

Every minute of every day counts

**A guide for families on why school
attendance matters**

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Sending your child to school every day – and on time – is one of the most powerful things you can do for their education. A day here and there doesn't seem like much, but small absences add up surprisingly fast.

“Just one or two days” – how absences add up

If your child misses...	That equals...	Which is...	Over their schooling (K–12)...	Best they can finish
1 day per fortnight	20 days/year	4 weeks/year	nearly 1½ years missed	part-way through Year 11 (90%)
1 day per week	40 days/year	8 weeks/year	over 2½ years missed	part-way through Year 10 (80%)
2 days per week	80 days/year	16 weeks/year	over 5 years missed	the end of Year 7 (60%)
3 days per week	120 days/year	24 weeks/year	almost 8 years missed	the end of Year 4 (40%)

Based on attendance data published by Australian education departments. Year levels show the best a child could finish if the pattern continued from Kindergarten to Year 12.

Being late adds up too

Arriving even a little late means missing the start of the day – instructions, routines and the first part of lessons.

Arriving late by...	Adds up to...	Each year...	Over their schooling...
10 minutes a day	50 mins per week	almost 1½ weeks	almost half a year
20 minutes a day	1 hr 40 mins per week	almost 2½ weeks	almost a whole year
30 minutes a day	half a day per week	4 weeks	about 1½ years
1 hour a day	1 full day per week	8 weeks	over 2½ years

How we talk about attendance at OSG

We group attendance into bands so we can celebrate strong patterns and step in early when support is needed.

95%+ On track Set up to achieve their best	90–95% Early identification Small gaps — let's act early	Below 90% Cause for concern Key learning being missed	Below 70% Serious concern A serious risk to learning
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Why every day really matters

- Every day counts. Even a single day of absence is linked to a decline in achievement – and the more days missed, the greater the effect. (Grattan Institute, 2025)
- A Western Australian study of NAPLAN results found every day of school missed was associated with lower scores in numeracy, reading and writing. (Grattan Institute, 2025)
- Students who attend at least 90% of the time are far more likely to keep that pattern. Below that, attendance rarely recovers on its own – so staying above 90% really matters. (UK research cited by Grattan Institute)
- It's not only about marks. Regular attendance builds friendships, belonging, confidence and the routines children carry into work and life. (NSW Department of Education)

How you can help — simple habits that make a big difference

- **Aim for 95%+.** Treat school as the default. Every day your child is well enough, they're better off in class.
- **Be on time.** A consistent morning routine – bags packed and uniforms ready the night before – protects the start of the day.
- **Let us know on the morning of an absence.** Please contact the Campus Office on the morning of any absence to let us know the reason.
- **Plan holidays and appointments around school.** Holidays during term time can't be approved, so please book family trips in the school breaks and routine appointments after school where possible.
- **Know when to keep them home.** Keep your child home if they're genuinely unwell (fever, infection risk, or impacting ability to engage), if you have an appointment that truly can't be made outside school, or if something serious is happening at home and your child needs support.
- **Talk to us early.** If something is making school hard – worry, friendships, health or anything else – contact your Campus Principal or Homeroom teacher. We're here to help, together.

Attend = Achieve.

Your child's attendance is their opportunity — let's make every day count, together.

Sources: Grattan Institute, *Every day matters: Improving school attendance in Australia* (2025); NSW & Western Australian Departments of Education; U.S. Department of Education. Figures are indicative and based on a standard school year.