School Attendance

Why your child should go to school: Information for Parents and Caregivers

Why must I send my child to school?

The law in NSW states that all children between the ages of six and seventeen years of age are required to attend school regularly. (Education Reform Act 1990).

It is the responsibility of the parent or caregiver to make sure that their child attends school every day.

Must I send my child to school every day?

YES unless ….

- your child is too sick to go to school
- your child has been injured
- your child has to go to a religious ceremony
- your child has an infectious illness (eg. chicken pox, mumps or measles)
- there is a serious family situation which requires their involvement

Must my child attend school sport?

YES

Sport and other exercise help the healthy physical development of children. Sport is part of normal school activity which students must attend. It is policy for students to attend non-sport when they are unable to participate in sport due to injury or illness.

Why is regular attendance at school important?

Attending school every day makes learning easier for your child and helps build and maintain friendships with other children.

Regular attendance at school will help your child to succeed in later life.

Unsatisfactory school attendance may affect the NSW Record of Achievement (RoSA) and the awarding of the Higher School Certificate (HSC).
Please do not keep your child away from school for

- birthdays
- pension day
- minding other children
- hair cuts
- interpreting for other family members

Always try to make children’s appointments with people like dentists or doctors before or after school.

**What should I do if our family is going on holiday in school time?**

If you can only arrange your family holiday during school time, you should inform the school principal in advance and request leave.

You can ask the school to provide homework that can be completed while your child is absent.

**What should I do if my child has to stay away from school?**

It is important to let the school know when your child will be away and why your child was absent.

The parent or caregiver can explain their child’s absence in written form or by phone.

**My child won’t go to school. What should I do?**

You should contact the principal as soon as possible to discuss the problem and ask for help. The principal may ask a Home School Liaison Officer to contact you to discuss the issues.

**Who are Home School Liaison Officers?**

Home School Liaison Officers are trained teachers.

They have also been specially trained to help you with your child’s school attendance.

They work with schools to encourage all students to attend school regularly.

For further information about your nearest Home School Liaison Officers contact the Shellharbour District Office of the NSW Department of Education and Training in your area.

**Good school attendance leads to …**

- Better school results
- Better life chances
- Better peer relationships at school

Support your children’s success at school by getting them there!