Whalan Public School strongly encourages high levels of attendance. The school’s attendance program is based on the premise that

**IT IS NOT OK TO BE AWAY**

**Must I send my child every day?**

YES. It is a condition of enrolment that you send your child to school every day. A small number of absences may be justified if your child:

- has to go to a special religious ceremony
- is required to attend to a serious and/or urgent family situation (e.g., a funeral)
- is too sick to go to school or has an infectious illness.

**NB Advice from NSW Health indicates that there is no need for students to be sent home or excluded from school because of head lice. Head lice, is not a valid reason for prolonged absences from school.**

**Why is regular attendance at school important?**

Regular school attendance will help your child to succeed in later life. Attending school every day makes learning easier for your child and helps children to build and maintain friendships with other children. If your child doesn’t learn the basic skills in the early years of school, they may develop learning problems in later years.

**What happens if my child is absent from school more than they should be?**

All children’s attendance is monitored weekly by the HSLO / ASLO and the Deputy Principal (DP). If your child has too many days off school and those absences are unexplained, the school will contact you to discuss the absences or arrange a meeting to discuss how the school can support you to improve your child’s attendance.
Did you know?

If a child misses 8 days in every school term, by the end of year 6, they will have missed 1 year of education.

If a student arrives 15 minutes late every day, by the end of the year, they miss 10 days of school.
Why is arriving at school on time important?

Arriving at school and class on time:
• ensures that your child doesn't miss out on the important learning activities scheduled early in the day when they are most alert
• helps your child to learn the importance of punctuality and routine
• gives your child time to greet their friends before class and therefore reduces the opportunity for classroom disruption.

Lateness and early pick-ups are recorded as a partial absence and must be explained to the school the same way as other forms of absence.

Parents need a late note or an early pick-up note from the office

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

Parents and carers are encouraged not to withdraw their children from school for family holidays. Families should try to arrange holidays during school vacations. If your family holiday is during school time, inform the school principal in advance and request leave and/or an exemption from school.

Parents need to complete an exemption form

Must my child attend all activities, including daily fitness and sport?

YES. Sport and other physical activities help to keep your children healthy. Children are expected to attend all regular school activities, including sport. Do not keep your child away from school for the following:
• birthdays
• shopping
• minding other children
• routine check-ups or care such as haircuts
• minor family events
• sleeping in
Medical and other health appointments for your child should be made either before or after school or during the school holidays.

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

If your child has to be absent from school, it is important to tell the school and provide a reason for your child’s absence. To explain an absence parents and carers may:

- send a note, fax, email or absence e-form via school app to the school
- telephone the school, or
- visit the school

**All absences must be explained to the school**

The principal of the school has the right to question parents’ or carers’ requests for their child to be absent from school. The principal may also question any explanation given for a child’s absence from school.

**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. The principal may seek support from a home school liaison officer (HSLO) or Aboriginal student liaison officer (ASLO).

**Who are home school liaison officers and Aboriginal student liaison officers?**

Home school liaison officers and Aboriginal student liaison officers have been specially trained to help you with your child’s attendance. They work with school communities to encourage all students to attend school regularly.

**Do you have problems with getting your child to school, for some of the following reasons?**

- won’t get out of bed
- won’t go to bed
- can’t find their clothes, books, homework, school bag...
- school lunches not ready
- slow to eat breakfast
- homework not done
• watching television late at night or when they should be getting ready for school
• assessment or presentation at school
• birthdays
• screaming and not letting go of you

Here are some suggestions which are based on setting regular routines:

✓ Have a set time to be out of bed
✓ Have a set time to go to bed
✓ Have uniform and school bag ready the night before
✓ Make lunches the night before
✓ Have a set time for starting / ending breakfast. A routine is important.
✓ Set time for daily homework activities
✓ Turn the television on for a set time and only if appropriate
✓ Be firm, children must go to school
✓ Provide lots of positive encouragement
✓ Be firm, a birthday is not a holiday
✓ Time arrival at school to coincide with bell time and leave quickly. If arranged with the teacher beforehand, place your child’s hand into that of the teacher and then leave.
How does our school reward good attendance?

✓ Lunch with Mrs Lock (once a term)
✓ Daily draws for ice block / popcorn treats
✓ Weekly class prizes
✓ Attendance awards at assembly for improved attendance

Each week, the best attending class K-2 and 3-6, is rewarded with a class prize. The best attending classes choose their class reward from a selection of prizes on offer.

This selection includes:

✓ ingredients for a cooking lesson
✓ pizza lunch for the whole class
✓ a wheelie bin full of games for the week
✓ audio stories for the class to share
✓ an ipod for the class to use for the week
✓ a Nintendo 3DS for the week
✓ an ipad for the week