

P E R S P E C T I V E S   O N   E D U C A T I O N

# KEEPING KIDS AT SCHOOL

*Issues in student attendance*



Department of Education,  
Employment and Training

Victoria

## Keeping Kids at School

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K E E P I N G   K I D S   A T   S C H O O L

*Issues in student attendance*



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## FOREWORD

**T**his publication, *Keeping Kids at School: Issues in Student Attendance* is published by the Accountability and Development Division as part of a new series: Perspectives on Education.

These occasional publications offer information, research and opinion on contemporary issues in education and are designed to be thought provoking and to stimulate the exchange of ideas and good practice among people working in the education field.

Over the past five years, the school review process has thrown up a great deal of data on student attendance across the system. *Keeping Kids at School: Issues in Student Attendance* examines the incidence and the impact of student absence from school and describes what some schools have done to tackle the issue. It is an interesting and practical discussion on a subject that is significant for parents and education professionals alike.

I believe you will find much to consider in this booklet and other publications planned for the series.



Bill Griffiths  
General Manager  
Accountability and Development Division

## INTRODUCTION

**G**oing to school every day is important for a student's education. This may seem to be stating something extremely obvious, but data from school reviews is now available to support what teachers have long known. Absence from school means that learning opportunities are reduced and this can ultimately lead to poorer student achievement. Where this happens, the impact will be felt long after the student has left school.

Absence from school and class clearly affects the absent student, but also impacts on the teacher's ability to plan and present class work in a sequential and organised way. This can affect the progress of all students in the class, not only those missing, and can make classroom management difficult.

The systematic monitoring of student attendance and the degree to which schools are able to address the absence issue is an important indicator of a school's ability to maximise the learning opportunities it offers to its students.

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*Absence from school means that learning opportunities are reduced and this can ultimately lead to poorer student achievement*

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**E**ffective schools have higher levels of attendance than under-performing schools. Or, put another way, schools with high levels of absence tend to achieve lower academic results. While the correlation between attendance and academic performance is not a straightforward story of cause and effect, examining student absence in conjunction with levels of achievement can give schools important information on which to base their curriculum and policy planning.

This booklet examines the issue of improving school attendance and suggests how the collection of information is an essential starting point. It also outlines approaches that schools might take to improving attendance, based on both research and the experience of schools themselves. Several schools have kindly agreed to allow their experience – the data they have collected, the concerns it raises, and their systems of monitoring student attendance – to be included in this booklet.

When should schools be concerned about levels of absence? A rule of thumb used in some school systems in the USA is that a school average of 12 days absence per student per year is one that requires action. In Victoria, schools can compare their absence levels with those of geographically similar and ‘like’ school groups, and with statewide figures. This information – Extended Student Absence Benchmarks – included in this booklet at Appendix 2, gives a school some indication as to whether its absenteeism levels are higher than they should be.

What can schools do to lift student attendance? First, they have to know it needs lifting and in what ways. This necessarily involves the collection and monitoring of attendance information to identify levels and patterns of attendance, a procedure that is relatively easy for schools to set up and maintain. The figures collected will either confirm or challenge what a school suspects or ‘knows’ anecdotally, or reveal a more complete picture of student attendance.

Attendance figures, when collected consistently and recorded accurately, can be an important source of information as to how well a school is meeting the needs of its students. Initial figures can be adjusted to take account of factors unique to individual schools: the first impressions created by raw attendance data might not necessarily tell the whole story.

Attendance data not only provide insights into aspects of student welfare and achievement, but can also inform decisions on suitable curriculum and teaching methods, the extent to which the needs of particular student groups are being met, and aspects of the school’s culture, policy and general organisation.

As part of their recording and tracking of student absence, and depending on their circumstances, schools might choose to look at lateness, early leaving, skipping classes and truancy. These are not the only manifestations of ‘absence from school’, but they are the most common and the ones that schools can tackle most feasibly.

Although there will always be a measure of student absence within any school, some schools have recognised a need to improve attendance and have taken well-planned steps to do so.

### SCHOOL STORY ONE: *Using the CASES Attendance Module*

Kensington Primary School has a range of strategies aimed at maximising student attendance. The school uses the year-to-date information from the CASES attendance module to track absence.

#### STUDENT ABSENCES REPORT

#### KENSINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL 2374

RANGE OF STUDENT ABSENCES FOR THE CURRENT YEAR FROM 01/01/1997 TO 31/03/1997

Year Level	Total Students in Year Level	Zero days Absent	1 – 10 days Absent	11 – 20 days Absent	21 – 30 Absent	30+ days Absent
0	39	17	21	1	0	0
1	34	12	21	1	0	0
2	22	7	14	0	1	0
3	35	10	24	1	0	0
4	25	6	15	4	0	0
5	20	6	14	0	0	0
6	19	8	10	1	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

It is not always clear to schools whether some students are absent or have left altogether. Kensington's year-to-date absence report for the period 1/1/1997 to 31/03/1997 shows a student who already has over 21 days of absence.

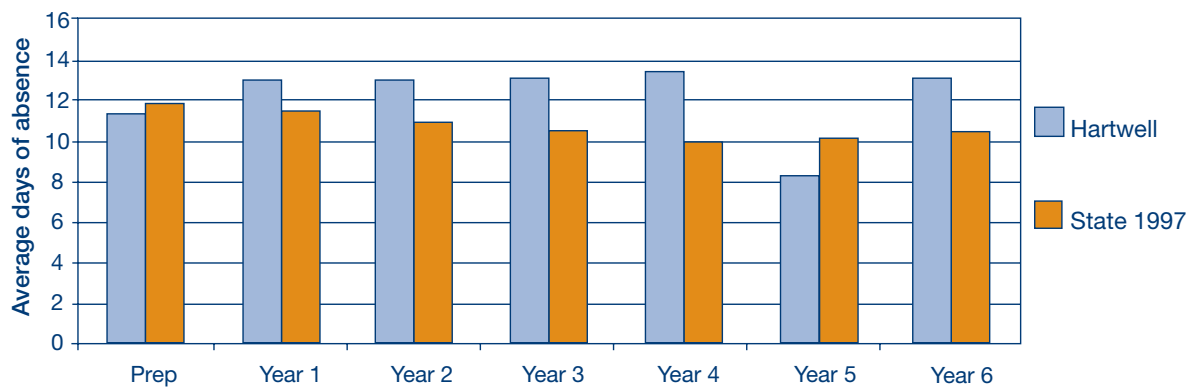
The school suspects that this student has left, but has been unable to contact the family. Should it eventuate that this student has moved to another school, then he or she may be discounted from consideration of average absence levels.

Kensington reports absence levels to parents on student reports and this information is now provided through the attendance module. The school also monitors whether there is a tendency for students with high absence to be part of a homogeneous group, for example, children of recently arrived migrants. This can lead to consultation with community leaders to ensure that the importance of school attendance is broadly known and to determine if groups are facing particular difficulties.

## SCHOOL STORY TWO: *Beyond first impressions*

Hartwell Primary School, when first considering their absence data for 1997, found that their absence levels were quite high compared to those of the state. Apart from Prep and year 5, absence at other year levels seemed high.

COMPARISON OF AVERAGE ABSENCE – HARTWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL COMPARED TO STATE 1997



Compared to the region and to their 'like' school group, they appeared even worse, with only grade 5 being lower on average than each of the comparison groups. However, it was suspected that absence due to students travelling overseas with

their parents might be having a significant affect. It was decided to reconsider the data, controlling for families' overseas travel. The table sets out the number of days of absence that were attributable to overseas travel.

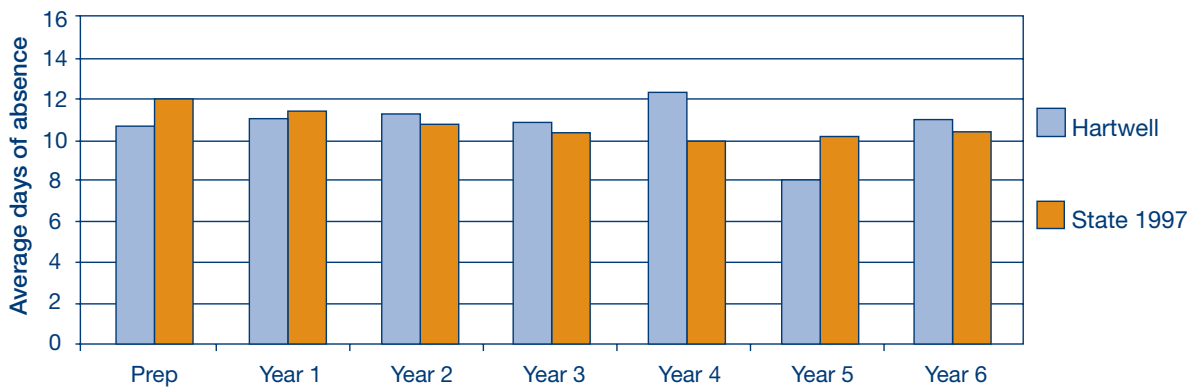
Year Level	CASES total days absent	No. of students travelling overseas	Absence attributable to overseas travel (days)	Corrected total days absent	Average absence per student CASES	Corrected average absence per student
Prep	667	3	35	632	11.3	10.71
1	692	7	185	607	12.9	11.04
2	792.5	7	103	689.5	12.99	11.30
3	693	6	121	572	13.07	10.74
4	695	5	55	640	11.36	12.30
5	461.5	3	20	114.5	8.33	8.02
6	586.5	5	93	494.5	13.3	10.98

The school believes that travel does not have a detrimental effect on education. It has a policy of supporting parents who take their children overseas and provides activities that will maximise the educational value of such trips. In the light of this,

it was felt that any action should take into account the days of absence attributable to student travel.

When the absence graphs are corrected to take this into account, the story looks rather different.

COMPARISON OF AVERAGE ABSENCE LEVELS –  
HARTWELL (CORRECTED) COMPARED TO STATE 1997



The school is effectively at or below the state average for all years except year 4. When compared to the region and the 'like' school group, the school is still above the average absence level for all years except grade 5, but to not nearly the same extent.

The low level of student absence at year 5 was rather intriguing (two teachers take year 5). Investigation of this group's past absence indicated that good attendance levels had been maintained each year. The high level of attendance appears to be a factor associated with this particular group of students.

The school still had some concerns with regard to absence levels, believing they were rather high when compared to the region and to similar schools. As a result, the school resolved to:

- ▶ Monitor the absence of the 1997 year 4 group as they progress through the school and take action to improve their attendance
- ▶ Re-examine absence monitoring procedures to better track students with high levels of absence using the CASES attendance module
- ▶ Individually track academic performance of those students with high absence levels
- ▶ Refocus attention of staff and parents on the importance of school attendance
- ▶ Ensure that parents taking students overseas were aware that the school provided support to help gain maximum educational value from the trip.

### TRUANCY

There does not appear to be any Australian research as to overall levels of truancy in schools, and while the statewide benchmarks for student absence (see graph on page 26) include truancy figures, the extent of their contribution to overall levels of absence is uncertain. A small number of truants absent from school for a large number of days can disproportionately affect a school's average absence rate.

Students who truant might do so on the odd day, either on their own or with friends, or might persistently truant over numbers of days or weeks. In general, truants attempt to conceal their absence from parents and often respond with denials to accusations that they are truanting.

Though they may miss a good deal of school, skipping classes or missing whole days, even persistent truants will usually endeavour to keep in touch with their school. Indeed, it is not uncommon for them to visit the school yard on days when they are 'absent'.

More boys than girls truant with a ratio of 3:1 sometimes mentioned in the literature. Truancy is also more prevalent through the middle years of

secondary school. Truancy is associated with antisocial behaviour and sometimes coexists with attention deficit disorders.

There is a clear relationship between poor academic performance and truancy (Bosworth, 1994). As well, truancy appears to be more prevalent in situations of poverty, social disadvantage and where there are multiple family problems. Truants often misbehave when in class and are frequently in trouble at school for one reason or another.

School culture appears to be an important factor in combating truancy, with some schools having higher truancy levels than others, even in situations where the background characteristics of students are very similar. Some of the factors involved here seem to be the provision of suitable curriculum, good tracking of student absence, quick and consistent follow-up of unexplained absence, cooperation between school and parents, and support designed to ensure that students feel they are part of the school.

The long term effect of not thoroughly endeavouring to address truancy compounds the problem for individual students. It can also contribute to a perception among students that absence is acceptable to some degree.

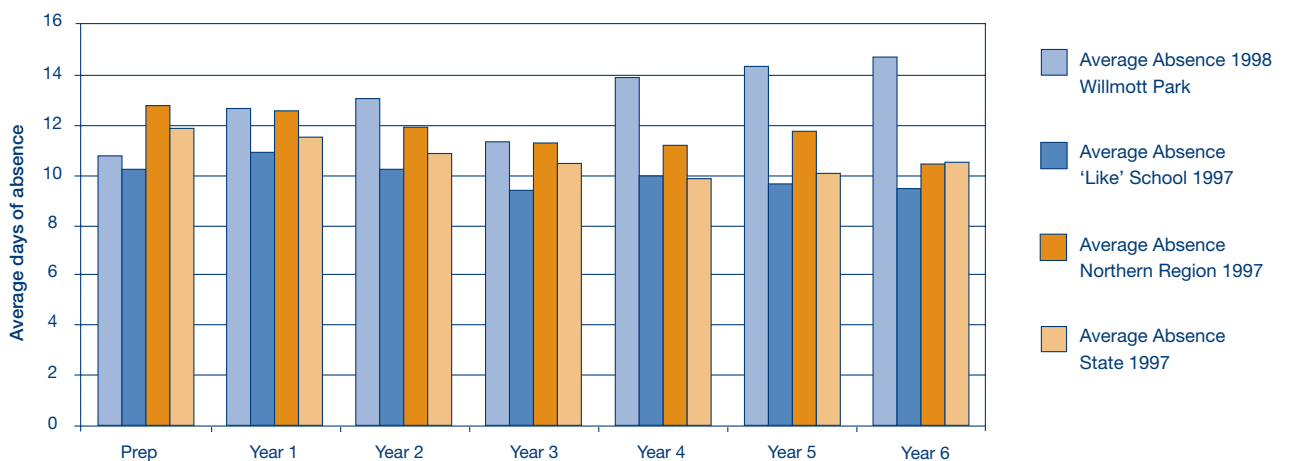
### SCHOOL STORY THREE: *Identifying students*

Willmott Park Primary School had become increasingly worried about levels of attendance. In 1998, absence levels were above the state for all year levels except Prep.

The school keeps thorough data and was aware of the number of students with high absence.

**WILLMOTT PARK: AVERAGE ABSENCE – 1998, COMPARED TO STATE, ‘LIKE’ SCHOOL AND REGION – 1997**

Year Level	Average Absence 1998	Average Absence 1997 ‘Like’ School	Average Absence 1997 Northern Region	Average Absence 1997 State
Prep	10.72	10.24	12.80	11.93
Year 1	12.72	10.92	12.60	11.51
Year 2	13.00	10.23	12.02	10.83
Year 3	11.38	9.33	11.30	10.45
Year 4	13.88	9.94	11.17	9.91
Year 5	14.34	9.60	11.73	10.09
Year 6	14.67	9.40	10.43	10.46



THE FOLLOWING TABLE INDICATES ABSENCES AT ALL YEAR LEVELS,  
GROUPED BY NUMBERS OF DAYS.

Year Level	1 – 10 days Absent	11 – 20 days Absent	21 – 30 Absent	30+ days Absent
Prep	49	29	7	3
Year 1	42	43	7	4
Year 2	32	18	14	2
Year 3	37	21	5	4
Year 4	13	12	2	2
Year 5	12	11	1	3
Year 6	9	8	4	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>20</b>

The total number of days absent at the school for the year was 4869.5, leading to an average absence rate of 12.52 days per student. The group of 60 students with over 21 or 31 days of absence accounted for a minimum of 1460 of the total days, assuming every student was at the bottom end of the range. If these students are not included in the data, this has a dramatic effect on the school's level of student absence, with the average falling to less than 8.4 days per student.

The school concentrated on these students, contacting families in a bid to improve attendance. Although there was an initial improvement in attendance, gains were quickly lost and the old pattern of high absence was soon re-established among these students. As part of the follow-up to their Triennial Review, the school is now considering a more comprehensive approach to improving attendance.

## DISADVANTAGE AND ATTENDANCE

Socio-economic disadvantage is a factor that has a broad effect on attendance. Group measures of disadvantage correlate with poor attendance. That is, students in receipt of financial support such as the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) in Victoria have, as a group, lower attendance rates than other groups of students.

Disadvantage can be a direct cause of absenteeism or the connection can be more indirect: students in a situation of disadvantage are more likely to miss school if a difficulty arises there, or if another

option that is more attractive than going to school is available to them.

When analysing school attendance data, the level of disadvantage within the school needs to be taken into account. The attendance levels of the 'like' school group—that is, the group in which schools are likely to have similar student populations—should provide a useful point of comparison and a starting point for making decisions.

Nevertheless, high levels of disadvantage in the student population do not mean that high levels of absence are unavoidable, as the experience of Preston East Primary School reveals.

### SCHOOL STORY FOUR: *A broad approach*

Preston East Primary School manages to keep absence levels close to, or below, the state average, despite being in 'like' school group 9, with very high levels of students in receipt of EMA. The school attributes this to an approach that includes attention to curriculum, teaching methods and individual support.

There is an emphasis in the curriculum on success in English and mathematics. Indeed, Learning Assessment Project (LAP) tests indicate that the matched group of students at the school improved by 1.25 Curriculum and Standards Framework (CSF) levels from year 3 to year 5. This compares with a statewide improvement in the order of 0.7 of a CSF level.

At the same time, the school makes a conscious effort to provide activities that will make the school program as interesting as possible. This includes a strong science program and emphasis on physical activity and sport. Teaching strategies are geared to challenging students to succeed academically, but easing off when pressures become too strong. School policies ensure that no student misses materials, excursions or camps due to lack of funds.

Individual students are supported by home visits. In some instances, staff bring students to school each morning. There is swift follow-up of unexplained absence and occasionally a no-nonsense approach to students being absent. The school also pays conscious attention to related whole-school issues, such as bullying.

PRESTON EAST PRIMARY SCHOOL AVERAGE ABSENCE COMPARED TO STATE AND  
'LIKE' SCHOOL GROUP

Year Level	School average absence 1997	State average absence 1997	'Like' school average absence 1997
Prep	6.39	11.93	13.8
Year 1	10.70	11.51	13.6
Year 2	10.34	10.83	12.36
Year 3	11.38	10.45	11.6
Year 4	10.32	9.91	10.91
Year 5	8.46	10.09	11.15
Year 6	2.9	10.45	11.07
<b>Total</b>	<b>9.53</b>	<b>11.1</b>	

It is interesting to note the very low absence in year 6 during 1997. The school checked rolls, thinking at first that the year 6 figure was a CASES error. "They were a difficult group, but they just kept coming", was the teacher's summation.

The school has noticed that where individual support, such as bringing students to school is used, old patterns of absence are often re-established when students move on to secondary college. So, it is important, especially where the school has a role in bringing a child to school, that the responsibility to attend is fostered in the student.

The correlation between absence and socio-economic status is not a simple one; there are several interrelating factors at work, with cause and effect entangled. For example, a Tasmanian study of attendance (Kilpatrick, 1997) has shown that on a statewide basis, the correlation between absence from school and disadvantage only becomes apparent when attendance figures for schools in provincial cities are not included. In other words,

in provincial cities, at least in Tasmania, the potential impact of disadvantage on school absence is offset by other factors.

What those factors might be is a matter of speculation. Perhaps the school has a more significant role as a social outlet for students in country areas. Or, it may be that with a high proportion of bus travellers at provincial schools, there is more chance of parents knowing that their children have not been to school. It may also be that truancy is simply more difficult in smaller communities where there are just fewer places to hide or 'hang out'.

Whatever the interplay of factors in this situation, the implication of the Tasmanian research is that schools can reduce absence by making it harder for students to miss school without being caught. This common sense approach, taken by many schools, is supported by British research (Stoll, 1994) which found that the likelihood of getting caught and the threat of associated consequences often acts as a deterrent to truancy.

## SKIPPING CLASS

Skipping particular classes tends to increase as students move up in the school and is one reason many secondary colleges now mark rolls on a lesson-by-lesson, rather than a half-day, basis.

For students undertaking the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), the decision to skip a class in order to complete an assessment requirement for another subject might be a completely rational one. Indeed, many colleges timetable a common day when assessment tasks are due and allow for approved study days prior to this date. Occasionally, individual teachers will allow students to miss a class in order to prepare required work elsewhere, such as in the library, the computer room or at home.

There tend to be two views of this practice. Some teachers view the release of students in this manner as a way of developing trust, combined with the need to encourage maturity and independent work habits. Others think that students can work just as independently in class where help is at hand and believe that allowing students to be absent encourages the development of an inappropriate culture in the school.

This is a situation where an agreed and uniformly implemented school policy is required. If decisions as to whether students may be absent from class are made by individual classroom teachers on an ad hoc basis, then difficulties are bound to arise. This situation also has the potential to play havoc with the accuracy of attendance data where rolls are marked on a lesson-by-lesson basis.

### SCHOOL STORY FIVE: *Changing the culture*

**Melbourne High School** was concerned that the incidence of skipping classes was higher than acceptable. Teachers believed that there was a culture of “playing the system”, particularly associated with the completion of assessment tasks or work requirements, which advantaged some individuals but disadvantaged others. They reasoned that if students knew that whenever they skipped class they would be caught and penalties would result, the practice would lessen.

The school decided to introduce a system of marking the roll in every class. This was accompanied by a good deal of information aimed

at ensuring that students were aware of the new system and the likelihood that they would be caught if they missed classes. The initial follow-up of students who missed class once the new system was in place was rigorous. The outcome of using this new program has been a significant reduction in the number of students skipping class.

There are several commercially available systems for tracking attendance at each lesson. These vary in sophistication and may cost up to \$38,000 for those that do not rely on student monitors. However, by writing their own program and linking it to their ten-day timetable, Melbourne High

School was able to introduce a system for a cost of about \$2000.

Initially, two notebook computers were used. This had the advantage that the impact of excursions and the like on attendance could be pre-programmed. Unfortunately, the wear and tear of constantly opening and closing the laptops as they were taken from class to class soon destroyed them. So, two hand-held bar code readers are now used.

These readers have tags that are read into the computer system at the end of each day by a tag reader. The computer program allows cross references to excursion and similar information.

Two monitors take rolls and readers to each class and teachers scan in absences only.

A leading teacher has responsibility for the system and the school computer technician, who wrote the tracking program, maintains it. Form teachers and year level coordinators, who receive a regular feedback form, follow up absences. This typically occurs within two days. Students are expected to be in class or in the library, unless they are on an excursion or involved in sport.

The system provides absence summaries for individual students, individual classes, year levels, subjects or teachers for any specified period of time.

### SCHOOL STORY SIX: *Tracking year 11*

Craigieburn Secondary College, during 1998, became concerned that instances of skipping classes, particularly in year 11 might be high. Rolls were marked in home group periods at the start of each morning and afternoon but not during each lesson. Anecdotally, teachers felt that many students were skipping some classes but there were no data to check the extent of the problem.

The college decided to mark rolls manually in every class for a trial period of five weeks. The results confirmed their suspicions. For the five weeks commencing 17 August, year 11 students skipped a total of 669 classes.

NUMBER OF CLASSES SKIPPED EACH WEEK, AUGUST 17 TO SEPTEMBER 19 1998

Week 1 Beginning 17/8	Week 2 Beginning 24/8	Week 3 Beginning 31/8	Week 4 Beginning 7/9	Week 5 Beginning 14/9	Total
134	88	168	110	169	669

The college decided to introduce a system of electronic roll marking on a lesson by lesson basis.

The school uses *First Class* as a timetabling program and wanted an absence monitoring program which would automatically link to this, so that information would be available both on the extent of skipping class and the particular classes skipped. There was already a system in place of using two student monitors to mark rolls each day and it was decided to expand their duties to include visiting each class every lesson with bar coded rolls. This ensured that teachers scanned absences for each class. (The college received assistance and advice from Melbourne High School.)

A more subtle situation exists where individual students (and not just those at senior level) make decisions to skip a class or to be absent on days when particular subjects are taught. This may be for as simple a reason as homework not done or not finished or as complex as a curriculum which does not meet the needs of students belonging to particular groups.

Research from the USA (Gabb, 1998) indicates that students who occasionally skip particular classes are not predominantly habitual troublemakers or truants, but rather students who have not completed homework or have made a personal judgement as to the worth of a particular class or classes.

Similarly, students not coping academically and feeling somewhat unconfident or embarrassed in a

particular class might be making a rational, short-term decision not to attend. Of course, in the long term, their problem is compounded. This is one of the factors in the relationship between academic performance and attendance. Research confirms the common sense notion that students with higher absence rates, particularly truants, have lower academic results.

Absence can lead to a cumulative disadvantage in subjects that have a hierarchical cognitive or developmental sequence. If a student is absent when a key concept or prerequisite is taught, they are likely to have increasing difficulty as the course progresses. In turn, this may lead to further absence as the student makes more 'rational' decisions to be absent from classes where they feel they cannot cope or where their peers and teachers perceive them to be having difficulty. Alert teachers, home group or form teachers, and year level coordinators can usually detect when a student is skipping class due to fear of failure, or because of a perceived lack of relevance in the curriculum.

Less easily monitored, though perhaps more far reaching in their implications, are patterns of absence involving particular groups of students with similar learning characteristics. The attendance data for such groups is likely to be complicated by the interaction of a number of related factors. Apart from the difficulty of defining the precise group of students in question, the tendency for skipping class to occur more frequently in some subject areas than in others and

more frequently for some teachers than for others can also make it difficult to draw conclusions.

However, tracking groups of students can provide valuable insights into how well the curriculum is meeting their needs, particularly where attendance data are gathered on a lesson-by-lesson basis.

Monitoring which students are skipping classes and discerning any patterns can indicate the need for a more focused curriculum.

It is to be expected that students with higher rates of absence will perform less well. What is required is to ascertain whether the group identified as having a combination of high absence and low academic performance is homogeneous either in part or whole. If so, further investigation should be made as to whether a more appropriate curriculum or teaching methods can be designed. Similarly, if a group is identified as having high absence in conjunction with high academic results, a similar reconsideration may also be required.

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*a pattern of skipping classes  
can indicate the need for a more  
focussed curriculum*

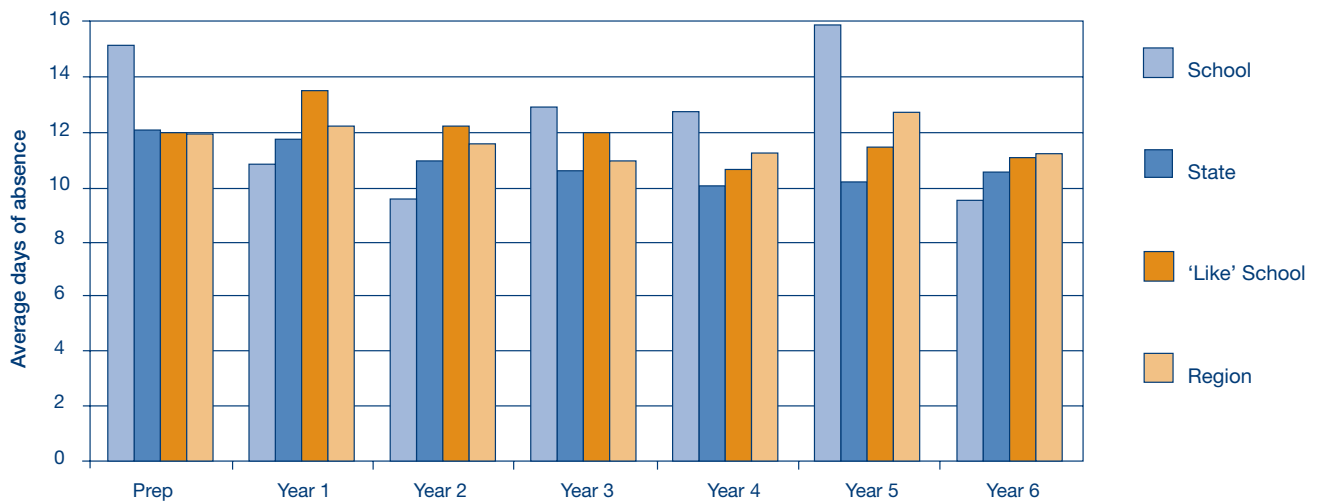
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## SCHOOL STORY SEVEN: *Late arrivals*

### Carnegie Primary School

When Carnegie Primary School compared its attendance levels with the benchmarks, it had some concerns about the number of absences, in particular those at years Prep and 5.

AVERAGE ABSENCE CARNEGIE PRIMARY SCHOOL COMPARED WITH STATE 'LIKE' SCHOOL AND SOUTHERN REGION.



The school suspected that the figures might be due, in part, to the processes of roll marking rather than to actual absence. Rolls were marked at the beginning of each day and returned to the office. If students were late, even for the first few minutes, they were marked absent for the half day.

The school kept good records of late arrivals and decided to investigate if lateness was affecting absence records. Although the records of lateness were thorough, they were recorded by individual

grade (often composite) making it difficult to identify absence at specific year levels. As a result, it was decided to aggregate the absence data into the three groups in which lateness was recorded: Prep to 2, years 3 to 5, and year 6.

Group	Total absence CASES	Number of students	Total students late	Absence due to lateness	Adjusted total absence	Percentage affect of lateness
Years Prep 1 and 2	1194.5	106	360	180	1014.5	15.1%
Years 3, 4 and 5	1053.5	86	326	163	890.5	15.5%
Year 6	265	27	53	26	239	9.8%

Indications were that lateness was inflating absence, but the grouping of data made it difficult to specify the extent at each year level, apart from year 6. For year 6, it appeared that counting lateness as a half day absent could be inflating the data by 9.8 per cent. For years Prep to 5, it appeared that the number of days absent might have been inflated by up to 15.5 per cent.

Based solely on the data, an adequate response to these figures would be to change roll marking procedures and monitor absence across the year. However, interpreting these indicators and deciding what action to take requires qualitative knowledge of the school environment. Effectively, only the school can decide whether action is required and what that action should be.

The information collected by the school sparked some debate as to whether every late student was marked absent. There was some uncertainty among staff as to whether this was always the case. This led to a discussion of whether levels of lateness were too high in any case. In the end, it was felt that some concern about absence levels was warranted.

The school decided to ensure that roll marking was consistent and to record lateness by year level so as to allow more targeted consideration of data. As well, some immediate steps were taken to remind parents of the importance of students being at school and arriving on time. However, two issues led the school to seek more information before making attendance a major focus: the fact that not all year levels had rates of absence above the benchmarks; and that some volatility in absence levels from year to year was always possible.

It was decided to monitor absence using the 'year to date' facility of the CASES attendance module. If sufficient information is gained in this way, it will be used to inform goal improvement statements that the school is developing for its Triennial Review. If more information is required, a goal improvement focus may be written into the school's charter at a later time. In any event, it has been decided that decreased levels of student lateness will be a goal focus in the school's new charter.

### POLICY

In regard to whole school issues of attendance, effective schools with high attendance levels tend to have a clearly stated and agreed policy that is known to staff, students and parents and is uniformly implemented. Parents and staff are reminded on a regular basis of the potential detrimental effect of absence on learning and a culture is nurtured within the school that absence is accepted only where a sufficient reason, such as genuine illness, exists. Students who have been absent are expected to ascertain from teachers what work has been missed and undertake that work, either at an arranged time or in their own time. Such schools also tend to provide sufficient curriculum breadth to meet the needs of all groups of students, particularly at upper levels.

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*effective schools with high attendance levels tend to have a clearly stated and agreed policy*

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### MONITORING AND FOLLOW-UP

Some schools have increased attendance by conscientiously tracking absence and skipping of classes. Students are expected to provide a note from a parent immediately upon return to school. There are consistent consequences for failure to provide a note within two days, with referral to a coordinator and possible detention. Where truancy is suspected, there is contact with the home on the day of the absence. In cases of persistent, parent-approved absence, the home is continually contacted.

At the upper levels of schooling, a valuable exercise for secondary colleges can be to run evening 'focus' groups of students – those in year 11 are suggested – and ask why absence levels are high.

Students' responses can often provide an honest and sobering appraisal of attendance monitoring and follow-up procedures, and point to approaches schools might take to tackle this problem.

#### WELFARE SUPPORT

Successful schools have clear policies and processes in place for welfare support of individual students, in conjunction with their families. This support may include programs such as an individualised curriculum, breakfast programs, nurturing friendship groups, peer support, intervention by school support officers, and attention to issues like bullying on both a whole-school and individual basis.

#### INDIVIDUAL FOCUS

Suspension from school is not a suitable deterrent for truants. 'In school' suspension or 'time out' is a better strategy with studies indicating that such withdrawal from class need not academically disadvantage students. Rather, such actions can help maintain the student-school link and reinforce student perceptions that they are part of the school. Provision of more individualised programs or small group teaching can be helpful in reducing truancy.

A cooperative effort between the school, parents and a counsellor is the most effective way to approach the problem of persistent truancy. The Promoting Attendance and School Success (PASS) program of Monash University, based at Monash Medical Centre, offers professional development for teachers on the issue of truancy. The program also provides support for individual students,

working in conjunction with school and parents. It undertakes an initial assessment with student, parents and staff, followed by individual counselling over a twelve-week period. As well as visits to the school to plan support strategies, follow-up support for school staff is provided. The program may be contacted on (03) 9550 1300. In some instances, regional teaching units may also assist with truanting students.

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*A cooperative effort between the school, parents and a counsellor is the most effective way to approach the problem of persistent truancy.*

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## USING ATTENDANCE DATA

### A PROCESS FOR SCHOOLS TO FOLLOW

The time of compiling an annual report or self-assessment for a Triennial Review is an appropriate time for a school to consider its absence data in depth. A useful process to follow is:

1. Compare your school's absence average with that of the state, region, and 'like' school benchmarks for each year level. (The publication *School Management Benchmarks 98* is available on the website: [www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/of\\_review](http://www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/of_review))
2. Check whether the school rates are within, below or above the middle 50 per cent of schools.
3. Calculate and consider your school's average absence when students with high levels of absence are controlled for. (The 'year to date' option in the CASES attendance module provides this data.)
4. Consider, in turn, each factor that may be affecting absence within the school. Where appropriate, control for these factors in calculations of absence rates.
5. Correlate the academic performance of the group of students with high absence and consider whether there is an homogeneous group, or sub-group, involved.
6. Consider whether action is required and if so, what form that action might take.

### TWO SCHOOLS AND THE BENCHMARKS

Each year the Accountability and Development Division publishes statewide Management Benchmarks, allowing schools to record, alongside their own data, the appropriate statewide averages for student absence at particular year levels.

#### STATEWIDE AVERAGES

The tables overleaf show annual reports on student absence for a secondary college of approximately 1400 and a primary school of about 140 students. Comparing their own averages with the state average at each year level gives these schools a broad indication of their relative performance in the area of student attendance.

AVERAGE NUMBER OF ABSENCES PER STUDENT BY YEAR LEVEL FOR THE YEAR 1997:  
YEARS 7 – 12

Year Level	Number of days of student absences (total)	Average number of absences per student	Statewide average number of absences per student
Year 7	1916.00	14.52	13.10
Year 8	2797.50	23.91	16.10
Year 9	3162.50	27.26	18.18
Year 10	1541.00	10.02	17.08
Year 11	892.50	15.66	12.71
Year 12	597.50	12.99	11.81
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,907.00</b>	<b>16.06</b>	

AVERAGE NUMBER OF ABSENCES PER STUDENT BY YEAR LEVEL FOR THE YEAR 1997:  
YEARS PREP – 6

Year Level	Number of days of student absences (total)	Average number of absences per student	Statewide average number of absences per student
Prep	437.00	8.09	11.93
Year 1	551.00	14.50	11.51
Year 2	364.00	15.83	10.83
Year 3	348.00	15.82	10.45
Year 4	291.50	13.25	9.91
Year 5	310.00	11.48	10.09
Year 6	351.50	11.72	10.46
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,653.00</b>	<b>12.28</b>	

In the case of the secondary college, the year 10 level of absence is well below that of the state, while at years 7 and 12 the levels are slightly higher. At year 11 the school average is almost three days higher than that for the state, while the average is nine days and 7.8 days per student above the state average at years 8 and 9 respectively.

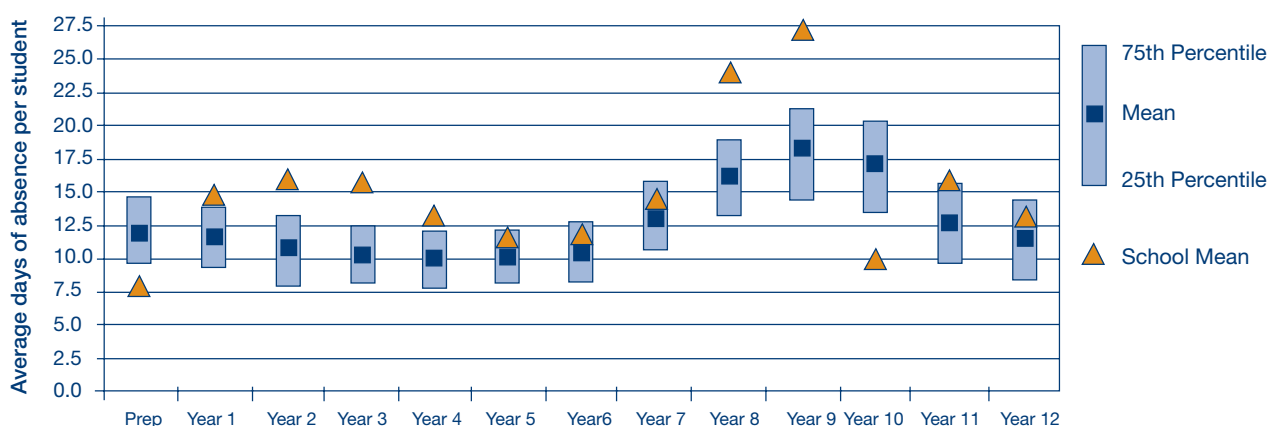
For the primary school, average absence is above the state for all years except the preparatory year. Indeed, for years 2 and 3, the school average is half as high again as it is for the state, and for year 4 it is over three days per student higher than the state average.

## STATEWIDE DISTRIBUTION

The Benchmarks also provide a picture of the distribution of absence across the state. Schools can see how their absence levels 'sit' in relation to

the middle 50 per cent of schools-those falling between the 25th and 75th percentiles-across the state. On the following graph, the average absence of both the secondary college and the primary school is marked as a triangle.

STUDENT ABSENCE 1997, PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND SECONDARY COLLEGES, COMPARISON OF SCHOOL MEANS



From this graph, the secondary college can see that while it is above the state average for absence at all year levels except year 10, and well above the 75th percentile for years 8 and 9, its pattern of average absence generally follows that for the state-that is, higher levels of absence in years 8 and 9, and lower in years 7, 11 and 12.

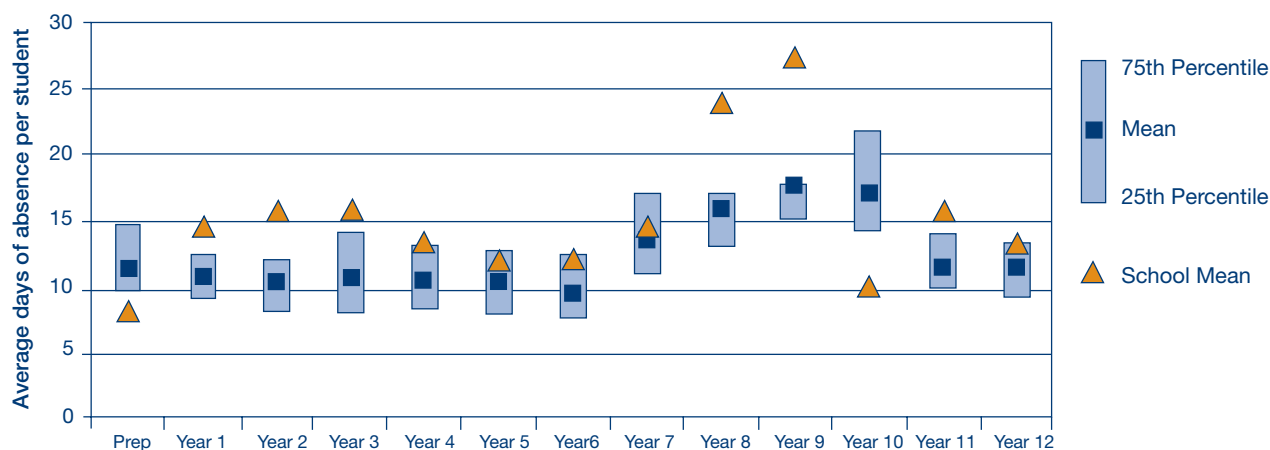
The primary school's pattern of absence, on the other hand, runs counter to the statewide pattern, with levels of absence increasing from prep through years 1, 2, 3 and 4.

## REGIONAL AND 'LIKE' SCHOOL GROUPS

Both of these schools are in the same region and are in 'like' school group 4. Again, in the following graphs, the average school absence for each of the schools is shown as a triangle on the distribution of absence across the region and the 'like' school group.

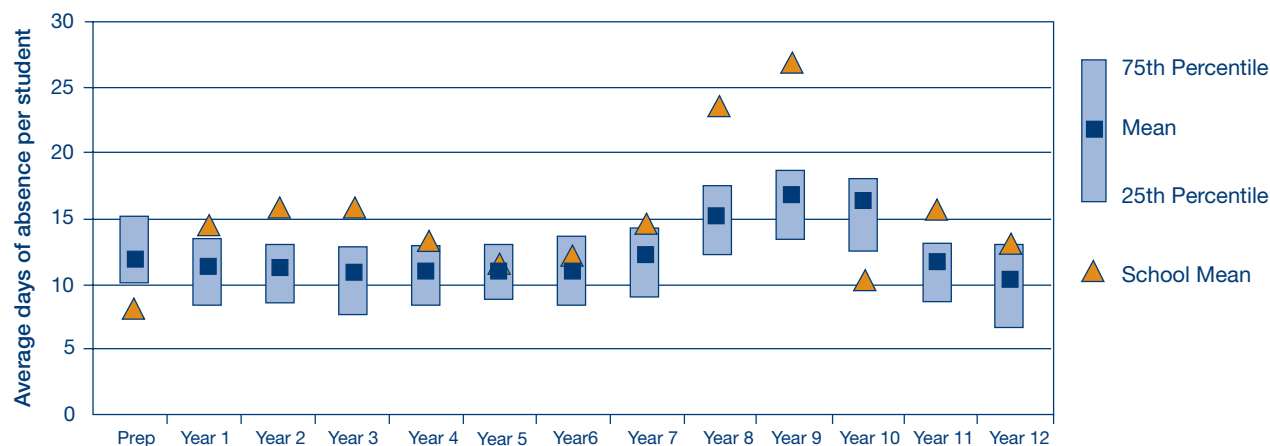
### BARWON SOUTH WESTERN REGION – AVERAGE STUDENT ABSENCE BY YEAR LEVEL

	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
75th Percentile	14.56	12.47	12.15	14.12	13.24	12.77	12.72	16.99	17.15	17.83	21.80	13.85	13.26
Mean	11.78	11.01	10.61	10.64	10.51	10.39	9.52	13.83	15.93	17.75	17.10	11.55	11.57
25th Percentile	9.79	8.95	8.09	7.92	8.12	7.78	7.45	11.06	12.96	15.12	14.23	9.81	9.33
School Mean	8.09	14.50	15.83	15.82	13.25	11.48	11.72	14.52	23.91	27.26	10.02	15.66	12.99



### 'LIKE' SCHOOL GROUP 4 – AVERAGE STUDENT ABSENCE BY YEAR LEVEL

	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
75th Percentile	15.19	13.51	13.17	13.01	13.00	13.10	13.75	14.41	17.66	18.85	18.31	13.20	13.09
Mean	11.71	11.37	11.39	10.81	10.82	11.15	11.01	12.35	15.32	17.10	16.55	11.79	10.29
25th Percentile	9.98	8.62	8.53	7.45	8.28	8.82	8.36	9.11	12.26	13.66	12.62	8.52	6.55
School Mean	8.09	14.50	15.83	15.82	13.25	11.48	11.72	14.52	23.91	27.26	10.02	15.66	12.99



Whereas the average absence at year 1 in the primary school fell within the middle 50 per cent of schools when compared to the state, this is not the case when compared to the region. The opposite is the case for year 4 which falls within the middle 50 per cent of schools when compared with both regional and 'like' school averages.

When compared with 'like' schools, the secondary college's year 7 absence is closer to the 75th percentile than it is when compared to the state. Year 11 and 12 absence is also higher when compared to the 'like' school group than it is when compared with the state or region.

#### DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

##### *The primary school*

It appears that from a low level in prep, student absence rises through year 1 and is unacceptably high in years 2 and 3. It then begins to return to more normal levels at year 4, where it is above the 75th percentile compared with the state, but just within the middle 50 per cent of schools when compared to the region and 'like' school group.

It would seem that this school needs to take action to improve attendance in years 1 to 4.

##### *The secondary college*

Years 8 and 9 are well above all absence benchmarks and year 10 is well below. This may indicate deficiencies in the collection or recording of student absence. For example, it is possible that at these two year levels, a student who is late or

misses a single period, may be recorded as absent for a half day (see School story seven – page 20).

Alternatively, there may be a group of students in these particular year 8 and 9 levels with a large number of absences and this may be inflating the average. If, after checking these possibilities, it is found that the absence levels indicated are correct, this school would need to take immediate action to improve attendance in these two years in particular.

The fact that absence levels in the college, apart from those at year 10, are above the state average would also be cause for concern. In particular, absence in years 11 and 12 is high in comparison to both the region and the 'like' school group. It seems the school might need to reconsider its overall attendance policy and how it is implemented.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX I. ADDITIONAL FACTORS IN STUDENT ATTENDANCE

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment and Training, *Report into Truancy and Exclusion from School* (1996) identified a number of interacting factors that can have an impact on a student's school attendance patterns.

These factors are summarised in *Department of Education Student Attendance Guidelines* (1997). They include: transience and mobility; lack of parental interest, support and recognition of the value of education; low socio-economic status; culture and cultural expectations; unemployment; family dysfunction; substance abuse; abuse of/by individual family members; learning difficulties and underachievement (particularly literacy); boredom and lack of motivation for learning; homelessness; disadvantage, isolation and an inability to make friends; and low self-esteem and inappropriate anger.

Several factors can have an impact on student attendance. These factors are discussed under a few broad headings.

#### ILLNESS

While illness is clearly a factor in student absence from school, it is usually only one of several factors. High levels of absence in a school are unlikely to be wholly, or even mostly explained by reference to outbreaks of 'flu or chicken pox or other common childhood and adolescent ailments.

#### SCHOOL WITHDRAWAL

School withdrawal is the situation where a parent 'keep(s) them away from school, either on a regular basis or for long periods, for reasons related to the needs and the priorities of the parent. This group also includes children who have not been enrolled at school by their parents' (House of Reps Report, 1996, p 8). This is distinguished from home education in that formal or informal education is not provided by the parents to compensate for the child's removal from 'regular' schooling. Often the child will be involved in working as a part of the family business, or contributing to the family's income in other ways, or assisting in the day-to-day running of the home or with child care duties.

#### SCHOOL REFUSAL

Research by the PASS Program (Promoting Attendance and School Success) of Monash University indicates that in the order of 1-2 per cent of students are likely to be school refusers at some stage.

School refusers tend to be students suffering severe emotional upset. Studies in Britain have characterised school refusers as having, in some cases, emotional-behavioural problems and in many cases links to chaotic families, broken relationships, endemic poverty, homelessness and a culture of unemployment (Whitney, 1994). Although school refusal occurs across all year levels, it is more

frequently seen in the early years of schooling, around age five and at times of transition. Thus there is a higher incidence when students move to another school and when they move to secondary college through years 6 and 7.

There appear to be approximately equal numbers of boys and girls who are school refusers. They do not usually exhibit anti-social behaviour, such as misbehaviour in class, lying, destructiveness, shoplifting, drug use or the like. Once at school, these students will often behave normally, with the phobic behaviour reappearing the next morning (Berg, 1996). Parents or caregivers often consent to the absence of school refusers. It is sometimes difficult in these cases to ascertain whether parents are being oversensitive to their child's demands, have separation difficulties of their own, or are simply 'worn down' by the constant battle to get their child to attend.

There is some evidence that school refusal can be alleviated through brief cognitive-behavioural treatment (King et al, 1998). In general, it is necessary to refer school refusers to a school support officer or to an agency such as the Austin Hospital or Children's Hospital Child Psychiatry Unit or the PASS program at Monash Medical Centre. A cooperative effort between school, parents and a counsellor is the most effective way to approach this problem.

It can be a useful exercise to exclude school refusers when calculating the school's overall average absence rates. Prolonged absence by a small

number of students may adversely affect the average number of days absent per student, particularly in small schools. This means calculating the average level of absence separately from the figure provided by CASES. It will then be interesting to compare the school's two absence figures and determine just how much school refusal contributes to average absence rates.

Statewide benchmarks include absence due to school refusal, although the extent of this contribution to the overall figure is uncertain. However, it is likely that the effect is not large.

## APPENDIX 2. EXTENDED STUDENT ABSENCE BENCHMARKS

### ABSENCE BY REGION 1998

#### BARWON SOUTH WESTERN REGION

	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
75th Percentile	14.56	12.47	12.15	14.12	13.24	12.77	12.72	16.99	17.15	17.83	21.80	13.85	13.26
Mean	11.78	11.01	10.61	10.64	10.51	10.39	9.52	13.83	15.93	17.75	17.10	11.55	11.57
25th Percentile	9.79	8.95	8.09	7.92	8.12	7.78	7.45	11.06	12.96	15.12	14.23	9.81	9.33

#### CENTRAL HIGHLANDS WIMMERA REGION

	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
75th Percentile	14.38	13.48	12.56	13.96	11.88	12.30	13.65	16.24	15.39	17.31	15.37	13.28	11.14
Mean	11.05	11.19	10.91	10.21	9.57	10.41	10.47	12.69	14.17	15.73	14.54	13.13	8.57
25th Percentile	8.01	8.63	7.99	7.15	7.54	7.54	8.63	8.42	9.23	11.29	10.18	6.66	6.64

#### LODDON CAMPASPE MALLEE REGION

	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
75th Percentile	16.23	14.32	13.41	14.23	11.65	12.21	12.29	14.14	15.51	18.53	17.88	13.03	12.72
Mean	13.26	11.51	11.32	9.77	9.99	10.44	9.57	12.78	14.76	17.43	18.50	9.56	8.26
25th Percentile	10.07	9.21	8.78	7.59	8.36	8.03	8.13	7.64	10.93	11.97	8.86	6.86	4.89

#### GOULBURN NORTH EASTERN REGION

	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
75th Percentile	16.98	14.08	13.48	14.28	12.89	12.80	13.59	15.22	17.57	18.40	21.03	16.29	13.72
Mean	11.75	11.32	10.47	10.86	10.26	10.51	10.54	13.90	15.83	16.73	17.21	14.10	11.54
25th Percentile	8.74	8.39	7.34	7.43	7.92	7.06	6.78	12.85	14.15	14.29	13.48	10.90	10.26

#### GIPPSLAND REGION

	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
75th Percentile	15.77	13.51	12.40	15.24	13.05	13.19	13.90	15.33	17.82	16.65	21.84	15.36	12.28
Mean	11.57	11.16	10.71	10.82	10.81	11.36	11.04	11.51	14.49	15.86	16.37	12.58	12.38
25th Percentile	8.00	7.88	6.99	6.85	8.32	6.76	6.58	7.30	9.38	11.85	13.03	9.63	8.83

### EASTERN METROPOLITAN REGION

	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
75th Percentile	12.92	13.50	12.38	12.84	11.96	12.21	12.47	16.35	19.93	22.29	19.52	15.92	17.98
Mean	10.48	10.63	10.29	9.89	9.80	9.85	9.66	13.17	16.49	18.86	17.06	13.57	13.79
25th Percentile	9.41	8.81	8.76	7.62	7.90	8.15	7.60	11.63	14.24	15.79	14.36	11.36	9.32

### WESTERN METROPOLITAN REGION

	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
75th Percentile	15.10	14.77	13.73	14.81	12.54	13.31	13.79	15.08	18.69	26.12	21.43	16.83	15.65
Mean	12.04	13.04	11.87	11.60	10.92	10.66	11.59	13.44	16.35	20.36	17.97	13.12	11.34
25th Percentile	10.78	11.42	10.32	9.06	9.12	9.06	9.26	11.98	15.80	16.73	15.14	12.00	7.14

### SOUTHERN METROPOLITAN REGION

	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
75th Percentile	14.37	14.08	13.65	13.21	13.37	13.70	13.89	15.43	20.66	21.25	19.96	14.80	15.27
Mean	11.84	12.06	11.45	10.80	11.02	12.58	10.99	12.69	17.22	18.04	17.05	11.30	10.94
25th Percentile	9.87	10.45	9.67	8.41	8.84	9.20	8.51	9.76	10.98	11.83	11.84	8.21	9.22

### NORTHERN METROPOLITAN REGION

	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
75th Percentile	15.96	14.49	14.26	14.48	13.16	14.66	13.79	13.35	14.88	16.56	19.44	12.57	12.26
Mean	12.28	12.26	12.02	11.30	11.17	11.73	10.43	12.33	15.55	18.61	16.54	13.90	11.61
25th Percentile	10.04	10.11	10.42	10.23	9.26	9.68	7.82	8.40	9.50	12.75	12.12	6.90	6.74

## ABSENCE BY 'LIKE' SCHOOL GROUP 1998

### 'LIKE' SCHOOL GROUP 1

	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
75th Percentile	13.32	12.70	12.93	14.06	11.73	12.14	13.03	14.38	17.09	19.07	17.98	14.79	13.65
Mean	10.76	10.95	10.74	10.38	10.18	11.85	10.24	10.66	13.94	16.17	15.17	11.97	12.23
25th Percentile	9.05	9.39	8.19	8.27	7.71	7.61	7.52	8.62	10.38	13.35	12.49	8.43	8.62

### 'LIKE' SCHOOL GROUP 2

	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
75th Percentile	11.92	12.21	11.67	11.48	11.16	11.12	11.62	14.44	16.02	19.61	18.71	15.68	13.43
Mean	10.24	10.92	10.23	9.33	9.94	9.60	9.40	13.06	15.29	17.79	16.31	12.85	13.11
25th Percentile	9.70	9.14	8.81	7.98	8.25	8.17	7.75	11.29	13.45	14.34	12.67	12.21	11.01

### 'LIKE' SCHOOL GROUP 3      Insufficient data are available to enable valid comparisons with group 8 secondary colleges

	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
75th Percentile	15.80	14.30	13.50	14.39	13.00	13.30	13.70	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mean	12.18	10.50	10.55	10.38	8.90	9.47	9.79	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
25th Percentile	11.14	8.96	8.80	6.60	7.29	8.21	8.40	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

### 'LIKE' SCHOOL GROUP 4

	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
75th Percentile	15.19	13.51	13.17	13.01	13.00	13.10	13.75	14.41	17.66	18.85	18.31	13.20	13.09
Mean	11.71	11.37	11.39	10.81	10.82	11.15	11.01	12.35	15.32	17.10	16.55	11.79	10.29
25th Percentile	9.98	8.62	8.53	7.45	8.28	8.82	8.36	9.11	12.26	13.66	12.62	8.52	6.55

### 'LIKE' SCHOOL GROUP 5

	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
75th Percentile	14.47	13.97	13.09	13.60	12.65	12.15	12.42	15.66	19.10	22.26	20.07	15.65	15.14
Mean	11.56	11.22	10.37	10.56	10.48	10.06	9.59	13.06	16.98	19.21	17.09	13.24	12.11
25th Percentile	10.21	10.40	9.31	8.64	9.59	8.04	6.50	8.76	11.86	15.84	12.39	10.13	8.99

‘LIKE’ SCHOOL GROUP 6

	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
75th Percentile	14.93	14.77	13.22	13.32	13.11	14.93	14.05	16.04	19.93	22.61	20.62	19.52	20.61
Mean	11.86	13.38	12.10	11.82	10.56	11.36	10.98	15.04	18.47	21.16	19.09	16.30	14.44
25th Percentile	8.91	10.34	10.04	8.01	9.17	9.03	8.60	14.72	16.22	18.64	16.95	12.87	12.37

‘LIKE’ SCHOOL GROUP 7

	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
75th Percentile	15.63	14.42	12.94	15.28	12.90	12.72	13.88	17.81	19.06	19.03	21.87	17.61	14.64
Mean	12.31	11.28	10.83	10.54	10.08	11.04	10.75	14.08	17.14	18.44	18.41	12.77	10.72
25th Percentile	8.45	7.99	7.45	6.58	7.07	7.34	7.44	9.52	11.55	14.13	12.63	9.90	8.87

‘LIKE’ SCHOOL GROUP 8      Insufficient data are available to enable valid comparisons with group 8 secondary colleges

	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
75th Percentile	16.28	15.02	14.41	14.52	13.50	13.93	13.85	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mean	12.57	12.51	11.80	11.46	11.51	11.68	10.44	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
25th Percentile	9.62	10.23	9.45	9.26	9.46	9.59	7.99	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

‘LIKE’ SCHOOL GROUP 9

	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
75th Percentile	17.06	15.26	14.67	14.79	13.11	14.31	13.78	17.55	19.05	22.77	21.22	15.41	16.45
Mean	13.80	13.46	12.36	11.60	10.91	11.15	11.07	14.29	17.19	20.19	18.28	13.67	12.64
25th Percentile	11.07	11.40	9.99	9.26	8.85	8.79	8.18	11.77	15.39	15.31	16.39	13.23	9.49

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