



White Rock State School

Attendance spotlight

Promoting the Every Day Counts campaign and having a whole school focus on improving student attendance has seen White Rock State School's attendance rate increase from 86.1% in 2013 to 91.2% in 2015.

White Rock State School Principal, Mrs Susette Birchley, says that improving attendance is all about making sure children feel like they're succeeding every day by differentiating the curriculum and creating a sense of belonging and a shared sense of identity.

"We want kids to know and feel they are White Rock kids, and this is what White Rock kids do....they come to school every day!"

In 2015, the school held an Attendance Forum where certain parents were invited to discuss the issue of attendance. A number of guest speakers, including students from the nearby Woree SHS, discussed the importance of parents getting their kids to school every day and supporting them with their learning. Since the forum, the attendance of the children in those families has greatly improved.

The school has also hosted several Prep Expos, (*Breaking Down the Barriers*), which were open to the public. The expos provided information to families in such a way that schooling would not be considered a mystery. Families were also made aware of the support services available to them if they needed them.

Participation in the expo included Centrelink (school bonus and budgeting), the Early Years Centre (parenting) and Counselling services. Writing and reading sessions were also held and a nutritionist discussed healthy eating and the preparation of healthy lunch boxes.

The school has also implemented a number of other strategies to support and improve attendance, including:

- Emphasising the importance of being at school so you can be a learner.
- Making sure that the school is an inviting place to be – for children and their parents.
- Providing differentiated learning episodes to give every student an opportunity to succeed.
- Ensuring student behaviour is appropriate so that every child feels safe and is able to participate as a learner without disruption.



- Displaying weekly attendance data in every classroom.
- Employing an attendance officer whose sole role it is to monitor the attendance of every child, every day, and to phone or make a home visit to ascertain why a child may have an unexplained absence.



- Making attendance a key topic of conversation in a range of places, all the time, including on parade, in newsletters and in the classrooms.
 - On parade they chant:
 - Principal: “Girls and Boys, Every day ...”
 - Students: “Counts!”
 - Principal: “What counts?”
 - Students: “Every day!”
- Having some extrinsic incentives in place:
 - Raffle tickets for students who attend for 5 days of the week day, which entitles them to a tuckshop voucher.
 - An end of term \$50 K Mart Voucher for the family of a child with 100% attendance, because attendance is a whole family effort.
 - End of term and end of year prizes such as an iPad Mini and an X Box for a perfect attendance record.
- In the classroom, if a whole class achieves 100% attendance on any given day, the teacher wears the ‘Attendance hat’ (a silly hat with 100% on it.)
- Operating a breakfast program three mornings a week – run by a local church and business, with assistance from volunteers from the community, including people from the local retirement village.
- Having spare school uniforms and a lunch room and supplies for those children who need it.
- Hosting a FaFT program (Families as First Teachers) each Thursday morning for the parents of pre-prep age children to increase their understanding of the importance of attending school every day and being involved in their child’s learning.
- Breaking down the barriers for parents so they also feel welcome and are happy to send their children to school. A Coffee Club operates every Tuesday afternoon.

All of these efforts help to remove barriers, create an inclusive environment and a sense of belonging at White Rock State School.

EVERYDAY-THE WHITE ROCK WAY



Be Respectful









- Use your manners
- Respect yourself
- Respect each other
- Respect staff

Show Respect



If you would like further information on any of the strategies discussed in this spotlight, please contact White Rock State School directly.

