

# ATTENDANCE INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

*Every single day at school is important for your child*

## Frequently Asked Questions:

- **Does my child have to attend school?** YES, if your child is of compulsory school age which, in WA, means from Pre-primary to Year 12. In specific circumstances exemptions from school to undertake employment or training are approved.
- **Must I send my child to school every day?** YES, unless your child is unwell, has an infectious disease or the Principal is provided with a genuine and acceptable reason. Attending school regularly helps students develop confidence, social skills, resilience and teamwork. Families are encouraged to take holidays in school holiday times.
- **What should I do if my child refuses to go to school?** Contact your school immediately and seek support. Your child's school has qualified and skilled people to support you in getting your child to school.
- **A day or two off school now and again isn't a concern, is it?** YES, it is. Any time off school makes it harder for your child to build on their learning. Every day is important to be at school so that learning isn't interrupted and friendships are sustained
- **What should I do if my child has been away from school?** Provide a genuine reason to the school explaining the absence, as soon as possible. Provide a reason to the school for any absences your child has, via phone, sms, email or in writing. To get the most out of school and learning, children need to attend school every day.
- **Regular days off school in the early years is OK and isn't a concern, is it?** YES it is. Children develop attendance patterns early and these follow into secondary school. Research indicates that positive attendance patterns need to start early. Be a role model and discuss the value of going to school with your child.

## What is risked by not attending school – from Primary school to Year 12

Absent average 5 days a term	=	90% attendance rate	=	1 year of school missed
Absent average 1 day per week	=	80% attendance rate	=	2 years of school missed
Absent average 1.5 days per week	=	70% attendance rate	=	3 years of school missed
Absent average 2 days per week	=	60% attendance are	=	4 years of school missed

Attendance matters for achievement and every day counts. There is no 'safe' threshold of absence.

## Do you have a hard time getting your child to school?

Some common reasons given for children being late or absent from school are:

- Won't get out of bed or goes to bed late at night;
- Can't find their bag, materials, books etc;
- Lunch is not ready;
- No breakfast or is slow to eat breakfast;
- Homework not done;
- Test or presentation due that day;
- Birthday or relatives visiting; and
- Nervous at leaving family.

Some suggestions based on setting regular routines and giving a consistent message:

- Have a set time for going to bed and getting up;
- Have uniform, lunch and school materials ready the night before;
- Set daily homework time, as well as limit time for TV, games and devices (screen time) late at night;
- Seek immediate support from the school if your child is nervous about going to or when arriving at school;
- Be firm with clear boundaries around attending school.