

It's NOT OK to be Away

Attending school on a regular basis is vital for all students in Prep to Grade 6 so that they can access all they need to learn throughout their 7 years of primary schooling. This attendance is related to curriculum in that if the students have a high absence rate, their immersion in the curriculum is severely reduced. Please read the information below with regards to absence rates and consider the number of days your child has absent from school:

In the 'good old days' it used to be hard to get a day off school. Now it seems to be easy, maybe too easy? The wider school community, parents and students need to fully understand the impact of missing too many school days.

If a student has a day off, once a fortnight, this would add up to 20 days in a school year (approximately 40 weeks in a school year). 20 days is the same as missing a tenth of a school year.

This would be equal to missing a year of schooling up to Year 10.

A key message that needs to be embraced by schools, parents, and the wider community is that "It's Not OK to be Away". The 'fallout' of poor attendance is very real. These students will be at risk of not achieving their potential and therefore limit their life choices. Also, other real consequences are:

- Social isolation
- Will have gaps in their learning of knowledge and basic concepts
- May feel insecure in the school environment
- More likely to leave school early
- Could lead to school refusal further in their education
- May place themselves at risk of harm while absent
- Could get too easily involved in socially unacceptable and / or illegal activities

When you consider the above, schools, parents and the wider community need to work in partnership with each other to ensure students enjoy school success and as a consequence more enriching life choices. We appreciate that there are times when students are ill or when family holidays need to be taken during the school term, but we are outlining the importance of those other times that absences occur.

Some Benefits of Regular School Attendance

For Students:

- The development of skills and attitudes such as self-discipline, punctuality, and being organised will optimise life choices
- Regular attendance leads to making friends and learning how to maintain relationships over a length of time
- Regular attendance leads to learning social skills necessary to live and work with others
- The more students attend, the more they will learn and the more they will like school.

For the Community:

- Young people are the next generation of community leaders and community citizens
- Community agencies can work in partnership with schools towards the shared goal of developing future community leaders and citizens
- Young people who attend school regularly are more likely to be safe
- The more students attend, the more they learn and the more likely they are to make a positive contribution to society.

sHow many days of school has your child missed this semester?

0-6

This is within normal range. A child with this attendance rate is able to take full advantage of the teaching and learning opportunities available to them.

7-10

This attendance rage is below average. A child with this attendance rate could miss over one year of schooling between prep and Year 10

11-20

This is a poor attendance rate. A child with this attendance rate days could miss out on up to two years of schooling between prep and Year 10

20+

This is a very poor attendance rate. A child with this attendance rate could miss over two and one half years of schooling between prep and Year 10

Remember

- Students need to attend school regularly to make the most of educational opportunities.
- There is a direct link between school attendance and achievement later in life.
- Poor patterns of attendance in the early years lead to poor patterns of attendance throughout the school years.
- Poor attendance makes it difficult for children to form positive relationships with their peers.

