



Darling Heights State School

ANNUAL REPORT 2016

Queensland State School Reporting

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Department of Education and Training



Contact Information

Postal address:	Wuth Street Toowoomba 4350
Phone:	(07) 4636 8333
Fax:	(07) 4636 8300
Email:	principal@darlheigss.eq.edu.au
Webpages:	Additional reporting information pertaining to Queensland state schools is located on the My School website and the Queensland Government data website.
Contact Person:	The Principal – Mr Mark Creedon

School Overview

Darling Heights State School – "Grow with Knowledge: Many Paths, Many Futures".

Darling Heights State School is in the south west quadrant of Toowoomba, near the University of Southern Queensland.

The school provides comprehensive education to approximately 680 students from Prep to Year 6 in a co-educational setting.

Our school has a diverse and culturally rich population. There are thirty-one languages spoken at home by our families. Over 325 of our students have a language background other than English. This population includes one hundred students who are from a refugee background. Most other of our overseas students are children of families studying at the University of Southern Queensland.

Our school hosts a dedicated English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) Program. This feature of our school was extended in 2013 when an Intensive Language Program was instigated to provide focussed supports for newly arrived non-English speaking students.

The school support system also features a Special Education Program which provides support for 51 students each of whom have a special need that requires supporting.

We are truly a multicultural school with acceptance, tolerance and understanding of others being features that we celebrate throughout the year. This is also reflected in our value statements: "Grow with Knowledge; Many Paths, Many Futures."

Darling Heights State School offers programs covering the Australian Curriculum with all classes offering core literacy and numeracy blocks and programs to encourage higher achieving students, extension literacy groups, enrichment programs, extension modules and extra-curricular offerings.

The structure of the school sees three broad sub-schools: Junior, Intermediate and Senior Schools. The school facilities include a state-of-the-art library, large multifunction hall with an out-of-school-hours program and large grassed play areas including shaded play equipped areas, practice nets, oval and an outdoor multipurpose court. All classrooms are fitted with digital technologies including interactive white boards. The school is well-resourced with computers including three computer labs, Wi-Fi, class computers and iPads. The school's music and physical education specialists teach all classes and provide many extension opportunities. Opportunities exist to participate in choir, stage and concert bands, Eisteddfod, intra- and inter-school sport and instrumental music including woodwind, brass and percussion.

We strive to provide a happy, enjoyable and safe student learning environment and encourage and maintain parental and community involvement in our school.

Principal's Foreword

Introduction

School Progress towards its goals in 2016

The school improvement agenda priorities from 2016 are as follows:

- **Implement a School Wide Pedagogical Framework featuring "Explicit Teaching".**
 - A school based 'Explicit Instruction (EI) Coach' was employed to support the professional development of teachers and teacher aides in relation to the 16 elements of Explicit Instruction. The EI coach implemented workshops to assist teaching staff in understanding the content, she modelled the planning, teaching and reflecting process to teachers, co-planned and co-taught to support teachers in developing these skills and provided feedback to support teachers in further refining their craft.
 - In relation to increasing the number of collective responses, (active participation) greatly increased over the course of the project.
- **Moving Literacy Forward—Embed Reading Comprehension strategies and processes.**
 - A representative team from across the school was developed to assist in updating the Reading Program. This was successfully completed and staff were upskilled in the language and the requirements of the program.
- **Commence STEM & Digital Technologies understanding using "Maker Space" as a driver.**
 - Students in Years 4 – 6 participated in Maker Space lessons. A number of teachers visited Darling Heights to learn how Maker Space was being implemented to assist them in developing their own plans for implementation.
- **Enhance teacher Data & Analysis Skills to focus on precision & differentiation in teaching.**
 - The leadership team participated in the beginning phase of the 'Faces on the Data' workshops conducted by Lyn Sharratt. This assisted the leadership team in refining the data collection practices at Darling Heights. Staff successfully designed and completed a data wall for their year level and teachers have participated in professional conversations about where students are operating in terms of their reading level and what subsequent teachers need to teach children.

Future Outlook

Darling Heights State School staff continue to have a sharp and narrow focus to further extend and embed the following improvement agenda items:

Curriculum/Teaching Practice:

- Embed our school wide pedagogical framework featuring “Explicit Instruction”.
- Moving Literacy Forward – Embed reading comprehension strategies and processes.
- Refine teacher Data and Analysis Skills to focus on precision and differentiation in teaching.
- Extend STEM and Digital Technologies understanding, using “Maker Space” as a driver.

Leadership/School Capacity:

- Celebrate professional learning team successes that enhance school practice.
- Introduce *Swivls* to the “Coaching and Feedback” processes across the school.
- Use PBL as the focus for skilling children about Respectful Relationships.
- Deliver, successfully, “Investing 4 Success” programs.

Students/School/Community:

- Provide further opportunities for parent engagement.
- Extend School/Community Engagement Officer’s roles.
- Continue and extend the Pre-Prep Playgroup programs.

The following table outlines specific targets that accompany each of these focal areas:

School Improvement Agenda Item	Target
Embed our School Wide Pedagogical Framework featuring “Explicit Instruction”	100% of teachers are implementing Explicit Instruction Framework within classrooms.
Moving Literacy Forward – Embedding Reading Comprehension Strategies and Processes	100% of classroom teachers understand and successfully implement the DHSS Reading Program. Increase the number of students achieving an A-C grade in English to 70%.
Refining teacher Data & Analysis Skills to focus on precision & differentiation in teaching	100% of classroom teachers have a functioning data wall in their area.
Celebrate Professional Learning Team Successes that embrace school practice	Every Year Level group of teachers operate as a highly functioning professional team.
Introduce <i>Swivls</i> to the “Coaching and Feedback” processes across the school	25% of teachers engaged with using <i>Swivls</i> to enhance the “Coaching and Feedback” process.
Extend School/Community Engagement Officer’s roles	Student attendance to reach 95%.

The leadership team will monitor progress to assist in determining whether or not these agenda items need to be carried forward to 2018, otherwise it is anticipated they will be achieved by the end of 2017.

Our School at a Glance

School Profile

Coeducational or single sex:	Coeducational
Independent Public School:	No
Year levels offered in 2016:	Prep Year - Year 6

Student enrolments for this school:

	Total	Girls	Boys	Indigenous	Enrolment Continuity (Feb – Nov)
2014	630	303	327	56	90%
2015*	650	330	320	59	91%
2016	654	339	315	79	90%

Student counts are based on the Census (August) enrolment collection.

*From 2015, data for all state high schools include Year 7 students. Prior to 2015, only state high schools offering Year 7 had these students included in their counts.

In 2016, there were no students enrolled in a pre-Prep** program.

** pre-Prep is a kindergarten program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, living across 35 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, in the year before school (<http://deta.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/families/pre-prep-indigenous.html>).

Characteristics of the Student Body

Overview

Darling Heights State School is situated very close to the University of Southern Queensland with a 2016 maximum enrolment of 660 Primary students. 95 students were enrolled in Prep and 39 in our Special Education Facility. In all, our school offered a comprehensive education from Prep through to Year 6 in a co-educational setting which featured 29 co-educational classes.

In terms of boys and girls, our student body is balanced. In 2016 we had slightly more b/g enrolled in Years 5 and 6 with a higher percentage of b to g in Years 1 and 2. During any year, our enrolment from Day 8 can grow up to 10%. We receive a number of student enrolments, many international, from parents who are studying at the University of Southern Queensland. USQ does not commence lectures until late February and we also gain enrolment from those commencing study in Semester 2.

Of our students,

- 356 have identified that they are from other cultures.
- 270 children indicate they are born overseas.
- 329 are students who have English as a Second Language or Dialect. Of these students, 106 have been given refugee status in Australia.
- 67 of the EAL/D students were at DHSS because they had a parent studying at USQ

Average Class Sizes

The following table shows the average class size information for each phase of schooling.

AVERAGE CLASS SIZES			
Phase	2014	2015*	2016
Prep – Year 3	25	22	22
Year 4 – Year 7	26	27	23
Year 8 – Year 10			
Year 11 – Year 12			

*From 2015, data for all state high schools include Year 7 students. Prior to 2015, only state high schools offering Year 7 had these students included in their counts.



Curriculum Delivery

Our Approach to Curriculum Delivery

- The school is divided into three Sub-Schools supported by specialist departments in order to best serve the diverse needs of students. All sub-schools offer Core Literacy and Numeracy blocks with specialised options programs to enhance learning at the various levels. The Junior and Intermediate areas offer departmental reading programs. We run a fledgling program to encourage higher achieving students in the school. This includes extension literacy groups in the Junior School, an enrichment program in the Intermediate School and extension modules in the Senior School as well as extra-curricular offerings as teacher time allows.
- The school's Music Specialist teaches classes from Junior to Senior School. Opportunities exist for students to participate in choir, stage and concert bands, eisteddfod, song festival and numerous public performances. An Instrumental Music Teacher provides weekly lessons for woodwind, brass and percussion.
- In general, our learning framework consists of our curriculum framework with its core learnings across the Learning Areas providing the knowledge and skills essential for all students. Our Whole School Literacy Plan provides the core for a developmental reading, oral and written literacy program across all the year levels which is aimed at meeting individual student needs.
- Our whole school ICT for Learning Agreement sets out the school's direction for the use of technologies, including computers.
- In 2015, there were no students enrolled in a departmentally funded Pre-Prep Playgroup program. We did however host Pre-Prep Playgroup programs for up to 60 students per week. These programs were school funded and were designed to engage our families before they start school. We were only able to host 2 programs per week and had waiting lists as they were very popular. These programs have been hugely successful and will continue in 2017.

Co-curricular Activities

- Children in the Preparatory Year to Year Three participate in day excursions to venues such as Amaroo Environmental Field Studies Centre at Kleinton and Jondaryan Woolshed.
- Year 5 and 6 students undertake trips that alternate between the Sunshine Coast and Canberra.
- Our school offers children from Year 4 and above, the opportunity to be in School Choirs, Concert and Stage Bands operated through the Instrumental Music Program.
- Year 3 and Year 4 children participate in an Intra-School sporting program on a Thursday Afternoon and all students in Years 5 and 6 can participate in an inter-school sporting program on a Friday afternoon.
- Our Chess Club has allowed children to show their talents on the Regional stage with individuals and School Teams participating in Toowoomba and Darling Downs Tournaments.
- Homework and Learning Clubs operate in various areas of the school.

How Information and Communication Technologies are used to Assist Learning

Computer labs are established in the Library, Intermediate Area and Senior Area. Each classroom has two or three computers. Each computer is connected to a server and the Internet. An Internet User Agreement Form is sought from parents before children have access. Students frequently use computers to enhance their learning.

All classrooms have Interactive Whiteboards installed as a result of several programs from which we sourced funding in previous years. Staff have become proficient with the use of this exceptional technology and ongoing PD and training in the use of Interactive Whiteboards is ensuring teachers are gaining proficiency.

All teachers have been provided with an I-Pad and Professional Development on the opportunities this technology provides teaching and learning in our classrooms.

Technology is now seen as a tool to assist learning and is used as such.

An extensive infrastructure and cabling upgrade was completed in 2014 which has ensured greater speed and access for our students as they use the equipment we have.

Staff discussions continue to focus on how we can better cater for the "STEM" initiatives and implementation of the Digital Technologies curriculum as outlined in the Australian Curriculum.

Social Climate

Overview

In terms of the "Social Climate" of Darling Heights State School, one needs to look at the support provided to parents and children alike. A Guidance Officer, Speech Language Pathologist, EAL/D Advisory Teachers and a Chaplain are all part of the School and are actively supporting students and parents. Co-operative Religious Instruction is taught in most classes, except Prep, once a week, by volunteer visiting Catechists. The supportive and caring nature of the school environment has a very positive impact on the morale of students and staff alike.

Our School Chaplaincy Program is a feature of the support that we are able to provide all members of our community.

Our Staff and Student Well-being Policy ensures we focus on the social and emotional components of our people and this has ensured we have an exceptionally friendly and supportive school environment where the climate features happy and well supported children, staff and parents.

Darling Heights SS is a Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) school. Members of this team are representatives from each area of the school and communicate key information and strategies, discussed at meetings, to staff members in their area. Whole school data and trends are discussed and plans to support students in making positive behaviour choices are discussed and determined.

Parent, Student and Staff Satisfaction

Parent opinion survey

Performance measure			
Percentage of parents/caregivers who agree [#] that:	2014	2015	2016
their child is getting a good education at school (S2016)	100%	100%	100%
this is a good school (S2035)	95%	98%	97%
their child likes being at this school* (S2001)	98%	100%	100%
their child feels safe at this school* (S2002)	98%	100%	100%
their child's learning needs are being met at this school* (S2003)	98%	100%	100%
their child is making good progress at this school* (S2004)	100%	100%	100%
teachers at this school expect their child to do his or her best* (S2005)	98%	98%	100%
teachers at this school provide their child with useful feedback about his or her school work* (S2006)	98%	94%	100%
teachers at this school motivate their child to learn* (S2007)	100%	98%	100%
teachers at this school treat students fairly* (S2008)	95%	96%	97%
they can talk to their child's teachers about their concerns* (S2009)	98%	98%	100%
this school works with them to support their child's learning* (S2010)	93%	93%	100%
this school takes parents' opinions seriously* (S2011)	93%	91%	97%
student behaviour is well managed at this school* (S2012)	91%	100%	94%
this school looks for ways to improve* (S2013)	98%	100%	100%
this school is well maintained* (S2014)	95%	100%	100%

Student opinion survey

Performance measure			
Percentage of students who agree [#] that:	2014	2015	2016
they are getting a good education at school (S2048)	97%	100%	97%
they like being at their school* (S2036)	95%	99%	95%
they feel safe at their school* (S2037)	95%	98%	96%
their teachers motivate them to learn* (S2038)	94%	100%	99%
their teachers expect them to do their best* (S2039)	98%	100%	98%
their teachers provide them with useful feedback about their school work* (S2040)	92%	99%	95%
teachers treat students fairly at their school* (S2041)	91%	93%	83%
they can talk to their teachers about their concerns* (S2042)	90%	93%	84%
their school takes students' opinions seriously* (S2043)	91%	91%	89%
student behaviour is well managed at their school* (S2044)	84%	86%	86%
their school looks for ways to improve* (S2045)	96%	100%	96%
their school is well maintained* (S2046)	92%	98%	96%
their school gives them opportunities to do interesting things* (S2047)	98%	98%	95%

Staff opinion survey

Performance measure			
Percentage of school staff who agree [#] that:	2014	2015	2016
they enjoy working at their school (S2069)	97%	100%	100%
they feel that their school is a safe place in which to work (S2070)	99%	100%	99%
they receive useful feedback about their work at their school (S2071)	91%	94%	91%
they feel confident embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives across the learning areas (S2114)	90%	98%	100%
students are encouraged to do their best at their school (S2072)	100%	100%	99%
students are treated fairly at their school (S2073)	100%	100%	99%
student behaviour is well managed at their school (S2074)	94%	97%	96%
staff are well supported at their school (S2075)	93%	96%	92%
their school takes staff opinions seriously (S2076)	90%	97%	93%
their school looks for ways to improve (S2077)	97%	99%	100%
their school is well maintained (S2078)	93%	99%	100%
their school gives them opportunities to do interesting things (S2079)	90%	94%	93%

* Nationally agreed student and parent/caregiver items

'Agree' represents the percentage of respondents who Somewhat Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree with the statement.

DW = Data withheld to ensure confidentiality.

Parent and community engagement

Involving parents begins with being welcomed and involved in their child's classroom and the activities of this classroom. Building a relationship with teachers is vital and all teachers welcome the opportunity to get to know parents and discuss progress of children in the classroom. Opportunities for parent involvement exist in all classrooms with teachers requesting various levels of support in a variety of activities.

Parents can also become involved in activities of our P&C Association all of which significantly contribute to the effectiveness of our school while providing parents an opportunity to network. One such successful activity is the Craft Group which meets weekly to make items which then become the stock for the Mothers' and Fathers' Day Stalls run for the children to purchase gifts for these special days.

A Principal Parent Forum was instigated in 2015. This Forum seeks to have a representative from each class who then collectively meet with the Principal, twice per term. The Forum is then presented with topics and items that are discussed, taken away to gain further ideas from parents and then brought back to share at the next Forum. Collectively, school staff and P&C members encourage parents and families to become involved in our school and the activities of their children.

Teachers maintain open communication with parents, especially when discussing any adjustments that a student may require. These conversations take place in the following ways:

- Parent-teacher interviews
- Parent-teacher meetings to develop and/or update Individual Curriculum Plans
- Teacher information sessions – these are held by classroom teachers on their expectations and also to inform parents of the requirements of support/enrichment programs in which the students are invited to participate.

Our School's Parent and Community Engagement Officer actively works to build strong and effective relationships with parents across the school. A number of events/experiences are organised to value and welcome parents and community members. Some of these include:

- International Women's Day celebration with key guest speakers
- English classes for non-English speaking women
- Chess
- Craft groups
- Women's friendship groups

One only has to visit our school at arrival and departure times to see how welcomed and engaged parents are at Darling Heights State School.

Respectful relationships programs

Darling Heights State School's Responsible Behaviour Plan is centered on 4 STAR values, these include:

- Safety
- Thinking
- Acting Responsibly
- Respect

The Deputy Principal and Parent and Community Engagement Officer undertook the initial stages of the 'White Ribbon' training during 2016 with a view to completing this training during 2017.

Particular focus has been given to the notion of 'Respectful Relationships' with the school participating in White Ribbon day by wearing a white shirt, acknowledging the importance of this through a whole school assembly with student pledge shared and a photo of the whole school standing in the shape of a white ribbon.

Staff are developing ideas to continue and extend student understanding of the importance of Respectful Relationships during 2017.

The school has developed and implemented a program or programs that focus on appropriate, respectful and healthy relationships.

School Disciplinary Absences

The following table shows the count of incidents for students recommended for each type of school disciplinary absence reported at the school.

SCHOOL DISCIPLINARY ABSENCES			
Type	2014*	2015**	2016
Short Suspensions – 1 to 5 days	0	5	12
Long Suspensions – 6 to 20 days	0	1	0
Exclusions	0	0	0
Cancellations of Enrolment	0	0	0

* Caution should be used when comparing post 2013 SDA data as amendments to EGPA disciplinary provisions and changes in methodology created time series breaks in 2014 and 2015.

**From 2015, Exclusion represents principal decisions to exclude rather than recommendations for exclusion. From 2015 where a principal decided not to exclude, a small number of recommendations for exclusions have been counted as a long suspension. Exclusions, Cancellations and Long & Charge Suspensions may be upheld or set aside through an appeals process.

Environmental Footprint

Reducing the school's environmental footprint

Of our School Values, Respect is one and includes Respect for our Built and Natural Environment.

Featuring as part of this are efforts of staff and children to reduce the Environmental Footprint we leave.

Water saving devices have been installed in all toilets as has a solar panel system which generates electricity and feeds it back into the system. Children are regularly made aware of the need to conserve the resources we have, especially those of water and electricity.

The following Data is sourced from the school's annual utilities return and is reliant on the accuracy of these returns.

ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT INDICATORS		
Years	Electricity kWh	Water kL
2013-2014	199,658	0
2014-2015	226,735	
2015-2016		

The consumption data is compiled from sources including ERM, Ergon reports and utilities data entered into OneSchool by each school. The data provides an indication of the consumption trend in each of the utility categories which impact on the school's environmental footprint.

School Funding

School income broken down by funding source

School income, reported by financial year accounting cycle using standardized national methodologies and broken down by funding source is available via the *My School* website at <http://www.myschool.edu.au/>.

To access our income details, click on the *My School* link above. You will then be taken to the *My School* website with the following 'Find a school' text box.

Find a school

School name

Suburb, town or postcode

Sector:

Government

Non-government

Where it states '**School name**', type in the name of the school you wish to view, select the school from the drop-down list and select <GO>. Read and follow the instructions on the next screen; you will be asked to confirm that you are not a robot then by clicking continue, you acknowledge that you have read, accepted and agree to the **Terms of Use** and **Privacy Policy** before being given access to the school's *profile* webpage.

School financial information is available by selecting '**School finances**' in the menu box in the top left corner of the school's profile webpage. If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the school for a paper copy of income by funding source.

Our Staff Profile

Workforce Composition

Staff composition, including Indigenous staff

2016 WORKFORCE COMPOSITION			
Description	Teaching Staff	Non-Teaching Staff	Indigenous Staff
Headcounts	54	46	<5
Full-time Equivalents	50	31	<5

Qualification of all teachers

TEACHER* QUALIFICATIONS	
Highest level of qualification	Number of classroom teachers and school leaders at the school
Doctorate	
Masters	3
Graduate Diploma etc.**	10
Bachelor degree	38
Diploma	8
Certificate	

*Teaching staff includes School Leaders

**Graduate Diploma etc. includes Graduate Diploma, Bachelor Honours Degree, and Graduate Certificate.

Professional Development

Expenditure On and Teacher Participation in Professional Development

The total funds expended on teacher professional development in 2016 were \$25 500.

The major professional development initiatives are as follows:

- o Southern Vale Cluster Professional Development Attendance by teaching staff
- o Speech Sounds Pics (SSP) training for teachers and teacher aides
- o First Aid and CPR training for teacher aides
- o Work Place Health and Safety Training
- o Collaborative Empowerment with Mackay schools – Leadership Team
- o Explicit Instruction Professional Development of the 16 elements – Teachers and Teacher Aides
- o Update and Clarify Reading Program demands and language

The proportion of the teaching staff involved in professional development activities during 2016 was 100%.

Staff Attendance and Retention

Staff attendance

AVERAGE STAFF ATTENDANCE (%)			
Description	2014	2015	2016
Staff attendance for permanent and temporary staff and school leaders.	97%	96%	96%

Proportion of Staff Retained from the Previous School Year

From the end of the previous school year, 97% of staff was retained by the school for the entire 2016.

Performance of Our Students

Key Student Outcomes

Student Attendance

Student attendance

The table below shows the attendance information for all students at this school:

STUDENT ATTENDANCE 2016			
Description	2014	2015	2016
The overall attendance rate* for the students at this school (shown as a percentage).	93%	93%	94%
The attendance rate for Indigenous students at this school (shown as a percentage).	87%	90%	87%

*The student attendance rate is generated by dividing the total of full-days and part-days that students attended, and comparing this to the total of all possible days for students to attend, expressed as a percentage.

The overall student attendance rate in 2016 for all Queensland Primary schools was 93%.

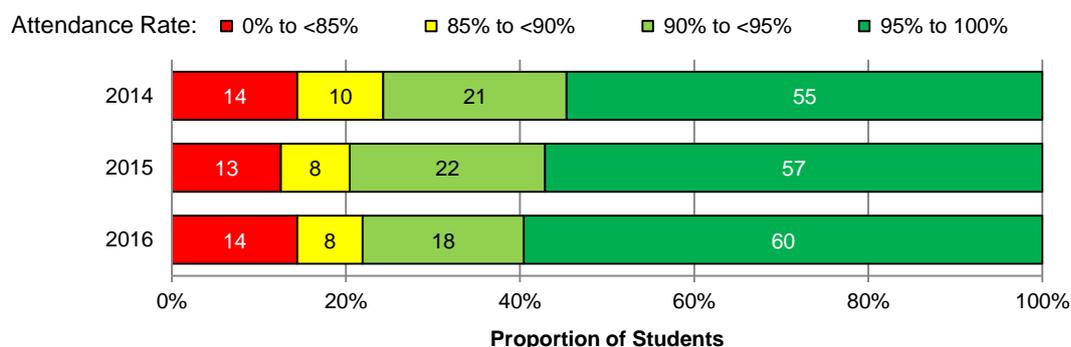
AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE* (%) FOR EACH YEAR LEVEL													
Year Level	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
2014	92%	93%	94%	92%	94%	92%	94%	95%					
2015	93%	92%	93%	94%	94%	94%	94%						
2016	93%	92%	93%	94%	96%	93%	94%	DW					

*Attendance rates effectively count attendance for every student for every day of attendance in Semester 1. The student attendance rate is generated by dividing the total of full-days and part-days that students attended, and comparing this to the total of all possible days for students to attend, expressed as a percentage.

DW = Data withheld to ensure confidentiality.

Student Attendance Distribution

The proportions of students by attendance range:



Description of how non-attendance is managed by the school

Non-attendance is managed in state schools in line with the DET procedures, *Managing Student Absences and Enforcing Enrolment and Attendance at State Schools* and *Roll Marking in State Schools*, which outline processes for managing and recording student attendance and absenteeism.

Parents of children who show regular unexplained absence are contacted and discussions held on how regular attendance can be achieved.

In 2014 and to support targeted special interest groups, we provided Attendance Certificates to students who achieved 90% plus attendance in each term.

From 2014, where regular absence or lateness occurs, families receive a "post card" showing just how much school their child/ren are/will miss.

In 2016 and to continue in 2017, all students will receive a certificate if they attend greater than 95% in the semester.

Sandwich boards, school newsletter items and notices on our school signs regularly remind parents of the importance of attendance at school every day.

Key strategies used to assist increased attendance include:

- Communication with parents regarding concerns about attendance
- Celebration with parents as attendance patterns improve
- Purchase and implementation of SMS system to inform parents of unexplained absences
- Celebration of great attendance records at the end of each term through presentation of a certificate
- Tracking of individual students' attendance in class by classroom teachers

NAPLAN

Our reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy results for the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 are available via the My School website at <http://www.myschool.edu.au/>.

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School NAPLAN information is available by selecting '**NAPLAN**' in the menu box in the top left corner of the school's profile webpage. If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the school for a paper copy of our school's NAPLAN results.