

6. INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

Frequently asked questions about attendance
Did you know ...?



**ATTENDANCE
IMPROVEMENT
PACKAGE**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT ATTENDANCE

Is regular attendance important?

Yes, from the very first day! If children and students miss the basic skills in the early years of schooling they often experience learning difficulties later on. It has been shown that irregular attendance in the early school years can lead to poor patterns of attendance in primary and then secondary years.

Do I have to send my child to preschool and school?

Yes. All children who are enrolled in an educational setting are expected to attend on a regular basis.

Do I have to send my child every day?

Yes, unless:

- The child is too sick to leave the house.
- The child has an infectious disease like chicken pox, mumps or measles.
- The child has an injury preventing movement around school.
- The child is going with his/her parents/caregivers on a family holiday that cannot be arranged during school holidays. This is arranged with the principal prior to the absence by applying for a school exemption.
- The principal is provided with any genuine and acceptable reason preventing the child's attendance.
- A medical or dental appointment could not be made out of school hours (wherever possible, appointments should be made out of school hours).

Must I notify the preschool or school if my child has been away?

Yes. On your child's return, a note must be supplied to cover the days missed. You are also encouraged to contact the preschool or school if your child will be away. If your child has seen a medical practitioner (eg doctor, dentist) a note or appointment card from the practitioner will help explain the absence.

Should I notify the preschool or school if my child refuses to go?

Yes. You should immediately contact the preschool or school to seek assistance.

What assistance is available?

There are many staff members who can assist you if attendance is an issue for your child. You can discuss your concerns with your child's teacher or preschool director (in preschool); or class teacher, school counsellor, year level manager, deputy or principal



(in school). If the problem persists, Student Attendance Counsellors, based at district offices, can provide additional support to school students and their parents/caregivers to maintain regular patterns of school attendance.

DID YOU KNOW ...?

- Missing one day a week of school from reception to year 10 means missing two years and one term of schooling.
- There is a direct correlation between attendance and achievement.
- Frequent absences make it difficult for teachers who have to continually re-teach information and skills.
- Being half an hour late to school each day from reception to year 10 equals missing one year and one-and-a-half terms of schooling.
- Patterns of attendance/absence are set up in the early years of schooling.
- Being absent five days a term from reception to year 10 adds up to more than one year of missed schooling.
- Students who are frequently absent from school are over-represented in the juvenile justice system.
- Girls are absent more often than boys.
- Poor attendance makes it difficult for students to form positive relationships with their peers.
- Students who are frequently absent from school are more likely to end up homeless.
- Indigenous students are absent twice as much as non-indigenous students.
- Girls who are frequently absent from school are over-represented in the statistics for teenage pregnancies.
- Research shows that students who are often absent from school are likely to earn less than their peers as adults.



