

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND ABSENTEEISM IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Scope: This policy applies to all Catholic schools and colleges conducted by Catholic Education - Diocese of Rockhampton (referred to as Catholic Education in the document).

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Each parent / carer / guardian of a child who is of compulsory school age has the legal obligation to ensure their child is enrolled and attends a school. Each parent / carer / guardian of a child enrolled in a Catholic school or college (hereafter referred to as Catholic school) in the Diocese of Rockhampton regardless of the child's year level has the legal obligation to ensure their child attends on every school day for the educational program in which the child is enrolled, unless the parent has a satisfactory reason for the child's absence.

2. DESCRIPTION

A child should be enrolled in and attend a school in the year that they turn compulsory school age. A child is of compulsory school age if the child is at least six years and six months and less than sixteen years. A child is no longer of compulsory school age if the child has completed Year 10.

3. RATIONALE

Early identification of children whose attendance is not regular is crucial to minimising absences. Catholic schools must consider taking reasonable steps to follow-up unexplained absences as soon as possible. Schools may need to work closely with other agencies to support parents / carers / guardians to meet their obligations in regard to the enrolment and attendance or participation of their child.

4. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

1. The Principal (or member of the school's Leadership team) will inform parents / carers / guardians at the time of enrolment of their legal obligations for their child to attend school full-time.
2. The Principal will implement strategies to manage enrolment, absences, school refusal and truancy especially following up any unexplained absences.

3. The Principal will work with community agencies as required to assist parents / carers / guardians to meet their legal obligations regarding enrolment and attendance.
4. Personnel from Catholic Education will support Principals in managing enrolment, attendance and absenteeism by developing management guidelines for Catholic schools.
5. At all times the Principal will, through his/her actions, reflect the values and ethos of the Catholic school including the pastoral care of the child.
6. Principals will, in conjunction with Catholic Education, take appropriate action in reporting absentee issues to local authorities.
7. Teachers will ensure that rolls are marked accurately at times specified by the Principal.
8. Teachers will report prolonged or unexplained absences or patterns of absenteeism to the Principal.

5. REFLECTION MATERIAL

CATHOLIC EDUCATION POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

- [*Pastoral Care in Catholic Schools*](#) 2015-09

WEBSITES

The Education Queensland website *School absenteeism and student attendance* www.education.qld.gov.au/everydaycounts contains many valuable resources for schools and parents.

LEGISLATION

- Queensland Government [*Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006*](#)

RESOURCES

- Catholic Education Western Australia [*Framework for the Development of Pastoral Care in Catholic Schools*](#) 2007