Attendance Policy

Attendance Goal 92 – 100%

At Marsden State High School, our mission is to develop superior opportunities based on a culture of high expectations. One of these expectations is that students attend school on time, every day for every lesson in order to access all the opportunities available to them, and so we as a community can achieve our vision to *'Dare to Inspire, Make a Difference'*.

Purpose of this Policy

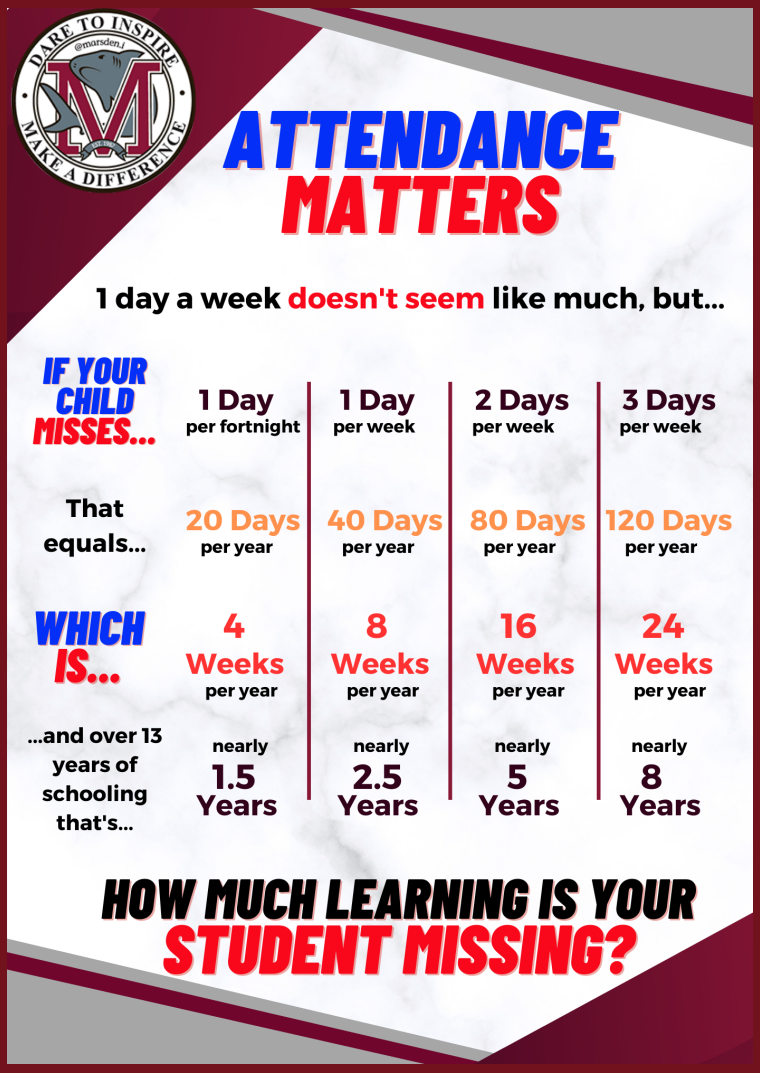
Research shows that a low level of school attendance is associated with poor academic achievement, early school exit, obtaining fewer qualifications, subsequent unemployment and a lower level of health/ life expectancy.

This policy aims to educate and inform students, families and the community, of the legal obligations regarding compulsory school attendance.
The policy will identify the expectations of all parties associated with school attendance.
It is aimed at the early identification of attendance issues and the subsequent investigation and action to increase school attendance and therefore improve student outcomes through the modelling of our school values of *Pride, Passion and Persistence.*

The Law

Under Queensland law, families must ensure any child of school age is enrolled and attends school all day, every school day unless they have a reasonable excuse. Illness, doing work experience, competing in a school sporting event or going on a school excursion are reasonable excuses for being absent from school.

Routine medical or other health appointments should be made either before or after school or during the school holidays.
As a parent/carer, it is your responsibility, by law, to ensure your child is engaged in a full-time education program.
Section 176(1) (b) of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 provides that each parent/carer of a child of compulsory school age has the obligation to ensure their child is attending school on every school day, for the educational program in which the child is enrolled.
Therefore, while it is a last resort, it is important to understand that families may be prosecuted if students do not attending school regularly.



Communication regarding Absences – Families to School

Communication regarding student absences is essential. Parents/Carers must provide notification of a student absence outlining the reason for the absence in one of the following ways:

- Entry onto QParents
- SMS - 0426 306 216
- Email - parents@marsdenshs.eq.edu.au
- Phone call during office hours
- Voice message left on absence hotline (3299 0555), option 0 or reply to school-initiated text message
- Note submitted to student foyer
- Doctors certificates are acceptable notes provide they cover the total period of absence

Communication regarding Absences – School to Families

- Rolls are marked every lesson, every day
- Families will be contacted via email and text message twice a day to advise of student absence.
- Additional communications through our Attendance Management Process outlined on page 4.

Late arrival to school

- Before 9am students go straight to class (with a note from carers) and teachers signs them in late to school
- After 9am students must sign in at the student foyer (with a note from carers)
- Students then proceeds to class with sign in slip
- Persistent late arrival to school will result in the compulsory enforcement of attendance process being applied

Acceptable reasons for absence

- Serious illness or medical conditions (majority of these conditions should be accompanied by a medical certificate)
- Representative activities including sport, academic and cultural
- Serious family emergencies
- For non-school representative sport, dance or cultural events the school must be notified before the date of absence

For any medical absences of 10 consecutive school days or more, an exemption from schooling application should be made directly to the school principal.

Not Acceptable reasons for absence

- Holidays outside school holiday periods
- Non-essential activities (for example shopping, parties, functions)
- Medical appointments that can be scheduled outside of school hours

*If you are unsure, contact the school on 3299 0555.
Communication around attendance is key!

Key Staff Attendance Duties

Ensuring students are accounted for and safe is key priority at MSHS. Many staff are involved in the recording and tracking of attendance and behaviour at MSHS. The staff include, but are not limited to:

- Year Level Deputy Principals
- Year Level Heads of Department
- Guidance Officers
- Youth Support Coordinators
- Engagement Officers
- Attendance Officers

These staff all contribute to effective monitoring of attendance and wish to collaborate with parents where support needs to be implemented.

Staff at MSHS:

- are committed to promoting the key messages of **Every Day Counts.**
- believe all children should be enrolled at school and attend school all day, every day/
- monitor, communicate and implement strategies to improve school attendance.
- believe truancy can place a student in unsafe situations and impact on their future employability and life choices.
- believe attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community.

Marsden SHS's Strategies to support Attendance

At MSHS our positive engagement strategies aim to promote 100% attendance by:

- Engaging students through a quality curriculum designed to meet their individual needs
- Providing a supportive and positive environment through learning together where students are rewarded for their high attendance at school through:
  - MMM Class celebrations
  - Certificates of appreciation
  - Recognition at whole- school and year level assemblies
- Educating parents and the community through Facebook, newsletters, emails and invitations to come into the school to celebrate student success. The school also provides support and counselling for parents/ guardians struggling to get their students to school.
- Employing dedicated Attendance Officers, Youth Engagement Officers and a team of Year Level Heads of Department to analyse data and develop strategies toward improved outcomes
- Setting whole-school achievable targets and engaging the school community in meeting those targets
- Utilising a systematic monitoring and action process with clearly defined roles, responsibilities and timelines informed by data and linked to a strong action/review.

Possible actions for unexplained absences/persistent late arrivals

- Disciplinary action for truancy
- Enforcement of attendance (compulsory aged schooling)
- Cancellation of enrolment (post compulsory aged schooling) (refer policy)

Further references/policies

Regular School Attendance

School Absenteeism – For Parents & Community

Every Day Counts

Cancellation of enrolment

STUDENT ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT 2024

MARSDEN STATE HIGH SCHOOL

EVERYDAY

Daily UA text sent to parent/guardian by whole school attendance officer (WSAO) by 10am

If contact made, update ID Attend

If no response:

- email sent by 2pm (WSAO)
- YLAO to make phone call for out-of-home care students by 12pm (log contact on OneSchool)

DAY 3

On third day of UA with no contact, year level attendance officer (YLAO) to call parent/guardian

If contact made, update ID Attend and record contact on OS

If no response:

- YLAO to send 3 day absence letter by email
- Record attempted contacts on OS
- Update tracking sheet

DAY 6

On the sixth day of UA with no contact, YLAO to phone parent/guardian.

If contact made, update ID Attend and record contact on OS

If no response:

- Record attempted contacts on OS and tracking sheet
- YLAO to send 'soft letter' via registered post OR Home visit @ the discretion of YLDP/HOD.

DAY 11

On the eleventh day of UA with no contact, YLAO to phone parent/guardian

If contact made, update ID Attend and record contact on OS

If no response:

- Record attempted contacts on OS and tracking document
- YLAO inform YLHOD/DP.
- YLHOD/DP. Instructs WSAO to send 'form 4' by registered post & SMS

DAY 16

On the sixteenth day of UA with **no contact**, YLAO to notify DP. DP to liaise with AP. Inform Departures Admin Officer to make student inactive on ID Attend.

If concerned for student, DP to refer to: SERStudentSupportRequest@qed.qld.gov.au

EXPLAINED ABSENCES

After 6 days of explained absences YLAO calls home to check in

LESS THAN 50%

Week 2: YLAO sends letter of concern with support resources via email

Week 4: YLAO to send 'Soft letter' via registered post. Meeting scheduled and Attendance Improvement Plan created and uploaded to OneSchool

Week 6: Enforcement process commences if supportive options are completed and no improvement

>50 TO 85%

Week 3: Letter of concern with support resources via email

Week 6: YLAO to send 'Soft letter' via registered post. Meeting request & Attendance Improvement Plan created

Week 9: at the discretion of the DP, may commence enforcement of attendance process.

ENFORCEMENT OF ATTENDANCE (compulsory school age)

Form 4:

- **Requirements:** 6 weeks of <50% attendance without improvement OR >10 days in a row with no attendance
- **Action:** WSAO to send Form 4 letter and meeting request by registered post & SMS. Record all ID attend SMS & email contacts in bulk on OS

Form 5:

- **Requirements:** No improvement in attendance since receiving form 4 letter >10 days
- **Action:** WSAO to send form 5 letter and meeting request by registered post
- **No Improvement within 10 days:** DP to refer to South East Region by completing referral form and emailing to: SERStudentSupportRequest@qed.qld.gov.au. DP to commence General Briefing Note (GBN) for recommendation to prosecute

LATE TO SCHOOL

WSAO to send SMS message for late to school by 10am.

If contact made, update ID Attend .

If no response:

- Email sent by 2pm (WSAO)

YLAO to provide weekly reports of students late to school to YLCO.

YLCO follow up with students with 3 or more late to schools in a week

TRUANCY

- YLAO run inconsistency report and sends targeted emails to staff for verification
- YLAO records truancy on OS and issues consequence for first & second offence. Refers to YLHOD on third offence
- YLHOD follows up third offence and issues consequences

STAGES OF CANCELLATION (post compulsory school age)

Stage 1 Considerations:

- **Requirements:** low attendance; non-submission of assessment.
- **Warning letter:** YLHoD to send 'warning letter' via email. Monitor. If no improvement after two weeks issue stage 1.
- **Formal letter:** YLHoD to send Stage 1 Formal Letter and meeting request by registered post & SMS. Record all SMS & email contacts on OS. Support and intervention strategies put in place and signed of by parents, student and school.

Stage 2 Considerations:

- **Requirements:** not meeting support and interventions outlined in Stage 1 meeting
- **Warning Letter:** YLHoD to send 'warning letter' via email requesting review meeting for support and intervention. Monitor. If no improvement after two weeks issue stage 2 letter
- **Cancellation of Enrolment:** DP to liaise with AP prior to cancellation.