



KIRWAN STATE HIGH SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE STRATEGY

KIRWAN STATE HIGH SCHOOL

A World Class School

Telephone (07) 4773 8111

Facsimile (07) 4773 8100

Email principal@kirwanshs.eq.edu.au

Address Hudson Street, Kirwan, Qld 4817

PO Box 33, Thuringowa Central, Qld 4817

kirwanshs.eq.edu.au

Kirwan High is a mindful school in which education is highly valued as a means for success for individuals and the community as a whole. We have high expectations and demand greatness from all students. To achieve at a high level and transition to a successful future, students must attend school regularly.

Being one of the largest schools in Queensland enables us to provide a large range of subject offerings and extracurricular programs. The opportunities for students are highlighted through our newly established attendance strategy – *Be Here and Belong*. This strategy is underpinned by the philosophy that a sense of belonging ensures young people are part of an inclusive community, enabling them to achieve excellent attendance and academic results.

Kirwan High is a school for everybody, where everybody can belong.

The collage features a large, stylized rainbow in the top left corner. The text "WHAT WILL YOU BELONG TO?" is prominently displayed in the upper right, with the word "WHAT" in white and "WILL YOU BELONG TO?" in white. Below this, the phrase "BE HERE & BELONG" is written in large, bold, white capital letters. The collage includes several photographs of students engaged in various activities: a student in a yellow shirt working on a project, a group of students in red and white uniforms playing drums, a student in a red and white uniform working on a project, a group of students in red and white uniforms sitting around a table, a student in a red and white uniform holding a globe, and a group of students in red and white uniforms sitting around a table. The collage is decorated with green clouds, red circles, and a green star.

WHAT WILL YOU BELONG TO?

BE HERE & BELONG

KIRWAN STATE HIGH SCHOOL

Achieving excellent attendance at Kirwan High means that:

Students are committed to:

- Attending every lesson, everyday.
- Adopting a growth mindset
- Building positive relationships with teachers.
- Engaging in curriculum classes.
- Exploring extracurricular activities offered by the school.
- Accessing support to achieve their goals.

Parents/Guardians are committed to:

- Valuing the importance of their child attending every lesson everyday.
- Encouraging their child to explore extracurricular activities offered by the school.
- Supporting their child through challenges that arise throughout their school experience.



Kirwan High is committed to:

- Providing a broad range of curricular and extracurricular opportunities for students.
- Delivering high quality, intellectually challenging lessons that engage students.
- Developing personal skills for resilient behaviours.
- Building positive relationships with students and their families.
- Providing support and guidance for those students who have not connected to the Kirwan High community.
- Accurately tracking attendance in HGR and curriculum classes.
- Celebrating students who achieve excellent attendance.
- Providing opportunities for students to have a voice.
- Creating a safe and inclusive environment for learning.
- Working closely with parents and guardians to help them engage their child.



Regular school attendance

Information for parents and carers

Did you know? Research shows that in Queensland, higher student attendance at school is associated, on average, with higher student achievement.

Why is regular attendance at school important?

Regular school attendance will mean that your child has a better chance in life. Your child will achieve better when they go to school all day, every school day.

- they learn better
- they make friends
- they are happier
- they have a brighter future.

Why must I send my child to school?

Under Queensland law, you must make sure your child of school age is enrolled and attends school all day, every school day unless they have an acceptable reason. Illness, doing work experience or competing in a school sporting event are acceptable reasons for being absent from school.

Principals decide if the reason given for your child's absence is acceptable.

Avoid keeping your child away from school for:

- birthdays, shopping, visiting family and friends, if they sleep in, looking after other children, minor check ups or care such as hair cuts.

Routine medical or other health appointments should be made either before or after school or during the school holidays.

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

You are encouraged not to schedule holidays during school time. If your family holiday is during school time, let the school know in advance and talk about what arrangements

can be made for your child. Depending on the circumstances the school may be able to provide tasks for your child to complete while they are absent or assist you to organise an exemption from schooling.

Do I need to let the school know if my child has been away from school?

Yes, you must let the school know the reason why your child has been absent from school within two school days of their return. If possible, advise the school beforehand.

Are you having problems getting your child to school for some of these reasons?

- won't get out of bed in the morning
- won't go to bed at night
- can't find their uniform, books, school bag ...
- slow to eat breakfast
- haven't done their homework
- watching TV
- have a test or presentation to do, have an assignment to hand in
- it's their birthday.

If so, a set routine can help

- have a set time to go to bed
- have a set time to get out of bed
- have uniform and school bag ready the night before
- have a set time for starting and finishing breakfast
- set a time for daily homework activities
- speak about school positively
- be firm, send your child to school every school day including their birthday and the last day of term!

What should I do if my child won't go to school?

You should contact the school as soon as possible for advice and support.

Every day counts – Is your child at school today?

www.education.qld.gov.au/everydaycounts



What happens if my child is not attending school?

If your child is of '**compulsory school age**' (when a child is at least 6 years and 6 months of age until they turn 16 years of age or complete Year 10, whichever comes first) please expect the following to occur:

1. You will be contacted by a member of the Kirwan High Engagement Team who will enquire about your child's attendance.
2. If attendance does not improve you will receive a letter suggesting some strategies to help you and your child improve their attendance (letter included in booklet).
3. If attendance still does not improve 3 weeks (15 school days) after the initial contact you will receive a Notice: **Form 4- Failure to Attend** (letter included in booklet). This explains your legal requirement and the fact you may be prosecuted.
4. If after 1 week (5 school days) from receiving a Form 4, attendance still has not improved to a reasonable standard you will receive a Warning Notice: Form 5 – Failure to Attend (letter included in booklet). This letter informs you that it is recommended that you be prosecuted.
5. If after 1 week (5 school days) from receiving a **Form 5**, attendance still has not improved to a reasonable standard your case will be passed on to Regional Office and the Director-General's permission to prosecute will be sought.

If your child is of '**compulsory participation phase**' (once a child reaches 16 years of age or completes Year 10) please expect the following to occur:

1. You will be contacted by a member of the Kirwan High Engagement Team who will enquire about your child's attendance.
2. If attendance does not improve you will receive a letter suggesting some strategies to help you and your child improve their attendance (letter included in booklet).
3. If attendance still does not improve to a reasonable standard the At Risk of Cancellation Process will begin. This process involves your enrolment being cancelled at Kirwan High.

What is a reasonable Excuse: the Director General's Guidelines for what is considered a reasonable excuse for absence is included in this booklet.

Application for Exemption from Compulsory Schooling: this application is included in this booklet. This must be used when a child is absent for more than 10 consecutive days, including illness, family reasons, cultural or religious reasons.



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Dear Parent/Guardian

Our records indicate that your child has been absent from school for ____ days. All students should be aiming for 100% attendance to enable them to achieve their potential.

It is essential that you talk with your child in regards to this situation. If there are any issues that you need assistance with in order to improve your child's attendance please consider one of the following options, or combination of options, in order to ensure their attendance improves.

What?	Who Can Help?
<input type="checkbox"/> Subject Selection Advice	<input type="checkbox"/> Guidance Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss with Class Teacher or Subject Head of Department
<input type="checkbox"/> Counselling re: family or personal issues which impact on attendance	<input type="checkbox"/> Guidance Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Community Education Counsellor (Indigenous students) <input type="checkbox"/> Defence Transition Mentor <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Support Coordinator <input type="checkbox"/> HOD Student Wellbeing <input type="checkbox"/> House Master <input type="checkbox"/> School Chaplain
<input type="checkbox"/> Time Management or Study Skills	<input type="checkbox"/> House Master <input type="checkbox"/> Head of Department Student Wellbeing <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Teachers
<input type="checkbox"/> Attendance	<input type="checkbox"/> Head of Department Student Wellbeing <input type="checkbox"/> House Master <input type="checkbox"/> Engagement Officer/Attendance Team <input type="checkbox"/> Community Education Counsellors <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Support Coordinator

It is extremely important that you take advantage of the support available to help your child improve their attendance.

Please contact the person you think is best to help you.

Yours sincerely,

HOD Student Wellbeing (Junior)

HOD Student Wellbeing (Senior)



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Dear

NOTICE ABOUT COMPULSORY SCHOOLING OBLIGATION – FAILURE TO ATTEND

Section 178(2) of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006*

I refer to my previous contact with you about your alleged failure to ensure your child attends school as required. This contact has included (Refer attached report).

I am an officer authorised to take formal steps under s.178 of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (the Act) which may lead to prosecution of parents in breach of their obligation to ensure their child attends school.

As it is in **your child's** best interest to attend school and he/she is not attending school full time on every school day, I have decided to issue you with this notice under s.178 (2) of the Act.

Your legal obligation

Section 176(1)(b) of the Act provides that each parent of a child of compulsory school age has the obligation to ensure their child is attending school on every school day, for the educational program in which the child is enrolled.

“Compulsory school age” is defined by s.9 of the Act to start when a child is at least 6 years and 6 months of age and to finish when the child turns 16 years of age or completes Year 10, whichever is sooner.

Failure to comply with the obligation in s.176(1)(b), without a reasonable excuse, is an offence. If you are prosecuted for an offence, you may be liable to a fine of up to 6 penalty units for the first offence, and up to 12 penalty units for each further offence. Information about penalty units is available from <https://www.qld.gov.au/law/crime-and-police/types-of-crime/sentencing-fines-and-penalties-for-offences>

I have attached a copy of ss.176, 178 and 179 for your information.

Proposed meeting

I have arranged a meeting at **Kirwan State High School** on (date) at (time), to discuss the situation. You are welcome to bring a support person. If this time or place is unsuitable to you, please let me know so we can arrange a suitable time.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the compulsory schooling requirement. We can discuss the options for your child, whether there is any reason why the obligation does not apply in your child's case or that you have a reasonable excuse for your child's non-attendance.

If this matter cannot be resolved, the Department of Education and Training may consider referring the situation to the Queensland Police Service for prosecution.

Please contact **HOD Student Wellbeing – Senior Schooling** should you wish to discuss the meeting, or to seek further assistance with ensuring your child's attendance at school.

Yours sincerely

Meredith Wentta

Authorised Officer

Meredith Wentta

Executive Principal

Kirwan State High School

Enc: Copy of ss176 and 178 of Education (General Provisions) Act 2006
Meaning of parent and compulsory schooling



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Extracts from Education (General Provisions) Act 2006

176 Obligation of each parent

- (1) Each parent of a child who is of compulsory school age must—
- (a) ensure the child is enrolled at a State school or non-State school; and
 - (b) ensure the child attends the State school or non-State school, on every school day, for the educational program in which the child is enrolled;
- unless the parent has a reasonable excuse.
- Maximum penalty—
- (a) for a first offence—6 penalty units; or
 - (b) for a second or subsequent offence, whether or not relating to the same child of the parent—12 penalty units.
- (2) Without limiting subsection (1), it is a reasonable excuse for a parent (the **relevant parent**) that—
- (a) the child lives with another parent and the relevant parent believes, on reasonable grounds, that the other parent is complying with subsection (1); or
 - (b) in all the circumstances, the relevant parent is not reasonably able to control the child's behaviour to the extent necessary to comply with subsection (1).
- (3) Subsection (1) applies subject to parts 2 to 4.

178 Notice to, and meeting with, parent

- (1) This section applies if an authorised officer reasonably suspects—
- (a) a child who is of compulsory school age—
 - (i) is not enrolled at a State school or non-State school; or
 - (ii) is not attending the State school or non-State school at which the child is enrolled, on every school day, for the educational program in which the child is enrolled; and
 - (b) parts 2 to 4 do not apply to the child.
- (2) The officer may give a parent of the child a notice in the approved form about the parent's obligation under section 176(1).
- (3) The officer may also meet with the parent to discuss the obligation.
- (4) If, despite the officer taking reasonable steps to meet with the parent under subsection (3), no meeting is held, the officer may give the parent a warning notice in the approved form.
- (5) For the *Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000*, section 14 an authorised officer acting under this section is a public official performing a function authorised by this Act.
- (6) In this section—
- authorised officer** means the chief executive or an officer of the department authorised by the chief executive for this section.

Note: Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, section 14 (Helping public officials exercise powers under other Acts) was renumbered as section 16 under that Act, section 810.

Meaning of parent (from Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 s10)

- (1) A **parent**, of a child, is any of the following persons—
- (a) the child's mother;
 - (b) the child's father;

- (c) a person who exercises parental responsibility for the child.
- (2) However, a person standing in the place of a parent of a child on a temporary basis is not a parent of the child.
- (3) A parent of an Aboriginal child includes a person who, under Aboriginal tradition, is regarded as a parent of the child.
- (4) A parent of a Torres Strait Islander child includes a person who, under Island custom, is regarded as a parent of the child.
- (5) Despite subsections (1), (3) and (4), if—
 - (a) a person is granted guardianship of a child under the *Child Protection Act 1999*; or
 - (b) a person otherwise exercises parental responsibility for a child under a decision or order of a federal court or a court of a State;then a reference in this Act to a parent of a child is a reference only to a person mentioned in paragraph (a) or (b).

Meaning of compulsory school age (from *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 s9*)

- (1) A child is of compulsory school age if the child is at least 6 years and 6 months, and less than 16 years.
- (2) However, a child is no longer of compulsory school age if the child has completed year 10.



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«Parent_Name»

«Address_2»

«Suburb» «Postcode»

Dear «Parent_Name»

WARNING NOTICE ABOUT COMPULSORY SCHOOLING OBLIGATION – FAILURE TO ATTEND Section 178(4) of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006*

I refer to the previous notice sent to you on (insert date) sent under s.178(2) of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (the Act).

I am an authorised officer for the purposes of s.178 of the Act. I believe that «Student_Name» of compulsory school age is not attending school, on every day other than exceptional circumstances, for the educational program in which they are enrolled.

This letter is a **warning notice** under s.178(4) of the Act that I intend to recommend that a prosecution be commenced against you for failing to ensure your child attends school on every school day of their educational program in which your child is enrolled.

If you are prosecuted for an offence, you may be liable for a fine of up to 6 penalty units for the first offence, and up to 12 penalty units for each further offence. Information about penalty units is available from <https://www.qld.gov.au/law/crime-and-police/types-of-crime/sentencing-fines-andpenalties-for-offences/>.

I encourage you to contact me on telephone or by email if you wish to meet to discuss your obligation and the support you need to meet your obligation. You may wish to provide me with a reasonable excuse for why «Student_Name» is not attending school as required.

If I have not heard from you within seven days, I will seek consent to bring proceedings against you. If consent is given, your case will be handed to Queensland Police Service for prosecution.

Yours sincerely

Meredith Wenta

Authorised officer

Meredith Wenta

Executive Principal

Kirwan State High School

Enc: Copy of ss178 - 179 of *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006*



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Exemptions from Compulsory Schooling and Compulsory Participation



Information for Parents and Students

What is an exemption and why do I need it?

Every parent of a child of compulsory school age or a young person in the compulsory participation phase has a legal obligation to ensure their child is enrolled and attending school or participating in an eligible option.

Parents can apply for an exemption from this obligation when their child cannot attend or it would be unreasonable in all the circumstances for their child to attend school or participate in an eligible option for a period of more than 10 consecutive school days.

Situations where an application for an exemption may be made include:

- Illness
- Family reasons
- Cultural or religious reasons

If your child is exempted from compulsory schooling, you are excused from your obligation in relation to compulsory schooling or compulsory participation.

The school principal is not responsible for providing an educational program to your child, however they may provide advice on other educational options available.

Who decides to grant or not grant an exemption?

• For state school students:

Decisions about exemptions are made by the principal of the school the student attends.

• For non-state school students:

Non-state school principals have the authority to approve exemptions of up to and including 110 school days in a calendar year that do not cause the total period of exemptions granted in the year to exceed 110 school days.

Any exemption application for a period of more than 110 school days or that would cause the total period of exemptions granted in a year to exceed 110 school days is decided by the Manager, Office of Non-state Education.

• For children who are not enrolled in any state or non-state Queensland school:

Decisions about exemptions for students who are not enrolled in any state or non-state school are made by either the Regional Director, Principal Advisor Education Services, Principal Advisor Regional Services, Director Regional Services, of the Department of Education and Training region in which the child resides.

Applying for an exemption

You are encouraged to discuss with the school whether an application for exemption is a suitable option. The school can provide you with an application form for an exemption. It is important that supporting documentation and evidence are attached to the application.

When a decision about the exemption has been made, you will be informed in writing whether or not the exemption has been granted and if any conditions have been imposed. If you are not satisfied with the decision made, you can make a submission for the decision to be reviewed.

Education (General Provisions) Act 2006, Section 186(2) and 245(2) Approved Form v1 - Exemption from Compulsory Schooling and Compulsory Participation – enrolled in a Queensland state school

Application for exemption for a child or young person enrolled in a Queensland state school

Privacy Notice

The Department of Education and Training is collecting the information on this form to determine if a student is entitled to an exemption from compulsory schooling or an exemption from compulsory participation. This collection is authorised by s.186 and s.245 of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006*. Information from this form may also be disclosed to third parties as required or authorised by law.

(Please type or print clearly)

To be completed by the parent/carers				
1. Name of student in full				
2. Date of birth				
3. Name of school				
4. Year level				
5. Name of parent/carers				
6. Address				
7. Home phone			8. Mobile phone	
9. Period for which exemption is sought (insert dates)	From	/ /	To	/ /
10. How many school days are you seeking an exemption for?				
11. Reasons for seeking exemption (please provide full details and attach documentary evidence to support this application e.g. statement from medical practitioner)				
Signature of parent/carers			Date	

Please forward the completed application form and any attachments to the school principal for consideration and approval. Written notification of the decision regarding this application will be sent to the parent/carers.

Uncontrolled copy. Refer to the Department of Education and Training Policy and Procedure Register at <http://ppr.det.qld.gov.au> to ensure you have the most current version of this document.

Page 1 of 2



Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld), Section 186(2) and 245(2) Approved Form ECSP-1 v2 - Exemptions from compulsory schooling and compulsory participation – enrolled in a Queensland state school

Part B - To be completed by the school principal (internal purposes only)		
Application for exemption from:	<input type="checkbox"/> Compulsory schooling <input type="checkbox"/> Compulsory participation	
Is the student in Year 10 or 15 years of age? If 'Yes', a Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority student learning account should be established, if it has not already been done so, prior to an exemption being granted	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> QCAA Account Number
Decision (please tick whichever is appropriate)		
<input type="checkbox"/> I grant an exemption for this student and the parent/carer and/or young person has been advised. <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div>Signature of principal _____</div> <div>Date _____</div> </div> Name of principal _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> I do not grant an exemption for this student. <input type="checkbox"/> I grant an exemption with the following condition/s: <input type="checkbox"/> I grant an exemption with the following change/s to what has been requested: <input type="checkbox"/> I grant a partial exemption (for students in the compulsory participation phase only)		
<p>NOTE: My decision, materials considered, findings of fact and reasons for my decision are set out in an information notice, which has been sent to the young person and/or parent/carer, as required by the <i>Education (General Provisions) Act 2006</i>.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div>Signature of principal _____</div> <div>Date _____</div> </div> Name of principal _____		

Uncontrolled copy. Refer to the Department of Education Policy and Procedure Register at <http://ppr.det.qld.gov.au> to ensure you have the most current version of this document.
Page 3 of 3



**Queensland
Government**



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Dear Parent/Caregiver,

Your child <<Student Name>> currently has the following unexplained absences:

<<Dates>>

Please complete and return the attached Absence Explanation Form.

We would also like to remind you;

1. In an event of illness - absences of 2 or more days consecutively require a medical certificate. In addition we may also ask for a medical certificate if your child accrues excessive absences.
2. In the event of absences from school for 10 or more consecutive days for any reason you are required to complete an **Exemption from Compulsory Schooling and Compulsory Participation Form**.

Should you have any queries regarding these absences please email absences@kirwanshs.eq.edu.au or contact (07) 4773 8108.

Yours sincerely

Meredith Wenta
Executive Principal
Kirwan State High School

Student Name:

House Group:

Absence date / s and reason for absence:



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Dear Year 12 Student, _____

Kirwan High is a mindful school in which education is highly valued as a means for success for individuals and the community as a whole. We have high expectations and demand greatness from all students. To achieve at a high level and attain a successful future, students must attend school regularly.

Currently your attendance is ____ %.

If your attendance does not improve it may result in a cancellation of your enrolment. It is imperative that you are in class, every day, working hard as this is the best way to ensure that you have a successful senior year, obtain your QCE and have a range of opportunities available to you post school. I must remind you that you will not be permitted to attend the formal unless your attendance rate is at least 93%.

If you have any questions about this letter, please don't hesitate to contact me.

HOD Student Wellbeing (Senior)

Phone: (07) 4773 8150

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Many teenagers seek independence and think they know best. No matter how hard parents try, some students may be reluctant or refuse to go to school. These are some ideas which may assist parents in dealing with teenagers and school refusal. Addressing this issue promptly and setting up good patterns in adolescence can lead to future success.

DID YOU KNOW?

- *Missing one day of school each week adds up to 2 months missed over a year.*
- *Each day absent in high school has an impact on numeracy skills.*
- *Poor attendance may be associated with future unemployment, criminal activity, substance abuse, and poorer health and life expectancy.*

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Talk about the importance of showing up to school every day, make that the expectation. Regular attendance at school sets up good behaviours for regular attendance at work.
- Help your teenager maintain daily routines such as finishing homework and getting a good night's sleep. On average, teenagers need 8-9 hours sleep to be healthy and alert. You may also need to monitor their use of the Internet, mobile phone and TV at night to ensure they are not staying up too late or being disturbed while sleeping.
- Try not to schedule hair, dental or medical appointments during school hours. Arrange family holidays during scheduled school holidays so that they are not missing out on classes and, therefore, will not have to struggle to make up for lost time.
- Don't let your teenager stay home unless genuinely sick. Complaints of headaches or stomach aches may be signs of anxiety
- If your teenager wants to stay home to finish an assignment, rather than letting them stay home, expect them to go to school – make attendance the number one priority. Later, you can discuss with them how they can improve their study habits or adjust their schedule.
- If your school has an assessment calendar on its website, use this to help your teenager plan their study so that they avoid working late the night before an assignment is due
- Be sure to set a good example – how you meet your commitments impacts on how they will meet theirs.
- Talk to your teenager. What are their feelings about school? What interests them at school? Are there any difficult situations? It helps if you open these discussions in a relaxed way so that your teenager knows you are demonstrating concern, not authority.

Every day counts – Is your child at school today?
www.education.qld.gov.au/everydaycounts





- Try to be aware of your teenager's social contacts. Peer pressure can lead to skipping school, while students without many friends can feel isolated.
- Encourage meaningful extracurricular activities that your teenager enjoys, such as sports and clubs, to develop positive relationships and have success outside of a classroom setting. These activities can help your child feel part of the group, important to the school, and more motivated.
- Set clear parameters around part-time work. Make sure that the hours your teenager is working do not impact on their ability to go to school the next day, or interfere with school assessment expectations or exam preparation.
- Familiarise yourself with the school's attendance policy. This can help when trying to reason with teenagers.
- Monitor your teenager's attendance and school performance. Periodically check with their teachers to find out how things are going. If you find it difficult to contact several different teachers by phone, try email. Alternatively, if your school has a year level coordinator, they may be a helpful point of contact in relation to specific issues.

Remember...

You can talk with school staff (such as the teacher, year level coordinator, deputy principal or principal) to find out what assistance they can provide to keep your teenager attending and engaged.

USEFUL WEBSITES

<http://raisingchildren.net.au/>

<http://www.mindmatters.edu.au/default.asp>

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