

Attendance Matters

Education for your child is important and regular attendance at school is essential for your child to achieve their educational best and increase their career and life options. Armidale Catholic Schools work in partnership with parents to encourage and support regular attendance of children and young people. When your child attends school every day, learning becomes easier and your child will build and maintain friendships with other children.

What are my Legal responsibilities?

Education in New South Wales is compulsory for all children between the ages of six years and below the minimum school leaving age of 17 years. The Education Act 1990 requires that parents ensure their children of compulsory school age are enrolled at, and regularly attend school, or, are registered with the NSW Education and Standards Authority for home schooling. Once enrolled, children are required to attend school each day it is open for students.

The Importance of arriving on time

Arriving at school and class on time:

- ensures that students do not miss out on important learning activities scheduled early in the day
- helps students learn the importance of punctuality and routine
- give students time to greet their friends before class
- reduces classroom disruption
- lateness is recorded as a partial absence and must be explained by parents.

What if my child has to be away from school?






On occasion, your child may need to be absent from school. Justified reasons for student absences may include:

- being sick, or having an infectious disease
- having an unavoidable medical appointment
- exceptional or urgent family circumstance (e.g. attending a funeral)

Following an absence from school you must ensure that within 7 days you provide your child's school with a explanation for the absence, preferably using the COMPASS platform or app. However, if the school has not received an explanation from you, the school will contact you to discuss the absence.

Principals may decline to accept an explanation that you have provided if they do not believe the absence is in the best interest of your child. In these circumstances your child's absence would be recorded as unjustified. When this happens the principal will discuss their decision with you and the reasons why.

Attendance Report Categories

	95% and Higher	No Risk	Impact over the course of the year - up to 10 days missed learning
	90 - 95%	Potential Risk	Impact over the course of the year - up to 20 days of missed learning or one day a fortnight
	80 - 89%	At Risk	Impact over the course of the year - up to 40 days of missed learning or one day a week
	70 - 79%	High Risk	Impact over the course of the year - up to 60 days of missed learning or one and a half days a week
	Less than 70%	Critical Risk	Impact over the course of the year - up to 80 days of missed learning or over two days a week



Principals may request medical certificates or other documentation when frequent or long term absences are explained as being due to illness. Principals may also seek parental permission to speak with medical specialists to obtain information to collaboratively develop a health care plan to support your child. If the request is denied, the principal can record the absences as unjustified.

Travel

Families are encouraged to travel during school holidays. If travel during school term is necessary, discuss this with your child's school principal. An Application for Extended Leave may need to be completed. Absences relating to travel will be marked as leave on the roll and therefore contribute to your child's total absences for the year.

In some circumstances students may be eligible to enrol in distance education for travel periods over 100 school days. This should be discussed with your child's school principal.

My child won't go to school what should I do?

You should contact the principal as soon as possible to discuss the issue and ask for help. Strategies to help improve attendance may include a referral to the school's inclusion team or linking your child with appropriate support networks. The principal may seek further support from Armidale Catholic Schools to develop an Attendance Improvement Plan. Early intervention works best in supporting students in returning to school.

What might happen if my child continues to have unacceptable absences?

It is important to understand that the school and Armidale Catholic Schools may be required to take further action where children of compulsory school age have recurring numbers of unexplained or unjustified absences from school.

School and Armidale Catholic Schools staff remain committed to working in partnership with you to address the issues which are preventing your child's full participation at school.

What age can my child leave school?

All New South Wales students must complete Year 10 or its equivalent. After Year 10, and up until they reach 17 years of age, there are a range of flexible options for students to complete their schooling. Please contact your child's school to discuss these options if relevant. Armidale Catholic Schools remains committed to finding the right pathway for your child in line with the NSW legislation.

Working in Partnership

Armidale Catholic Schools recognises that working collaboratively with students and their families is the best way to support the regular attendance of students at school. We look forward to working in partnership with you to support your child to fulfil their life opportunities.

