

Eva Lawler

Acting Minister for Education



Media Release

Attendance at Territory Government Schools Returns to Normal Levels

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Attendance at Northern Territory government schools has returned to pre-pandemic levels.

The Northern Territory was the first jurisdiction in Australia to decide students would physically return to the classroom from the first day of Term 2, Monday, 20 April, as COVID-19 shutdown measures continued to be enforced across the country.

Preliminary data gathered in the first two weeks of the term has shown a steady climb in attendance since day one, Term 2, when it was down 17 per cent on the same time last year.

The unverified data shows that average attendance across the Territory for week 2, Term 2 was at 79 per cent, slightly higher than Term 2, 2019's average attendance rate of 78 per cent.

It is also slightly below Term 1, pre-pandemic attendance levels of 80 per cent Territory-wide.

The data shows at the height of nationwide pandemic shutdown measures, in Week 10, attendance Territory-wide fell to 32 per cent.

Student attendance started to decline in Week 8, Term 1, before reaching its lowest levels in Week 10.

The final week of Term 1 - Week 11 - was largely pupil-free, to enable teachers to undertake professional development in preparation for Term 2.

Schools and the School Improvement and Leadership teams are working together to make sure Territory children get back on track and are engaged with their learning.

Quotes attributable to Acting Minister for Education, Eva Lawler.

"The Territory was the first jurisdiction to physically send children back to school and I would like to thank parents and families for helping us on our path to the new normal.

"We implemented tough measures to curb the spread of coronavirus in the NT and thanks to Territorians adhering to these measures, our schools are the safest in the country.

"The health advice from Australia's top health experts throughout the COVID-19 pandemic has been that schools are safe for our kids.

"It is the best place for kids to be, to thrive both academically and socially.

"Schools and the School Improvement and Leadership teams are working together to make sure all our Territory children are back on track and engaged with their learning.

"For the vast majority of NT students who have returned to school, and for their families, life is slowly returning to normal."

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