cannot participate at school on a full-time basis.

Under what circumstances may an exemption be appropriate?

Circumstances where an exemption from schooling for a child or young person may be appropriate include (but are not limited to):

- Diagnosis of terminal medical condition;
- Illness or hospitalisation for a prolonged period of time;
- 'Carer' responsibilities;
- Mental health condition;
- Extended travel;
- Cultural or religious reasons; and
- Family reasons.

When might an exemption be inappropriate?

Circumstances where an exemption from schooling for a child or young person may not be appropriate include (but are not limited to):

- Reluctance to attend school;
- Response to incidents at school such as bullying;
- Employment (for compulsory school aged child) or desire to seek employment;
- Difficulty with school curriculum; and
- Desire to become an apprentice or trainee but without an established training contract with an employer.

If the circumstances above exist, support and advice is available from Student Services at ISQ.
Process for granting an exemption

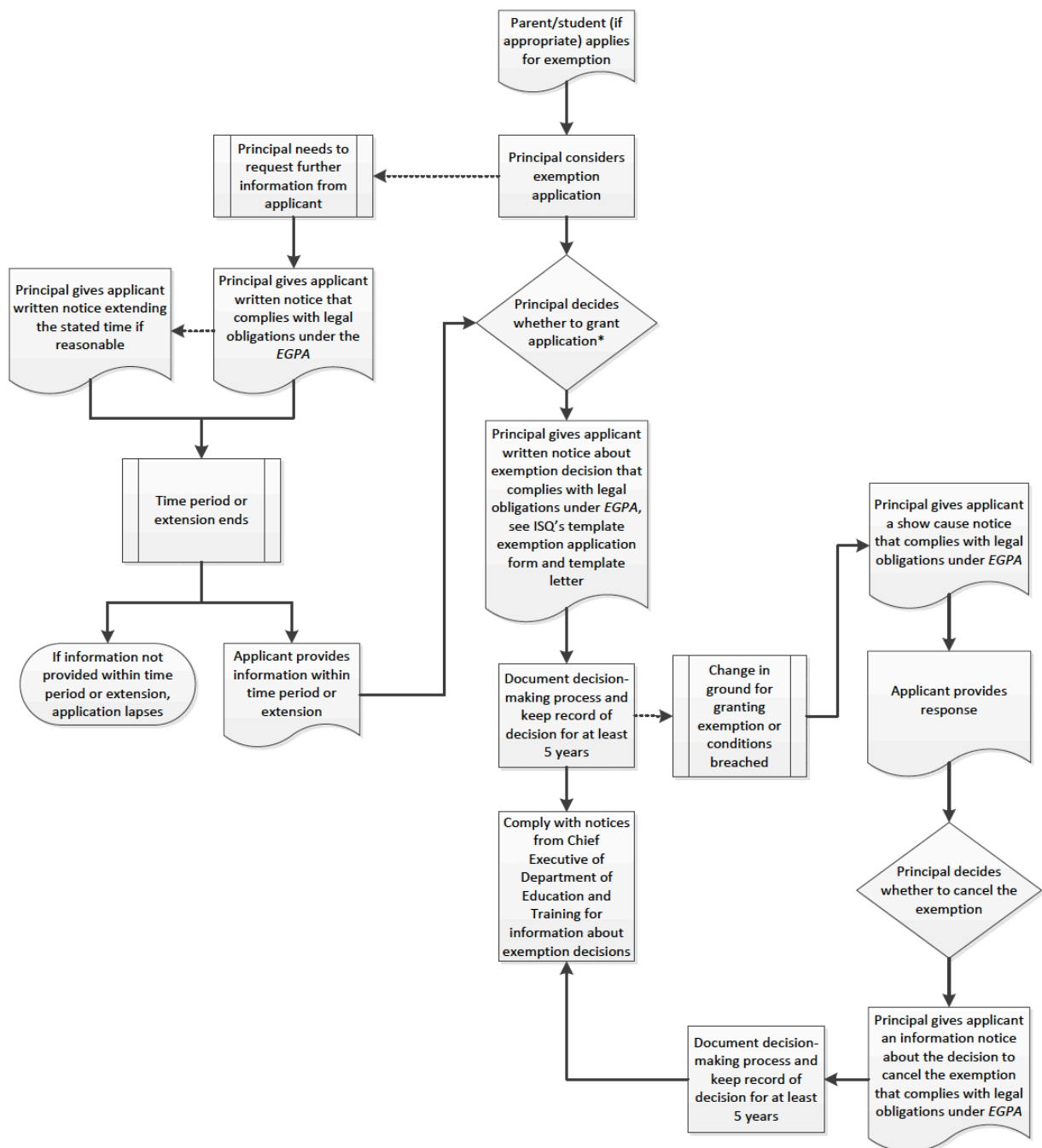
See ISQ's flowchart below for details on the Exemption Procedure.

More Information or Advice

This advice is provided with the acknowledgement that not all the facts of the situation are known to Independent Schools Queensland. Independent Schools Queensland is able to provide more detailed advice upon request.

School Services Team on 07 3228 1515 or office@isq.qld.edu.au

Appendix 2: Exemption Procedure



Appendix 3: Attendance Intervention Procedure

Purpose:

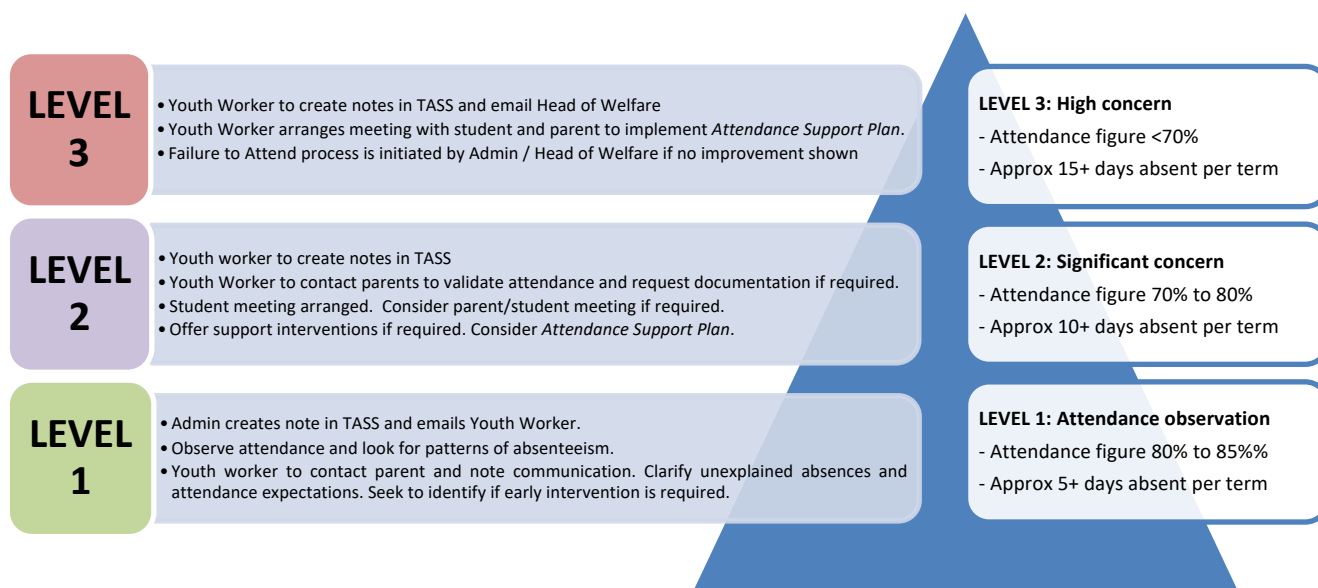
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- is committed to promoting the key messages of Every Day Counts
- believes all children should be enrolled at school and attend school all day, every school day
- believes in understanding individual student and family needs
- monitors, communicates and implements strategies to improve regular school attendance
- believes non-attendance and truanting can place a student in unsafe situations and impact on their future employability and life opportunities
- believes attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the school and wider community

Attendance Intervention Procedure:

A weekly attendance report and Attendance spreadsheet updated each Friday informs the following:

- Students with attendance rates lower than 70% for the term: **High concern**
- Students with attendance rates between 70% and 80%: **Significant concern**
- Students with attendance rates between 80% and 85%: **Attendance observation**



Appendix 4: Managing Student Absences & Enforcing Enrolment & Attendance

