**Rationale**

All schools in Queensland are committed to providing safe and supportive learning environments for all students which address their educational needs.

Clontarf Beach State School expects each parent of a child who is of compulsory school age to ensure that the child is enrolled and attends school every day ready for work unless prevented by reasonable circumstances from doing so. School readiness includes having school uniform, food for the day and equipment required for learning.

The CBSS attendance policy aims to maximise participation in learning programs by all students. It also aims to explore the critical areas which need to be addressed to assist students and families to meet the 94% school attendance goal.

**School community beliefs about the importance of attending school**

It is important that students, staff and parents/carers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school. Clontarf Beach State School

- 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 truanting 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.

**Responsibilities**

**School responsibilities include:**

- promoting high expectations of student attendance
- sending clear messages to students and parents that attendance is vital
- communicating consistently to students and the school community through the website, newsletters and in the school’s enrolment package
- identifying absences quickly
- following up on absences promptly
- having consistent and effective follow-up processes for unexplained student absences
- ensuring timely follow-up as a main preventative strategy in reducing absenteeism
- analysing school attendance data to identify absenteeism trends and individual students with high levels of absenteeism
- investigating absentee rates and their relationship to factors such as the day of the week, the class/year level and particular gender/cultural groups
• developing a safe and supportive school environment that promotes positive relationships and includes the implementation of programs which develop social and emotional skills, peer tutoring and mentoring and anti-bullying strategies

• establishing positive home-school relationships to assist parents to support their child’s attendance at school

• collaborating with other agencies and implementing appropriate strategies/support mechanisms, including Queensland Police and local non-government organisations, to address the trends or support individual students and their families to encourage attendance

Responsibility of Parents/Guardians
At CBSS we expect parents/guardians to:

• actively support the school in ensuring their child (ren) attend school every day of the year unless for illness or extenuating circumstances

• inform the school of all absences via note, email, SMS, phone call or in person as soon as possible (preferably on the day of the absence)

• avoid keeping their children away from school for birthdays, shopping, visiting family or friends, if they sleep in, minor check ups or care such as hair cuts.

• give forewarning of known future absences, in particular long term absences

• provide a note, SMS or phone the office if their child (ren) are late for school and remind their child (ren) that they must report to the office where they will be signed in before proceeding to class

• provide notification prior to any planned early departure from school and remind their child (ren) that they still must report to the office where they will be signed out before their departure

• support the school in applying detentions for students who truant during any school day.

Section 18 of the Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2006 allows a principal to grant a student early departure for medical treatment, dental treatment or specialised instruction. However, this regulation does not include shopping, visiting family or friends, birthdays, parent in the vicinity, avoid traffic congestion, haircuts and minor check ups as reasons for giving leave of absence.

Responsibilities of Students
At CBSS we expect students to:

• attend every day of school throughout the year and come ready to work to the best of their ability

• ensure that their parents/guardians provide them with a note, SMS or phone the office to explain their absences

• pass notes from parents to their classroom teachers to explain absences

• sign in at the office if they come to school late and present a note from their parent/guardian to explain lateness

• remain at school for the entire day and only depart prior to the end of the school day through the office with a parent/guardian who signs them out with approval from the principal
Responsibilities of Teachers

At CBSS we expect teachers to:

- mark rolls diligently and accurately every morning and afternoon taking account of variations to school routines (eg. district sports, music workshops, ACE programs, etc.)
- ensure that paper rolls marked by relief teachers are entered electronically and the paper copy is sent to the school office for archiving. (Teachers to sign when entered electronically.)
- promote high expectations of student attendance and monitor student absences including patterns of absences
- develop attendance reinforcement strategies to promote high attendance
- employ pro-active and supportive strategies with students who demonstrate an unwillingness to attend school
- contact parents/guardians if student has returned from an absence with no explanation
- amend the reason code in the electronic roll when unexplained absences are resolved
- record all discussions and phone calls regarding absences on OneSchool in Contacts
- discuss concerns regarding ongoing absences and unreasonable excuses with the Principal
- advise SWO of unresolved absences in excess of three continuous days by emailing the SWO with ‘3 days’ in the subject line
- advise Principal of continuing absences after initial conversations with parents/guardians have taken place.

Responsibilities of the Principal

- Inform parents of their legal obligations about enrolment and attendance
- implement strategies to manage student enrolment, absences, chronic absenteeism, school refusal and truancy using the Guidelines to address chronic absenteeism, school refusal and truancy and the Every Day Counts materials
- monitor student absences and identify when a student is absent for three or more consecutive days, or where there is a pattern of persistent unexplained absences, or where a student's attendance rate is reasonably considered unsatisfactory
- take reasonable steps to follow-up unexplained absences as soon as possible, or ideally within three days of the absence if teachers have been unable to do so
- continue to work with regions and other local resources to engage with the student and their family with the aim of returning the student to school
- follow appropriate processes for enforcing parental obligation in regard to:
  - enrolment
  - attendance
  - Compulsory participation.
**Strategies**

At Clontarf Beach State School we promote 94% attendance by:

- Promoting a positive and supportive school environment through the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) program and the House Cup
- Ensuring consistent follow up of absences with parents/guardians
- Working with students and families to reduce absenteeism
- Incentives for attendance success

**Responses to absences**

At Clontarf Beach State School, we are committed to achieving the following targets in improving attendance:

- 94% attendance of all students

Our school offers support to families to ensure the child’s attendance improves. All efforts, including records of meetings and conversations are documented in OneSchool (eg. phone calls, home visits, contact with local police, referral to GO or other support workers).

When a student is absent without explanation for 3 days or a pattern of absences has been identified, CBSS will take the following actions:

- Class teacher will notify SWO
- SWO will contact parents, verify reason for absence and inform class teacher to record in OneSchool
- SWO will monitor for ongoing student absences
- SWO will meet with principal weekly to discuss student absences with followup procedures implemented as required
- SWO will produce weekly reports to track student attendance
- Principal/Deputy Principal will support and offer assistance to Pan Pacific families and Indigenous families where necessary
- Meeting with parents/guardians

At CBSS the consequences or impacts of unexplained or unauthorised absences may include the following:

- Detention
- Referral to student services team
- Referral to GO and/or outside agencies
- Meeting with parents/guardians
- Developing an Individual Attendance Plan for students
- Formal processes as per Education Queensland policy up to and including referral by the Director General for prosecution under the Education (General Provisions) Act.
**Reporting and monitoring attendance**

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

- Telephone (38975888) / email to the school office (absences@clonbeacss.eq.edu.au)
- SMS phone text to 0413 314 056
- Signed / dated note with the student
- In person to the office or class teacher

**Some related resources**

*Every Day Counts*

*Departmental Policies*

**SMS-PR-017: Enforcement of Compulsory Schooling and Compulsory Participation Phase**

**SMS-PR-029: Managing Student Absences**

**SMS-PR-036: Roll Marking in State Schools**