



TSA Independent School
 YOS Lawnton and YOS Lawnton (Riverview)
 (A Queensland Non-State Independent School)

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE FRAMEWORK AND PROCEDURE		CODE: ATTEND2024
Scope of Application:	Students, Parents/Carers and Staff	
Filing Instructions:	SharePoint: Independent Schools/MASTER SCHOOL FOLDER/School Policies, Procedures and Frameworks	
Related Procedures and Frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TSA School Enrolment Procedures • TSA School Positive Behaviour Framework • TSA School Restorative Justice Framework • TSA School Flexible Arrangements Procedure • TSA School Flexible Learning Framework • TSA School Continuous Engagement Framework • SM_YS_Model of Care Framework • Qld Govt Exemptions from Compulsory Schooling and Compulsory Participation Procedure 	
Associated Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Learning Plan • Attendance Agreement and Review Form 	

Change record / revision history:

Version	Prepared/ reviewed by	Date reviewed	Approved by	Authorised by	Review date
25.1	Helen Boardman	December 2018	Darren McGhee	Thomas Austin	December 2020
25.2	Helen Boardman	Amendments: 17/04/2020			December 2020
25.3	Helen Boardman	08/12/2020	Rish Lefterys	Rish Lefterys	December 2022
25.4	Riley Hore	June 2022	Helen Boardman	Helen Boardman	December 2023
25.5	Riley Hore	April 2024	Helen Boardman	School Principal	December 2025

Purpose

To specify the attendance requirements of students enrolled at TSA Independent School – YOS Lawnton and YOS Lawnton (Riverview).

Framework

As a Special Assistance School, TSA Independent School understands that many of its students have had attendance issues in the past which may be the reason for the student disengaging from previous education providers. TSA Independent School endeavours to work alongside our young people to increase their attendance to enable them to maintain their enrolment and thus complete their schooling.



It is important that students, staff and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school. TSA Independent School¹

- is committed to promoting the key messages of Every Day Counts
- believes all students should be enrolled at school and attend school for the required hours
- monitors, communicates and implements strategies to improve regular school attendance
- believes avoidably missing school 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.

Each parent/carer of a child who is of *compulsory school age* has the legal obligation to ensure their child is enrolled and attends a state school or a non-state school, on every school day for the educational program in which the child is enrolled, unless the parent has a reasonable excuse².

Each parent/carer of a young person in the *compulsory participation phase* has a legal obligation to ensure that the young person is participating full-time in an eligible option, unless the parent has a reasonable excuse.

TSA Independent School also recognises that at times, students will be required to leave school or not attend due to personal reasons. If this was to occur, it is TSA Independent School process to ensure that communication is maintained with that student, to ensure that they are safe and if they require any support and to identify any barriers preventing them returning to school.

Parents/carers comply with their compulsory schooling or compulsory participation obligation by providing a satisfactory reason for these absences, unless the student is an adult or it is not appropriate to contact the student's parents, in which case an explanation should be sought directly from the student. Parents should provide a reason for a child's absence as soon as possible after the absence.

¹ Qld Department of Education and Training Attendance Information Retrieved from: <https://education.qld.gov.au/initiatives-and-strategies/initiatives/every-day-counts>

² Department of Education and Training: Managing Student Absences and Enforcing Enrolment and Attendance, Retrieved from: <http://ppr.det.qld.gov.au/education/management/Pages/Managing-Student-Absences-and-Enforcing-Enrolment-and-Attendance-at-State-Schools.aspx>

Strategies to Maintain Attendance

Strategies to assist students to maintain their attendance include, but are not limited to:

- Having the students involved in the school community and what it looks like
- Providing a safe and secure space for them to attend
- Having positive and supportive relationships with peers and staff
- Listening to young people and what they need, to be able to attend
- Team Building exercises to increase their connectedness to the school community
- Linking their attendance with their aspirations through discussions and planning
- Following up students who have not been attending and discuss and implement ways to support the student to return to school



Reporting and Monitoring Attendance

TSA Independent School reports and monitors attendance through:

- Daily roll call
- Excel spread sheet which includes categories covering unexplained absences, explained absences, late reasons, flexible learning agreements and other learning (eg Tafe in schools programs)
- Input attendance data into SAMIS

Definitions³

Compulsory school age

(1) A child is of compulsory school age if the child is at least 6 years and 6 months, and less than 16 years.

(2) However, a child is no longer of compulsory school age if the child has completed year 10.

Obligation of parent regarding compulsory schooling

Each parent of a child who is of compulsory school age must ensure the child is enrolled at a State school or non-State school; and ensure the child attends the State school or non-State school, on every school day, for the educational program in which the child is enrolled, unless the parent has a reasonable excuse.

Meaning of compulsory participation phase

A young person's compulsory participation phase starts when s/he stops being of compulsory school age (i.e. turns 16 or completes Year 10 whichever comes first) and ends when the person:

- gains a Senior Certificate, Certificate III or Certificate IV or
- has participated in eligible options for 2 years after the person stopped being of compulsory school age or
- turns 17.

³ Department of Education and Training: Managing Student Absences and Enforcing Enrolment and Attendance, Retrieved from: <http://ppr.det.qld.gov.au/education/management/Pages/Managing-Student-Absences-and-Enforcing-Enrolment-and-Attendance-at-State-Schools.aspx>

Obligation of parent to ensure participation

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.

Eligible option

An eligible option is a recognised education or training program or course, offered by a recognised provider, which will enable a young person to gain a senior certificate and/or a Certificate I, II or III.

Responsibilities

School/ Staff

- Work with the student to meet their needs supporting them to attend school on the stated days
- Create a safe and secure school environment
- Follow up students that have not attended
- Use Trauma Informed Care and Restorative Justice strategies
- Develop a procedure for staff to follow for non-attendance
- Complete induction and attend staff training to implement this policy at the beginning of each year
- Inform parents of their legal obligation for attending
- When student attendance is becoming more erratic and affecting student learning, holding attendance review meetings with students and parent/carer to develop specific strategies and responsibilities regarding improved attendance. An Attendance Agreement and Review Form should be completed at this stage

Students

- Attend school on specified days
- Contact the school if unable to attend
- Discuss with staff, if there are any concerns regarding their attendance

Parents/Carers

- Encourage and assist their child to come to school
- Contact if the school is student is unable to attend
- Be a part of the process of reintegrating back into school

Implementation

TSA Independent School will work with each student to assist them to attend school the required days and implement a plan around any barriers that may be preventing attendance. This may involve regular attendance meetings to implement a plan around improved attendance. An Attendance Agreement and Review Form should be actioned as part of this planning process to improve student attendance.

This policy will be implemented with staff through induction, staff training and through the review process every two years.

TSA Independent School practice is also based around Restorative Justice and Trauma Informed Care. TSA Independent School focuses strongly on developing a trusting

relationship and creating a safe, psychologically informed, and secure space for the students to attend. This is further outlined in the Restorative Justice Framework and Positive Behaviour Framework and the TSA Youth Services Model of Care Framework.

Compliance and Monitoring

This Framework and Procedure will be readily accessible on Sharepoint and the school website

TSA Independent School will ensure that documentation is maintained and attendance records are completed. Any individual student information regarding attendance issues will be documented on SAMIS, with any relevant hard copy material being scanned into the student's electronic record.

TSA Independent School will report on attendance statistics and the strategies the school uses to promote and encourage attendance, to the community through the Annual General Report.

Regular attendance meetings will be held between the Manager of Student Support Services and the Youth Workers to track student attendance and develop appropriate strategies for students whose attendance continues to be a concern. From these meetings, a term Attendance Report is to be completed and discussed with the Principal at the end of each term.

Procedure

TSA Independent School students are required to attend school 5 days (unless on a flexible learning agreement). If they are unable to attend school, students or parent/carer should contact the school office on the day before school commences if possible or early on the day of non-attendance.

Attendance is to be discussed during the enrolment and Induction process and is reinforced in the:

- Student Charter of Rights and Responsibilities
- One Month Education Review Agreement
- Student Participation Agreement
- Flexible Learning Meetings

Detailed information regarding the enrolment process and associated forms can be located in the TSA School Enrolment Procedure

Through these discussions, referral should be made to the principles of:

1. Respect
2. Safe and Legal
3. Responsibility
4. Participation

As mentioned above in the framework, the following strategies are to be used to assist students to encourage and maintain their attendance:

- Include the students in the whole school and wider Corp community
- Provide a safe and secure space for them to attend
- Having positive and supportive relationships with peers and staff

- Listening to young people and what support they need to be able to attend
- Include team building exercises to increase the connectedness of the school community as part of the curriculum
- Through discussion, assist the student to create a link that their attendance may impact the outcome of their aspirations and goals
- Following up students who have not been attending and discuss and implement ways to support the student to return to school
- Discuss if an Exemption for Compulsory schooling or Compulsory Participation is required and follow procedures of Qld Govt for this process

Following up Non- Attendance

If a student has not been in touch with the School, the following process is to be followed:

- On the day of absence, a text message will be sent out asking parent/carer/independent student to contact us with a reason for absence and to advise us that the student is safe
- If non-attendance on the 2nd day, attempt to contact parent/carer/independent student again by phone, or contact next of kin to confirm they are safe
- If no attendance after 5 days, arrange with another youth worker to go to the student's home to confirm they are safe and if any support is required
- A doctor's certificate may be needed for longer periods of absence due to sickness
- If student is refusing to attend school after 10 consecutive school days, a case management meeting will be required with teacher, youth worker, student and parent/carer to:
 - Discuss options of returning to school if appropriate
 - Gain an understanding of why the student does not want to attend
 - Discuss any strategies that can be implemented to assist the student to return to school.
 - At this stage, an action plan should be developed to record strategies put in place with appropriate timeframes. The action plan is to be reviewed regularly and as needed to ensure adequate support is given to the student and parent/carer. The outcomes of the action plan should be recorded in SAMIS. This information should be recorded on the Attendance Agreement and Review Form
 - If physically returning to school campus is not in the best interests of the student at that time, strategies to support the student working on a more flexible timetable with reduced actual contact school hours until the student is emotionally prepared to increase time spent at the School campus, should be developed and documented in the action plan with outcomes recorded in SAMIS and on the documentation supported by the Flexible Learning Framework
- When negotiating attendance and re-engagement action plans with students, staff involved should refer to our SEL Framework and use trauma informed/strength based practices to support all stakeholders involved in the action planning process. Staff could also refer to our Flexible Learning Framework for further guidance if appropriate

- If the student refuses any support and continues to remain absent from school, consultation is required with the Manager of Student Support Services and School Principal regarding continued engagement/enrolment in School

