

School Newsletter Article:



Attendance Matters: Changes to Student Absences

Did you know that attending school every day has a big impact on how well your child goes at school.

Missing school for whatever reason has a negative impact on students' learning. Because of this, the new Education Act specifies the reasons a child can be authorised not to attend school.

It is important that you discuss why your child is absent from school with the school Principal or a staff member as soon as practicable.

Why is this change important?

The changes to being authorised not to attend school will help address absenteeism, which has been a longstanding issue in Tasmania.

The changes to student absences:

- Encourage regular school attendance to help your child to make steady progress with their learning and gain the skills and knowledge needed for success both now and later in life.
- Help your child see themselves as a valuable and enthusiastic member of their classroom with high expectations of their own potential.
- Help you to emphasise to your child the value and importance of their education.
- Ensure there is a consistent statewide approach to authorised absences across all Tasmanian schools.

When can my child be authorised not to attend school?

Reasons your child can be authorised to be absent include:

- sickness/incapacity
- medical, legal or related appointments
- natural disaster or extreme weather preventing your child from safely attending their enrolled school
- terminal illness of an immediate family member

- bereavement of a person your child had a close, significant or family relationship with
- having witnessed or been subjected to family violence
- being a participant or official at a recognised National or International sporting, academic or cultural event
- an application for home education being received by the Education Registrar and provisional registration being granted.

What will happen if my child is absent for a reason that isn't listed?

- The absence will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.
- Principals receive notifications about the number of unauthorised absences your child has.
- Your child's school may send you a letter notifying you of the number of unauthorised absences your child has.
- They will seek to work with you to increase your child's attendance to maximise their learning if the Principal is concerned about your child's attendance.

What happens if my family go on holiday during school term?

- Schools have always encouraged family holidays to be planned for during the scheduled school holiday breaks.
- If your family decides to take a holiday during school term, you are encouraged to discuss your plans with the Principal or your child's teacher.
- Penalties will not apply if an absence is explained.

Where can I get more information?

- If you want your child to attend school but need help to do this, your child's school would really like to talk to you about what help you need.
- Please contact your child's school for more information.