

In primary school, some students miss on average 3 weeks of school per year. That's half a year of school by the end of year 6.



# EVERY DAY COUNTS

## Primary School Attendance

### Fact sheet for parents and carers of Koorie children and young people

Going to school every day is the single most important part of your child's education. Students learn new things at school every day – missing school puts them behind.

#### Why it's important

We all want our students to get a great education, and the building blocks for a great education begin with students coming to school each and every day.

If students miss school regularly, they miss out on learning the fundamental skills that will set them up for success in the later years of school.

There is no safe number of days for missing school – each day a student misses puts them behind, and can affect their educational outcomes.

Each missed day is associated with progressively lower achievement in numeracy, writing and reading.

#### Getting in early

Attendance patterns are established early – a child regularly missing days in kindergarten or in the early years of school will often continue to miss classes in the later

years, and receive lower test scores than their classmates. It's vital that students go to school every day – even in the early years of primary school.

#### What we can do

The main reasons for absence are:

**Sickness** – There are always times when students need to miss school, such as when they're ill. It's vital that they're only away on the days they are genuinely sick, and setting good sleep patterns, eating well and exercising regularly can make a big difference.

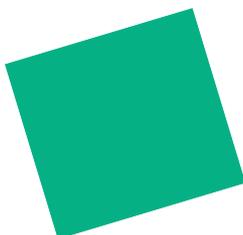
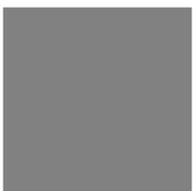
It's vital that holidays are planned during school holidays where possible, and not during the term if it can be avoided.

**"Day off"** – Think twice before letting your child have a "day off" as they could fall behind their classmates – every day counts.

**Truancy** – This is when students choose not to go to school without their parent's permission. There can be many reasons for truancy. The best way to address this is for schools and parents to work together.

If for any reason your child must miss school, there are things you can do with your school to ensure they don't fall behind:

- Speak with your classroom teacher and find out what work your child needs to do to keep up.



- Develop an absence learning plan with your teacher and ensure your child completes the plan.

Remember, every day counts. If your child must miss school, speak with your classroom teacher as early as possible.

Openly communicating with your child's school about all absences is a good way to prevent attendance issues being escalated to a School Attendance Officer. A School Attendance Officer is a Department of Education and Training Regional Director who has authority to follow up attendance issues.

If after this, your child continues to miss school, the Department can issue you with an Infringement Notice.

If you're having attendance issues with your child, please let your classroom teacher know so we can work together to get your child to school every day.

## Further information

For more information and resources to help address attendance issues, visit:

[www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/behaviour/Pages/studentattendance.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/behaviour/Pages/studentattendance.aspx)

The Koorie Education Workforce can provide a range of supports for Koorie students and families on attendance and other school issues.

Koorie Engagement Support Officers in particular can play a key role in assisting you to work with your child's school to resolve any issues that might be impacting on their school attendance and can also connect you and your child to other support services if needed.

To get in contact with a Koorie Education Coordinator, who will put you in contact with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer, see:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/Pages/wannikregional.aspx>

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