

Updated October 2022



Attendance Policy



RATIONALE

All schools in Western Australia are committed to providing safe and supportive learning environments for students which address their educational needs. Regular attendance at school is fundamental to all students' social and academic learning.

North Dandalup Primary School expects students to attend school regularly in order to participate fully and gain maximum benefit for schooling. Regular attendance enables students to access a full education, enabling them to reach their full potential.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND STRATEGIES

Parents

- Ensure that children attend school at all times when the school is open for instruction (see School Education Act 1999)
- Notify the school of student absence using the School Stream App or other communication methods as soon possible on the first day of the child's absence.
- Respond to SMS Attendance Notifications to inform the school of 'Unexplained Absences'
- Notify the school in advance if an absence of any period is planned.
- Email the school in writing at northdandalup.ps@education.wa.edu.au to inform staff of any planned / extended leave. For extended leave, the Principal will determine if this is recorded as 'Authorised' or 'Unauthorised' and this will be communicated with the requesting parent.
- Work collaboratively with the school to develop and implement improvement strategies when attendance has been inconsistent

Teachers

- Record absences accurately for both morning and afternoon sessions.
- Record student attendance daily via Integris by 9.15am
- Reinforce late procedure if student arrives after 9.00 am
- Teachers provided with an attendance report every 5 weeks to determine and investigate reasons for student absences.
- Follow-up on student absences if a reason has not been provided by the parent within three days of the student's return to school.
- Support school-wide attendance strategies including Individual Attendance Plans.
- Provide suggested activities for students who are going to be away from school for an extended period of time (2 weeks or longer).
- Inform Principal of any attendance concerns.
- Promote student attendance at every relevant occasion.

Office Staff

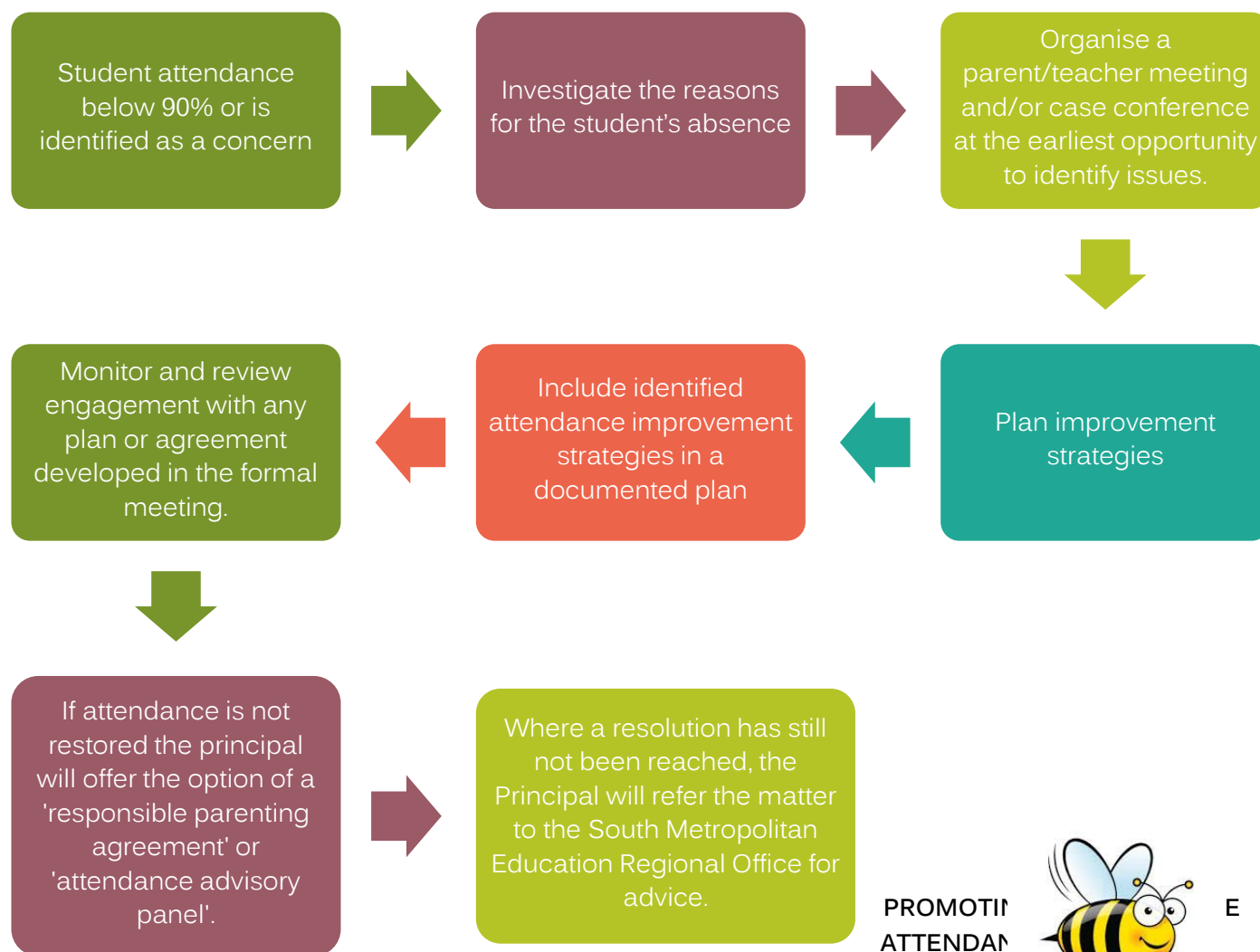
- Ensure transfer note procedures are actioned promptly
- Support the Principal in monitoring and investigating attendance issues within the school.
- Record absences sent by parents through the 'School Stream' application, email or notes.
- Generate attendance report and provide to teachers every 5 weeks.
- Generate formal letters to parents for students with at risk attendance once each term.
- Maintain open communication with families to ensure contact details in Integris are up to date.
- Inform relief staff of the attendance processes at North Dandalup Primary School prior to the first day of classroom teaching.

- Record Absence Notifications from the SMS System (MessageYou) onto Integr8.

Principal

- Students with 100% attendance each term will receive an Attendance Merit Certificate.
- Classrooms with highest average attendance every 5 weeks will receive a Class Certificate and 'Class Attendance Trophy' for their room until the next assembly.
- Parents emailed an attendance concern letter every term for students below 90% attendance
- Principal to send 'Authorised' or 'Unauthorised' letters to parents requesting extended leave from school
- Provide an attendance focus at least once a term in the school's newsletter.
- Ensure that staff are recording attendance accurately.
- Monitor at risk categories to identify students at risk through the Department Portal
- Contact parents, teacher and student (if appropriate) to convene an attendance focussed meeting to develop a plan to improve the student's attendance.
- Offer parents of students in the severe attendance category an attendance panel if attendance is not restored through the attendance improvement plan.

PERSISTENT STUDENT ABSENCE



PROMOTING
ATTENDANCE



E

We will promote positive student attendance by:

- Encouraging parents to bring their children to school regularly

- Promoting positive school attendance through our communication channels
- Acknowledging students and classrooms with high attendance each term during assemblies
- Providing a safe, supportive and nurturing school environment
- Provide high quality teaching and learning that engages all students, every day
- Explicitly teach students social and emotional skills and wellbeing, that equips students with the skills to confidently connect with others at school in a safe environment
- Promote our schools 4 R's (Respect, Responsibility, Resourcefulness, Resilience)
- Following up on students at-risk and providing supportive advice and strategies to restore student attendance at school.

INDIVIDUAL ATTENDANCE PLAN (IAP)

IAP's may be used to document strategies that support student engagement at school and can:

- provide an opportunity for the school and parents to work together to support student attendance
- enable a solutions-focused conversation around restoring student attendance
- allow discussion around strategies to improve student attendance
- ensure close monitoring of student attendance over time

RESPONSIBLE PARENTING AGREEMENT (RPA)

RPAs may be used to complement existing student support strategies and can:

- identify issues behind the student's absence or complex behaviour needs
- develop productive relationships between school staff and parents
- address behaviour support needs
- address persistent absence from school without reasonable cause.

THE ATTENDANCE ADVISORY PANEL (AAP)

An AAP may be used after other options have been explored without success.

An attendance panel is convened under section 39 of the Education Act. The panel is to consist of a group of people from the community who are independent of the school, to bring a new perspective to the case. There is no requirement for the AAP to include a representative from the Department of Education. The AAP has the authority to inquire in to the reasons for a child's failure to attend school and assist the family in restoring satisfactory attendance. If the Attendance Advisory Panel is refused the Principal will consider whether convening a panel is likely to be of benefit in restoring attendance. If it is deemed that no purpose would be served by forming an AAP, then prosecution will be considered and a certificate obtained from the Director General. If parents accept the offer of an AAP but do not engage or follow advice, the AAP can issue a certificate to commence prosecution pursuant to Section 2 of the School Education Act 1999.

- Information for Parents – Attendance at Primary School
- Information for Parents – When is it OK to miss school?
- Sample Leave Authorised Letter
- Sample Leave Unauthorised Letter
- Sample Attendance Letter 1 – At Risk Attendance
- Sample Attendance Letter 2 – No Improvement
- Sample Attendance Letter 3 – Improvement, but below 90%
- Attendance Plan
- Impact of Non-Attendance Chart

Information for parents - Attendance at primary school

Going to school every day is vitally important so your child does not miss out on important ideas, concepts, knowledge and skills for future learning. At our school, we want your children to do their very best. To get the best education, they need to go to school every day. By working together, our school community can support your child's attendance.

What can you do to help?

- Have a set time for your child to go to bed at night and get up in the morning.
- Have their uniform and school bag ready the night before.
- Have a set time for breakfast.
- Set a time for daily homework activities.
- Talk about school positively.
- If running late, encourage your child to still go to school and reassure them that you will let the school know.
- Organise for your child to meet a friend before school so they can arrive at school together.
- Get involved at school through volunteering or participate in school programs, events or join the Parents and Citizens' Association.

Do you need to let the school know if your child will be away from school?

Yes, you need to let office staff know that your child will be absent from school and the reason why as soon as possible.

Having information about why a child is missing school helps us plan for their return to school and to work out whether we can provide any further help to you.

What will staff at our school do to help?

- Offer developmentally, socially and culturally responsive learning opportunities to engage students.
- Monitor every student's attendance and work with parents to overcome problems affecting attendance.
- Provide predictable routines to help students know what to expect to reduce anxiety about going to school.
- Talk with you about involving support staff such as and other agencies or organisations to help.
- Talk with you about local services that may also be able to help such as Headspace, Youthline and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

Information for parents - When is it OK to miss school?

It is important for children to attend school all day, every day.

When is it OK to not go to school?

An OK reason is one that prevents your child from getting to school. This could include:

- your child is unable to attend because they are sick
- attending cultural or religious observances such as sorry time and funerals
- an unavoidable medical appointment

- an unavoidable natural event such as flood waters or a cyclone

The Principal decides if the reason given for your child's absence is acceptable.

It's NOT OK to miss school if your child:

- is celebrating a birthday
- is going on a family holiday
- is visiting family and friends
- has slept in or had a big weekend
- is looking after other children
- has sport or other recreational activities that have not been approved by the school
- has appointment such as haircuts and minor check ups

If possible, routine medical and other health appointments should be made either before or after school, or during the school holidays.

Do you need to let the school know if your child will be away from school?

Yes, you need to let the school know the reason why your child is going to be, or has been, absent from school as soon as possible. Where possible, please discuss any upcoming absences in advance so we can let you know of important learning or activities your child will miss out on.

This requires a responsible person, usually a parent, to provide a reason for the absence within three school days. Having information about why your child is missing school helps us plan for their return to school and work out whether we can provide any further help to you.

Why is going to school so important?

- At school, many concepts such as literacy and numeracy are taught in a sequence. Missing school means missing out on learning – which can often make it difficult to catch up later. This is particularly important in the early years when essential foundation skills are being taught.
- Going to school every day helps children learn the important life skill of 'showing up' – at school, at work, to sport and other commitments.
- Research from the Western Australian Telethon Kids Institute shows that every day at school counts towards a student's learning. Students who attend regularly, generally do better at school and in life.

SAMPLE LEAVE AUTHORISED LETTER



Insert Date

Dear _____

Thank you for advising the school of your planned leave for _____, on the dates of _____.

Based on the reason provided for the planned leave of your child, there are reasonable grounds for me to authorise this absence from school. Your child's attendance will be recorded as an 'Authorised Absence' from school during the dates specified above.

Please contact your child's teacher for information about completion of work during the period of leave from school. When the leave is 2 weeks or longer away from school, it is highly recommended that a work package is completed.

Whilst this leave is authorised, it is important we continue to promote students attending school regularly. Students attending regularly achieve stronger educational outcomes, and develop important social and emotional skills that will prepare them for life beyond school.

Please don't hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss this further.

Kind Regards,

Principal
North Dandalup Primary School
Ph: (08) 9531 0500
Email: _____

SAMPLE LEAVE UNAUTHORISED LETTER

Insert Date



Dear _____

Thank you for advising the school of your planned leave for _____, on the dates of _____.

Based on the reason provided for the planned leave of your child, I am unable to authorise this. Your child's attendance will be recorded as an 'Unauthorised Absence' from school during the dates specified above.

It is important we continue to promote students attending school regularly. Students attending regularly achieve stronger educational outcomes, and develop important social and emotional skills that will prepare them for life beyond school.

Please don't hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss this further.

Kind Regards,

Principal
North Dandalup Primary School
Ph: (08) 9531 0500
Email: _____

SAMPLE ATTENDANCE LETTER 1 – AT RISK ATTENDANCE

<ParSalutation1>

<ParAdd1>

<ParAdd1Town> <ParAdd1CountyState> <ParAdd1Postcode>

Dear <ParSalutation1>

NOTIFICATION FOR YOUR ATTENTION

According to our records <FirstName> has missed a significant amount of school this year, placing <him/her> at Academic Risk. Statistics show that attendance below 90% places a child AT RISK of not achieving their educational potential.



90-100%	Attendance is regarded as REGULAR
80-89%	Attendance is regarded as at RISK
60-79%	Attendance is regarded as at HIGH RISK
0-59%	Attendance is regarded as at SEVERE RISK

Your child's attendance rate is currently between _____% indicating that they are at _____

At North Dandalup Primary School, we are striving to increase the attendance of all students. *The School Education Act 1999* requires parents or caregivers to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend school on each day that the school is open for instruction. If children are absent from school, a parent or responsible person must provide the school with an acceptable explanation within three days of the absence.

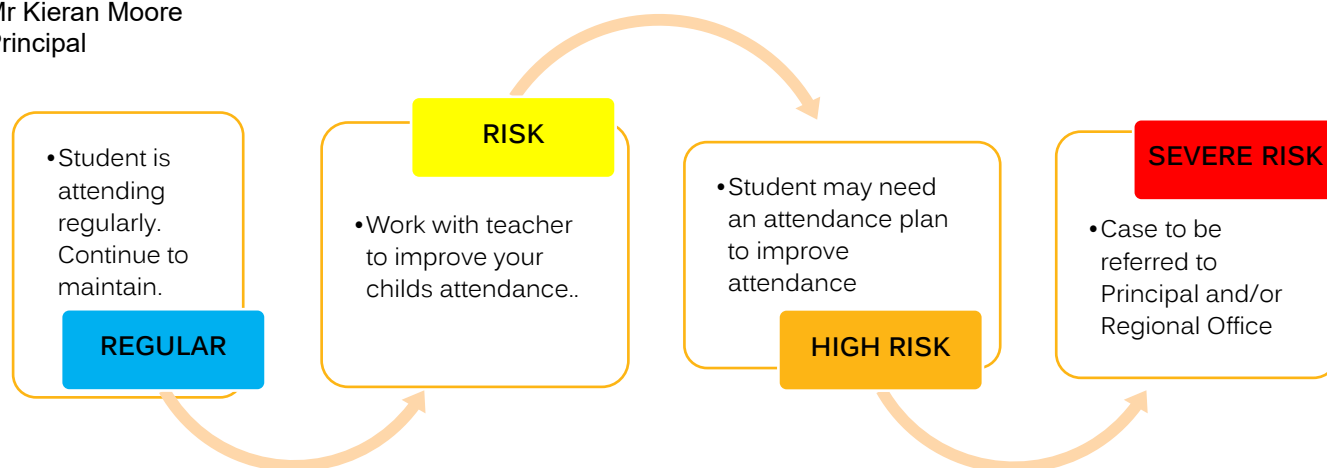
Naturally, there are absences that cannot be avoided. However, we ask that you do not keep your child away from school for minor reasons. For example, holidays should be arranged during school holiday periods and social occasions arranged out of school hours. We would like to the opportunity to work with you and seek your support in improving <FirstName>'s level of attendance where possible, so that they are able to attain their best level of achievement whilst enrolled at North Dandalup Primary School.

Please contact the school on **9531 0500**, to make an appointment to meet at a time which is convenient. Alternatively, a member of staff will be in touch with you to discuss the next steps in order to resolve this matter.

Thank you for your assistance and cooperation in this important matter. More information can be found at: <https://www.education.wa.edu.au/attendance-support-from-your-school?redirect=%2Fattendance>

Yours sincerely

Mr Kieran Moore
Principal



SAMPLE ATTENDANCE LETTER 2 – NO IMPROVEMENT

<ParSalutation1>

<ParAdd1>

<ParAdd1Town> <ParAdd1CountyState> <ParAdd1Postcode>

Dear <ParSalutation1>

NOTIFICATION FOR YOUR ATTENTION

Our records indicate that your child's average attendance as of <date> has not improved since our last letter and is still less than 90%. <FirstName>'s actual attendance to date is ____%.

90-100%	Attendance is regarded as REGULAR
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80-89%	Attendance is regarded as at RISK
60-79%	Attendance is regarded as at HIGH RISK
0-59%	Attendance is regarded as at SEVERE RISK

Under the School Education Act 1999, parents / guardians must send their children to school unless:

- they are too unwell
- they have an infectious disease

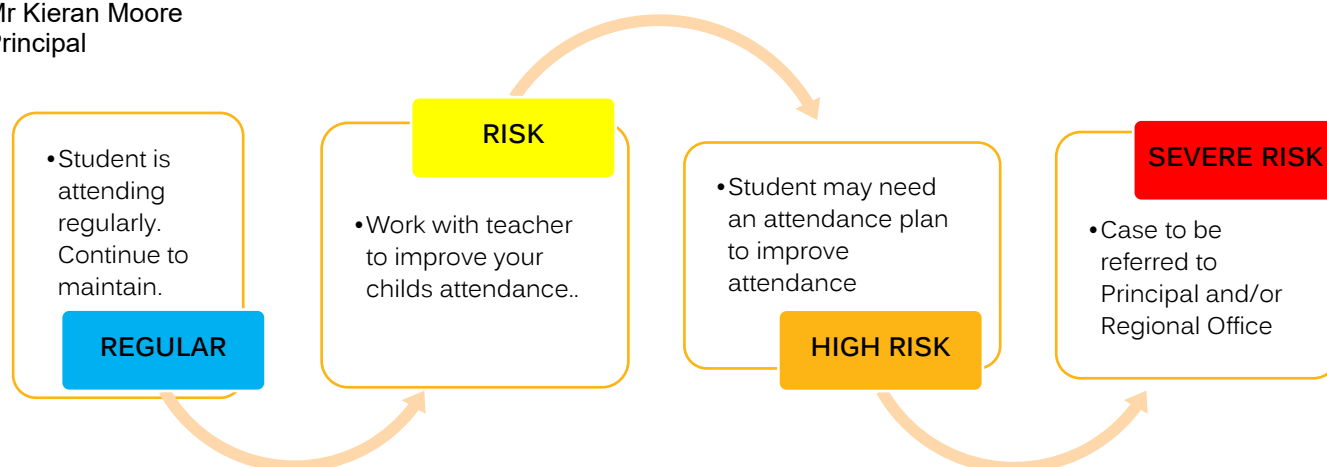
At North Dandalup Primary School, we are striving to increase the attendance of all students. *The School Education Act 1999* requires parents or caregivers to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend school on each day that the school is open for instruction. If children are absent from school, a parent or responsible person must provide the school with an acceptable explanation within three days of the absence.

A meeting has been scheduled for **<Date>** as an opportunity to work with you and seek your support in improving **<FirstName's>** level of attendance where possible, so that they are able to attain their best level of achievement whilst enrolled at North Dandalup Primary School. We have a number of support services operating from the school for parents and students.

Thank you for your assistance and cooperation in this important matter. We look forward to meeting with you on the date and time specified above, to support you in resolving this matter. More information can be found at: <https://www.education.wa.edu.au/attendance-support-from-your-school?redirect=%2Fattendance>

Yours sincerely

Mr Kieran Moore
Principal



SAMPLE ATTENDANCE LETTER 1 – IMPROVEMENT, BUT BELOW 90%

<ParSalutation1>

<ParAdd1>

<ParAdd1Town> <ParAdd1CountyState> <ParAdd1Postcode>

Dear <ParSalutation1>



NOTIFICATION FOR YOUR ATTENTION

Our records indicate that your child's average attendance as of _____ has improved since our last letter, however, is still less than 90%. **<FirstName's>** actual attendance to date is ____%.

All children enrolled in school are expected to attend on a regular basis, which is 90% or higher, as determined by the Education Department. As a school, we ask for your support in developing regular patterns of attendance for your child. This can be achieved by making sure your child attends school on all school days and is on time every day.

90-100%	Attendance is regarded as REGULAR
80-89%	Attendance is regarded as at RISK
60-79%	Attendance is regarded as at HIGH RISK
0-59%	Attendance is regarded as at SEVERE RISK

Under the School Education Act 1999, parents / guardians must send their children to school unless:

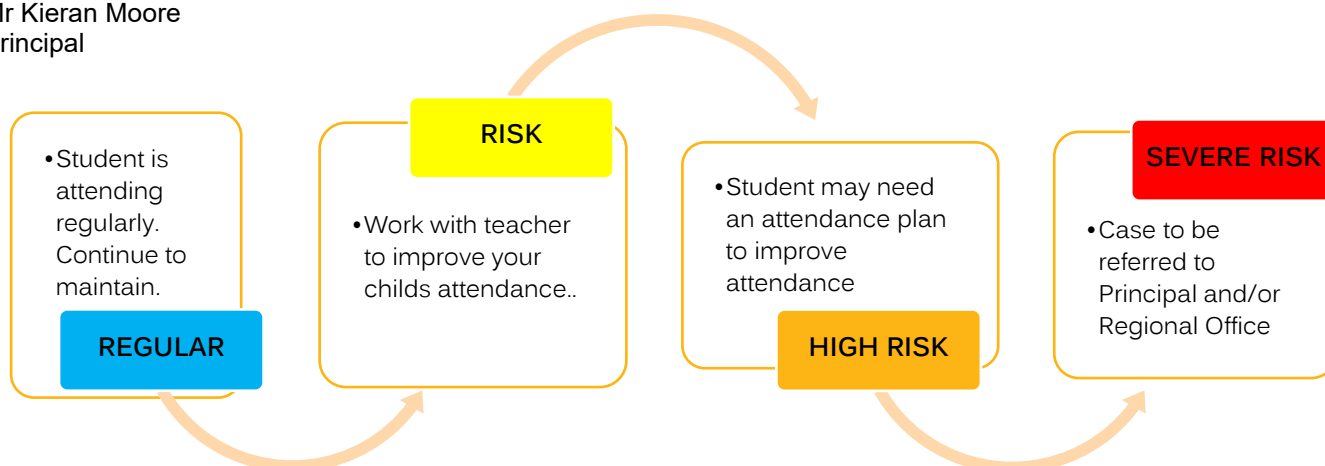
- they are too unwell
- they have an infectious disease

We would like to the opportunity to work with you and seek your support in improving <FirstName's> level of attendance where possible, so that they are able to attain their best level of achievement whilst enrolled at North Dandalup Primary School. We have a number of support services operating from the school for parents and students. Please contact the school on **9531 0500**, to make an appointment to meet at a time which is convenient.

Thank you for your assistance and cooperation in this important matter. More information can be found at: <https://www.education.wa.edu.au/attendance-support-from-your-school?redirect=%2Fattendance>

Yours sincerely

Mr Kieran Moore
Principal



SAMPLE ATTENDANCE PLAN

North Dandalup Primary School Attendance Plan



Student:	D.O.B:	Gender:
Teacher:	Year Level:	Date:

Long Term Goal

TARGETS	STRATEGIES	REVIEW/COMMENTS

What we will do to make this happen?				
STUDENT	PARENT	TEACHER	SCHOOL ADMIN	OTHER

MILESTONES (how will we know the targets are met?)	WHEN WE WILL TALK ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING	HOW WILL WE CELEBRATE?

REVIEW
Review date:
Notes:

Teacher..... Date..... Principal..... Date.....

Parent/Carer..... Date.....

IMPACT OF NON-ATTENDANCE CHART (PRE-PRIMARY TO YEAR 12)

The following chart and graph highlights the impact of non-attendance over time. Viewed in this context, the implications of regular absenteeism are startling. The chart shows the cumulative effect of persistent non-attendance over the period from Pre Primary to Year 12.

Days Absent	Attendance Percentage	Total Days Missed	Number of Terms Missed	Number of Years Missed
1 day each fortnight	90%	226	4.5	1 Year and 5 Weeks
1 day each week	80%	452	9	2 Years and 1 Term
2 days each week	60%	904	18	4 Years and 2 Terms
3 days each week	40%	1353	27	6 Years and 3 Terms

