

## Attendance Policy

### Come Every Day! Be On Time!

#### Procedures for all students:

- Students are to attend school on every official school day gazetted by Education Queensland unless the student is ill or special family circumstances prevent the student from attending.
- On each occasion the student is absent, an SMS text message is sent direct to parent/guardian phone and a reply text should be made immediately. A note of explanation is then to be handed in at the Absence Office the day the student returns to school. Notes must include: Care Class, Student's full name, Parent's/Guardian's name and signature; and a specific explanation. Parents should notify the school if a student is going to be absent for an extended period of time due to sickness or special circumstances. Absences will be approved when a note or medical certificate is received within one week from the date of absence.
- Parents intending to take students for holidays during the school year must apply to the school in writing stating the dates the students will be absent from school and the reason why the vacation must be taken in school time. A request for work or special arrangement for assessment which will be missed during absence should be arranged through a negotiation sheet available from the office.
- It is expected that parents will notify the school in writing when a student is leaving/transferring to another school so that the student clearance form can be completed, and all books and equipment returned. This is necessary to enable a refund of fees or transfer form to be issued.
- Students who are late for school are to report to the Absence Office for a LATE PASS (otherwise an absence will be recorded).
- Students who have to leave school early are to report to one of the Directors before school with a note stating the reason from their parents. A leave pass will be issued by the Absence Office.
- Students of the school must be in attendance up to and including the last day of school of each semester.
- The last week of school of each semester is to be a normal week in terms of behaviour, uniform and staff-student activities.
- Year 11 and 12 students must be in attendance up to and including the dates set each year by the Queensland Studies Authority.
- It is vital for students to strive to have 100% attendance or to obtain medical certificates to cover absences.
- Each student is responsible for their punctuality and attendance. Parental support is appreciated but ultimately it is the individual student who will be held accountable by the school for being on time, being present or advising of genuine absences.

#### Warning

*Students* may lose their YOUTH ALLOWANCE entitlement and/or may have to repay benefits received during time of absence *for failing to:*

- meet the above attendance requirements
- follow correct procedure for late arrivals
- acquire permission to miss class time to attend medical appointments.

*Students over the age of 16 who are repeatedly absent or late without reasonable excuse face:*

- warning of cancellation of enrolment
- cancellation of enrolment

## Attendance Requirements

Students assisted under YOUTH ALLOWANCE, AIC or ABSTUDY living allowance may have five days of unapproved absences in a term before they are penalised. When unapproved absences exceed five days, the student will lose entitlement to the days in excess of five as well as having a fourteen day penalty period imposed. Therefore a student who has six whole days of unapproved absences during a term would lose an entitlement of one day plus the fourteen days following that day.

### Benowa State High School will approve the following absences:

- Genuine illness supported by a Medical Certificate which must be obtained at the beginning of or during the illness. Certificates received more than one week after the illness will NOT be accepted. Only original certificates will be accepted.
- Personal or family problems (e.g. counselling, attendance at a funeral etc.). Each circumstance must be submitted in writing within one week and will be considered on its individual merits.
- Participation in school-approved sporting or cultural events at school, state or national level.

### Benowa State High School will NOT approve the following absences:

- Finishing assignments or completing extra study at home – this disadvantages other students
- Suspension or exclusion time
- Vacations - irrespective of whether the school has approved the vacation for QSA purposes

### Additional Notes

- Half-day absences count towards total absences.
- Frequent lateness will be added to other unapproved absences in Youth Allowance attendance checks.
- If a student is absent (without approval) on the school day immediately before and immediately after a weekend, no allowance will be paid for the weekend.
- A student receiving YOUTH ALLOWANCE who chooses to leave early for or return late after vacations is not entitled to the living allowance for the holiday.
- Notes from parents, guardians or independent students are necessary for an absence to be considered “explained”. However, if the reasons given do not fit the criteria provided by YOUTH ALLOWANCE and the School, the absence will not be approved.
- Therefore, it is the responsibility of the student who receives YOUTH ALLOWANCE or ABSTUDY to satisfy the school within one week that the absence should be “approved” according to the above guidelines. “Approval” cannot be given after this one-week period.

### Leaving School Grounds

- Students are not allowed to leave the school grounds unless a LEAVE PASS has been obtained from the Absence Office after the note has been sighted and signed by a Director. This refers to morning and lunch breaks as well as during lesson time.
- Permission will be granted to leave the school grounds for the following reasons only:
  1. A student becomes ill. In this case, a parent will be contacted by phone and an arrangement made for the student to go home. Under no circumstances will students be allowed to go home to an empty house.
  2. A student is injured at school. Again, in this case a parent will first be contacted, and then an ambulance called if required.
  3. If parents or legal guardians have an important reason to take students from the grounds, students are to present a note giving the reason to one of the Directors before school and students are issued with a leave pass.
- Sport is an integral part of the curriculum. Students should avoid making appointments on sport days and should include appointment cards with the note from parent/guardian.