

# NSW public schools student attendance fact sheet – Semester 1 2025

## Introduction

This fact sheet provides an overview of student attendance in NSW Government schools from Kindergarten to Year 12 in Semester 1 2025. It contains information on different cohorts of students, including observations on student attendance by multiple education levels, Aboriginality and remoteness classifications. The fact sheet reports attendance figures only and does not explain the factors contributing to any changes in attendance rates or levels.

There are 2 different measures of student attendance: attendance rate and attendance level. The attendance rate is the percentage of days students attended school compared to student enrolled days. The attendance level is the proportion of students attending 90% or more of the time. This measure was introduced in 2018 and is more variable than the attendance rate as it is based on a student-level binary outcome (that is, a student attending less than 90% of the time or a student attending 90% or more of the time). For most students, their attendance rate is concentrated around 90%. Therefore, a small shift in their attendance will likely mean changes in their attendance position to below, at, or above the 90% threshold, resulting in a larger variation in the attendance level.

The attendance rates and levels in the fact sheet are different to the nationally published My School figures, due to the inclusion of Kindergarten, Year 11 and Year 12 students. The attendance calculation methodology was revised in 2020 to align with the third edition of ACARA's 'National standards for student attendance data and reporting'. The nationally published My School figures includes data for students in Year 1 to Year 10.

## Summary of attendance

The overall attendance rate for NSW Government schools increased by 0.6 percentage points from 87.3% in 2024 to 87.9% in 2025. The primary attendance rate increased by 1.0 percentage point from 90.0% in 2024 to 91.0% in 2025, and the secondary attendance rate also increased, by 0.3 percentage points from 83.2% in 2024 to 83.5% in 2025.

The increase in attendance rate from 2024 to 2025 was similar across both primary education sub-levels: 1.0 percentage point for Kindergarten to Year 2 (90.5% in 2024 to 91.5% in 2025) and 0.9 percentage points for Year 3 to Year 6 (89.7% in 2024 to 90.6% in 2025).

At the secondary education sub-level, the Year 7 to Year 10 attendance rate increased by 0.4 percentage points (from 83.2% in 2024 to 83.6% in 2025), greater than the 0.1 percentage points increase in Year 11 and Year 12 (from 83.2% in 2024 to 83.3% in 2025).

Figure 1: Semester 1 2021 to 2025 attendance rate (%) by education level

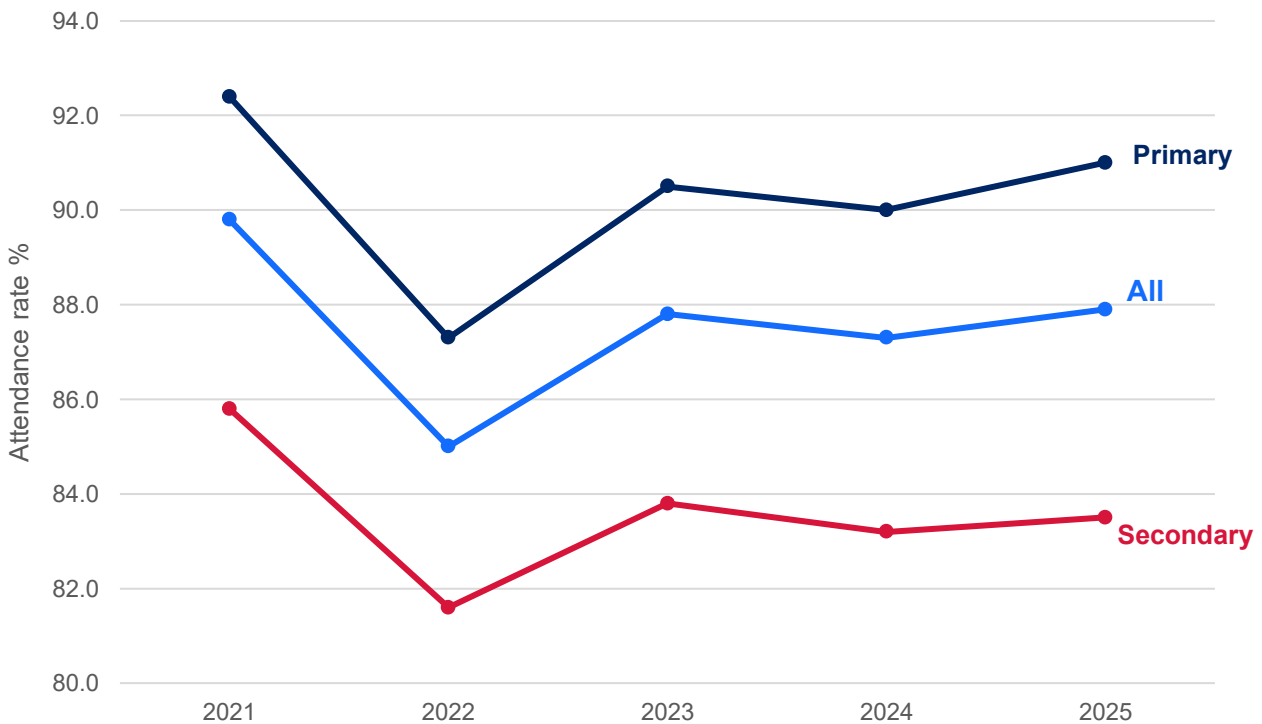
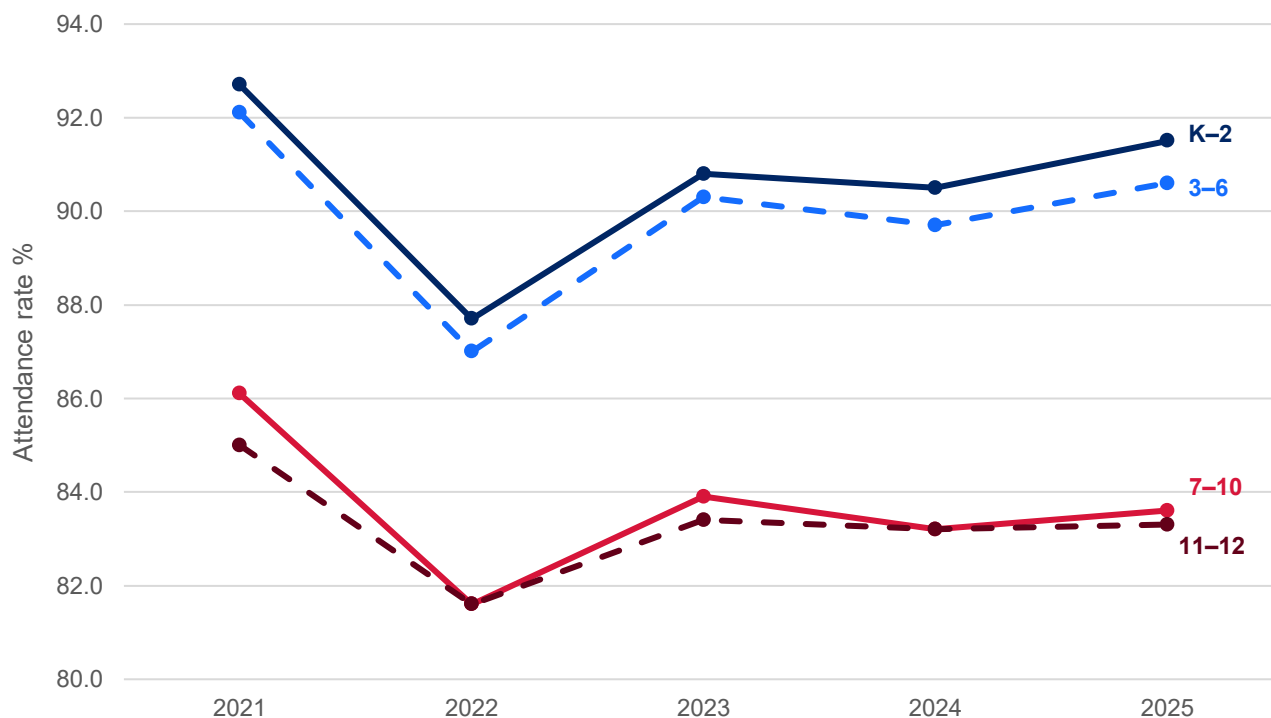


Figure 2: Semester 1 2021 to 2025 attendance rate (%) by education sub-level



The overall proportion of students attending 90% or more of the time (attendance level) increased by 4.0 percentage points from 55.8% in 2024 to 59.8% in 2025. At the education level, the primary attendance level increased by 5.3 percentage points from 62.8% in 2024 to 68.1% in 2025, and the secondary attendance level increased by 2.3 percentage points from 45.5% in 2024 to 47.8% in 2025.

At the education sub-level, Kindergarten to Year 2 had an increase of 5.1 percentage points (from 65.3% in 2024 to 70.4% in 2025), and Year 3 to Year 6 increased by 5.4 percentage points (from 61.1% in 2024 to 66.5% in 2025).

At the secondary education sub-level, the Year 7 to Year 10 attendance level increased by 2.9 percentage points (from 44.5% in 2024 to 47.4% in 2025), greater than the 0.9 percentage points increase for Year 11 and Year 12 (from 47.9% in 2024 to 48.8% in 2025). This was the fourth consecutive year the Year 7 to 10 attendance level was below the Year 11 to 12 level, though the gap has reduced (from 3.4 percentage points in 2024 to 1.4 percentage points in 2025).

Table 1: Semester 1 2024 and 2025 attendance rate and attendance level by education sub-level (all students)

Education level	Attendance rate (%)			Attendance level (%)		
	2024	2025	Change (pp)	2024	2025	Change (pp)
K–2	90.5	91.5	1.0	65.3	70.4	5.1
3–6	89.7	90.6	0.9	61.1	66.5	5.4
<b>Primary</b>	<b>90.0</b>	<b>91.0</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>62.8</b>	<b>68.1</b>	<b>5.3</b>
7–10	83.2	83.6	0.4	44.5	47.4	2.9
11–12	83.2	83.3	0.1	47.9	48.8	0.9
<b>Secondary</b>	<b>83.2</b>	<b>83.5</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>45.5</b>	<b>47.8</b>	<b>2.3</b>
<b>All</b>	<b>87.3</b>	<b>87.9</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>55.8</b>	<b>59.8</b>	<b>4.0</b>

Note: pp = percentage points.

Figure 3: Semester 1 2021 to 2025 attendance level (%) by education level

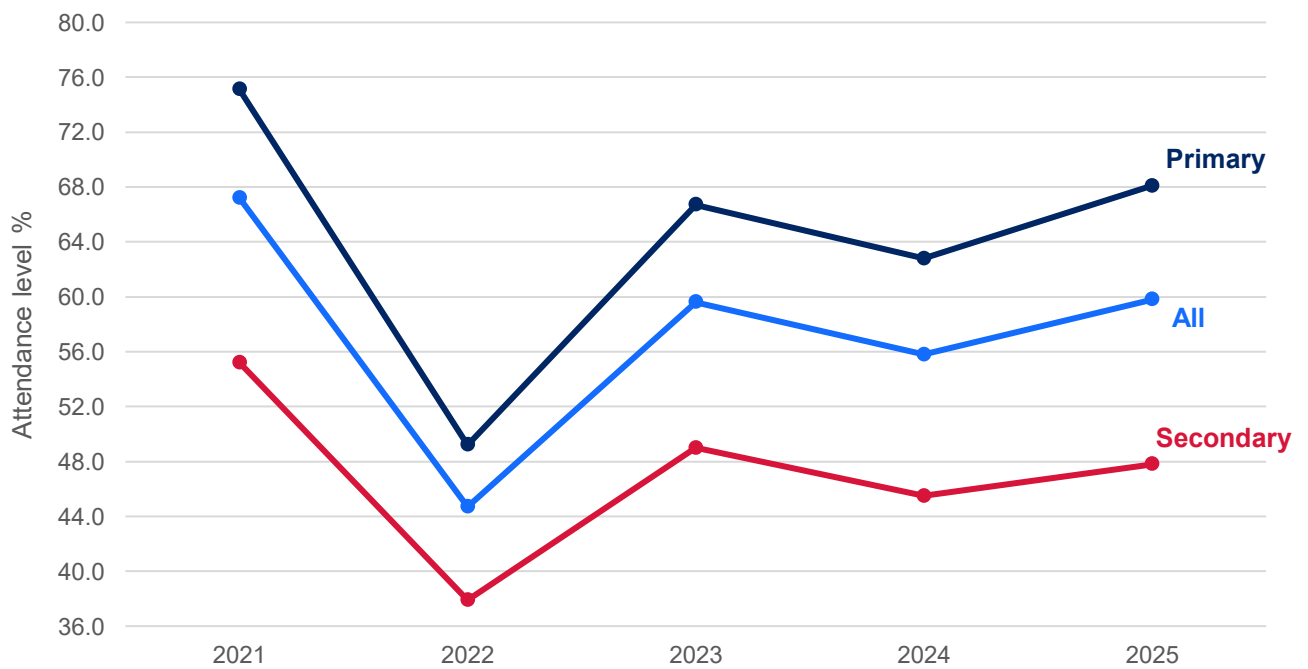
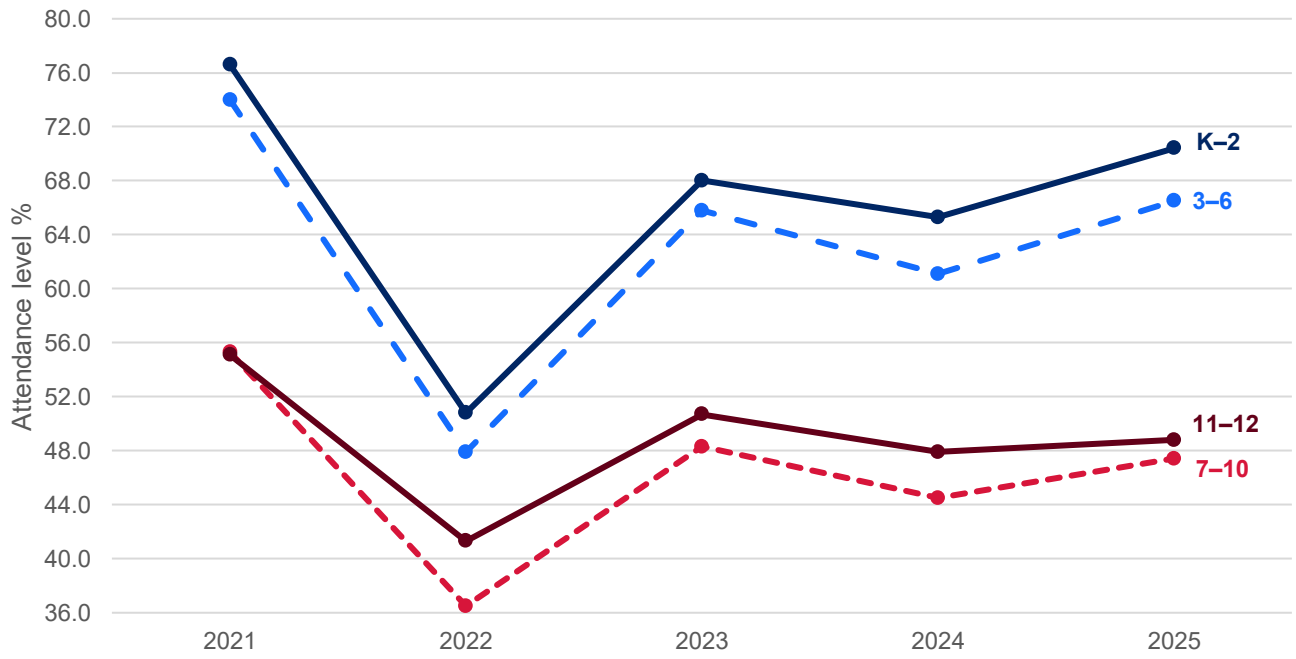


Figure 4: Semester 1 2021 to 2025 attendance level (%) by education sub-level



## Attendance by Aboriginality

Throughout this report, the term 'Aboriginal' is inclusive of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students. The overall attendance rate for Aboriginal students increased by 0.4 percentage points, from 78.2% in 2024 to 78.6% in 2025. Aboriginal primary students' attendance increased by 0.9 percentage points from 84.4% in 2024 to 85.3% in 2025. Aboriginal secondary students' attendance rate experienced no change and remained steady at 68.8% in 2025. The only decrease was in the attendance rate for Years 11 to 12 students, which dropped by 0.4 percentage points from 66.4% in 2024 to 66.0% in 2025.

The proportion of Aboriginal students attending 90% or more of the time in Semester 1 2025 increased by 2.9 percentage points (from 35.0% in 2024 to 37.9% in 2025). For Aboriginal primary students, the attendance level increased by 4.2 percentage points from 43.9% in 2024 to 48.1% in 2025. The increase was smaller for Aboriginal secondary students, at 1.3 percentage points from 21.6% in 2024 to 22.9% in 2025.

Table 2: Semester 1 2024 and 2025 attendance rate and attendance level by education sub-level for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students

Education level	Attendance rate (%)			Attendance level (%)		
	2024	2025	Change (pp)	2024	2025	Change (pp)
K–2	85.2	86.2	1.0	46.6	51.0	4.4
3–6	83.9	84.7	0.8	41.9	46.0	4.1
<b>Primary</b>	<b>84.4</b>	<b>85.3</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>43.9</b>	<b>48.1</b>	<b>4.2</b>
7–10	69.5	69.7	0.2	21.6	23.0	1.4
11–12	66.4	66.0	-0.4	21.7	22.6	0.9
<b>Secondary</b>	<b>68.8</b>	<b>68.8</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>21.6</b>	<b>22.9</b>	<b>1.3</b>
<b>All</b>	<b>78.2</b>	<b>78.6</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>35.0</b>	<b>37.9</b>	<b>2.9</b>

Note: pp = percentage points.

Figure 5: Semester 1 2024 and 2025 attendance rate by education sub-level for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students

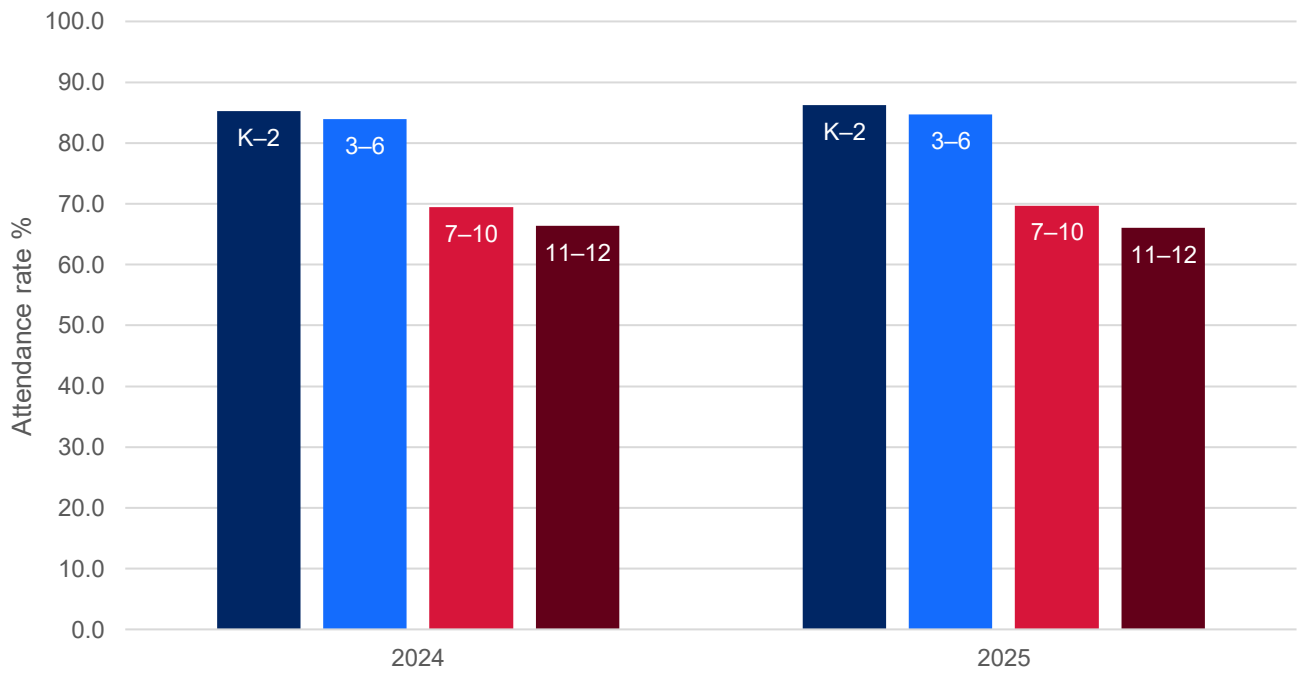
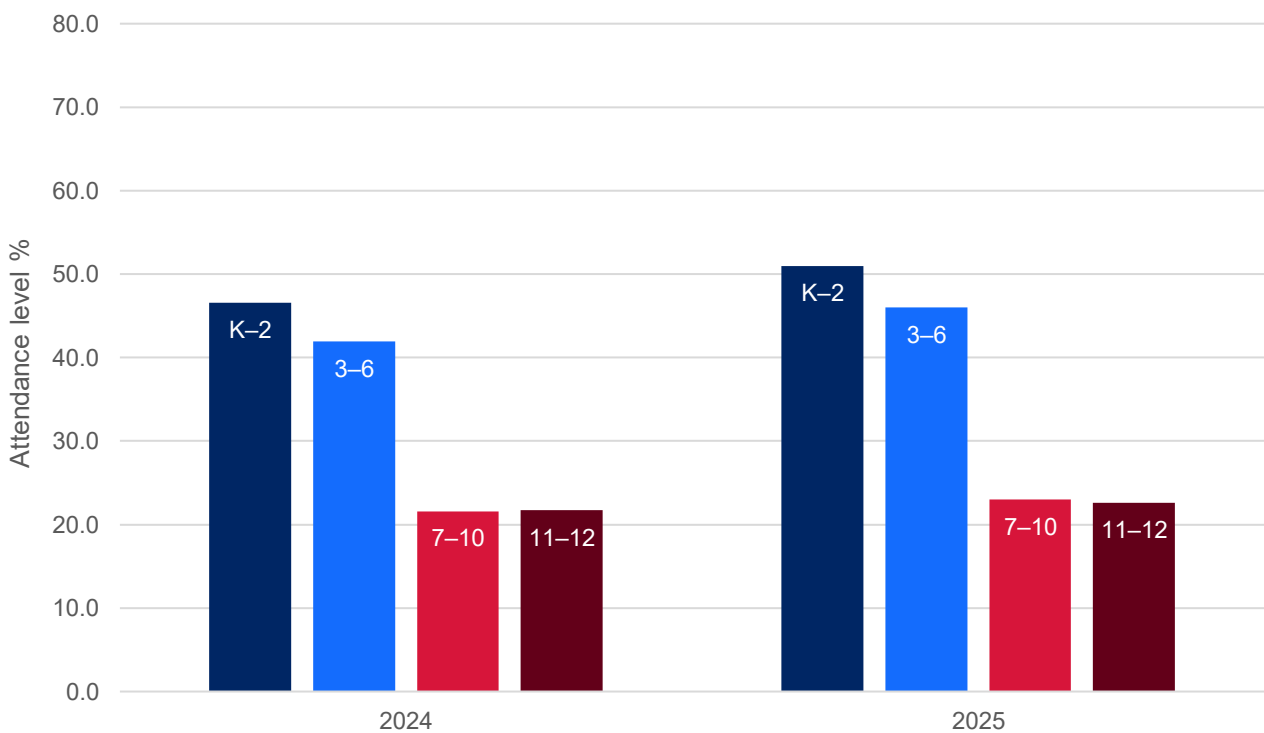


Figure 6: Semester 1 2024 and 2025 attendance level by education sub-level for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students



The attendance rate for non-Aboriginal students also increased from 2024 to 2025, increasing by 0.7 percentage points from 88.3% in 2024 to 89.0% in 2025. This was slightly more than the increase for Aboriginal students. When comparing attendance levels, the increase for non-Aboriginal students was also greater than for Aboriginal students, with an increase of 4.2 percentage points from 58.1% in 2024 to 62.3% in 2025.

Table 3: Semester 1 2024 and 2025 attendance rate and attendance level by education sub-level for non-Aboriginal students

Education level	Attendance rate (%)			Attendance level (%)		
	2024	2025	Change (pp)	2024	2025	Change (pp)
K-2	91.1	92.1	1.0	67.3	72.7	5.4
3-6	90.3	91.3	1.0	63.1	68.8	5.7
<b>Primary</b>	<b>90.6</b>	<b>91.6</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>64.9</b>	<b>70.4</b>	<b>5.5</b>
7-10	84.9	85.4	0.5	47.2	50.5	3.3
11-12	84.5	84.8	0.3	50.0	51.0	1.0
<b>Secondary</b>	<b>84.8</b>	<b>85.2</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>48.0</b>	<b>50.6</b>	<b>2.6</b>
<b>All</b>	<b>88.3</b>	<b>89.0</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>58.1</b>	<b>62.3</b>	<b>4.2</b>

Note: pp = percentage points.

Figure 7: Semester 1 2024 and 2025 attendance rate by education sub-level for non-Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students

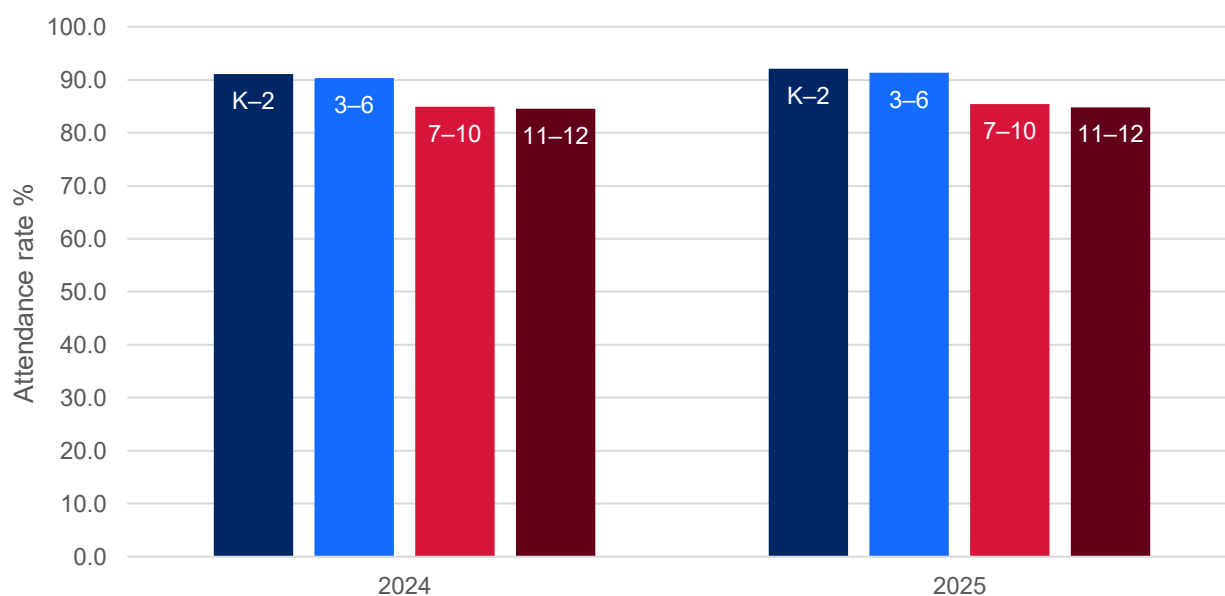
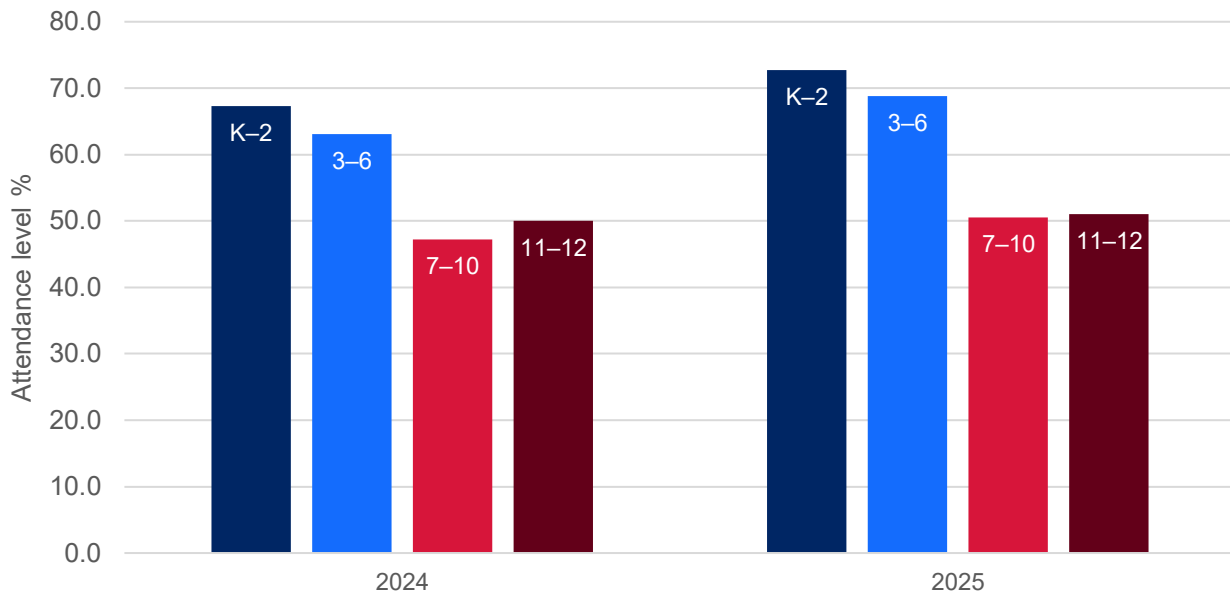


Figure 8: Semester 1 2024 and 2025 attendance level by education sub-level for non-Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students



## Attendance by remoteness

Table 4: Semester 1 2024 and 2025 attendance rate and attendance level by NSW remoteness classification

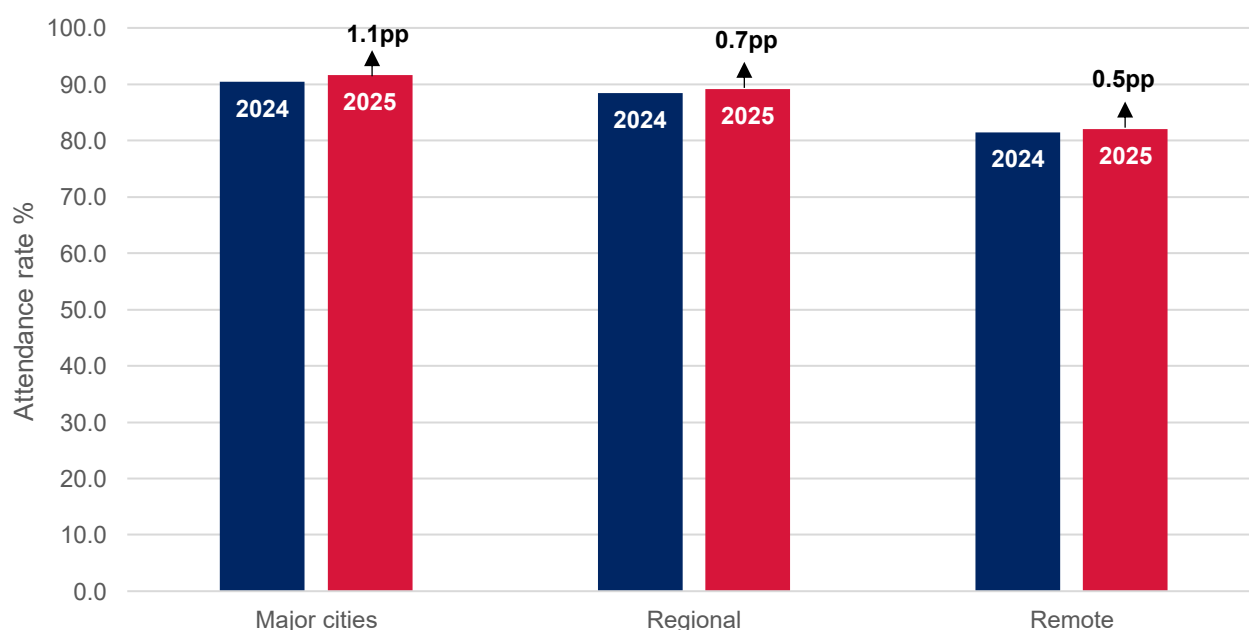
Remoteness	Attendance rate (%)			Attendance level (%)		
	2024	2025	Change (pp)	2024	2025	Change (pp)
Major cities	88.3	89.0	0.7	58.6	62.8	4.2
Regional	84.2	84.6	0.4	47.3	50.5	3.2
<b>Remote</b>	75.4	76.3	0.9	31.5	35.0	3.5
<b>All</b>	<b>87.3</b>	<b>87.9</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>55.9</b>	<b>59.9</b>	<b>4.0</b>

Note: pp = percentage points.

Table 4 shows that attendance rates increased more for students attending schools in remote areas of NSW than those in major cities or regional areas of NSW. In remote areas, the attendance rate increased by 0.9 percentage points (from 75.4% in 2024 to 76.3% in 2025), compared to 0.7 percentage points increase for schools in major cities (from 88.3% in 2024 to 89.0% in 2025), and a 0.4 percentage points increase for schools in regional areas (from 84.2% in 2024 to 84.6% in 2025).

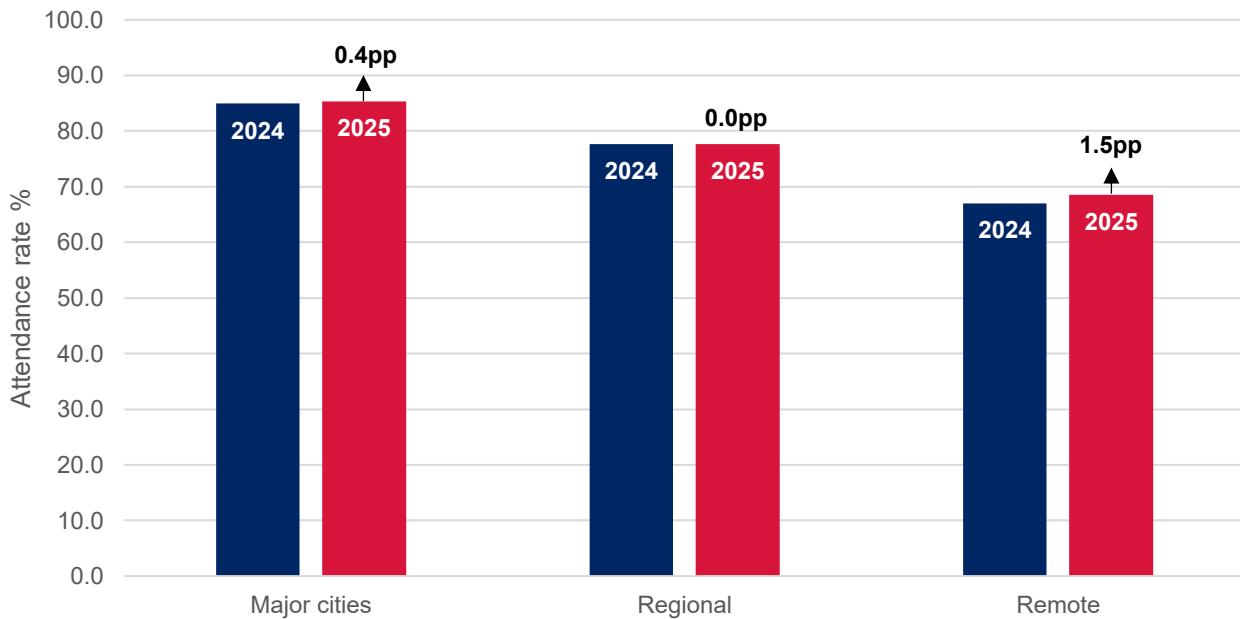
Attendance levels by school remoteness, however, followed a different pattern to rates. The largest increase in attendance level was for major cities, which increased by 4.2 percentage points (from 58.6% in 2024 to 62.8% in 2025). This was followed by schools in remote areas, which increased by 3.5 percentage points (from 31.5% in 2024 to 35.0% in 2025), and then by regional areas, which increased by 3.2 percentage points (from 47.3% in 2024 to 50.5% in 2025).

Figure 9: Semester 1 2024 and 2025 attendance rate (%) by NSW remoteness classification, primary students



Note: pp = percentage points.

Figure 10: Semester 1 2024 and 2025 attendance rate (%) by NSW remoteness classification, secondary students

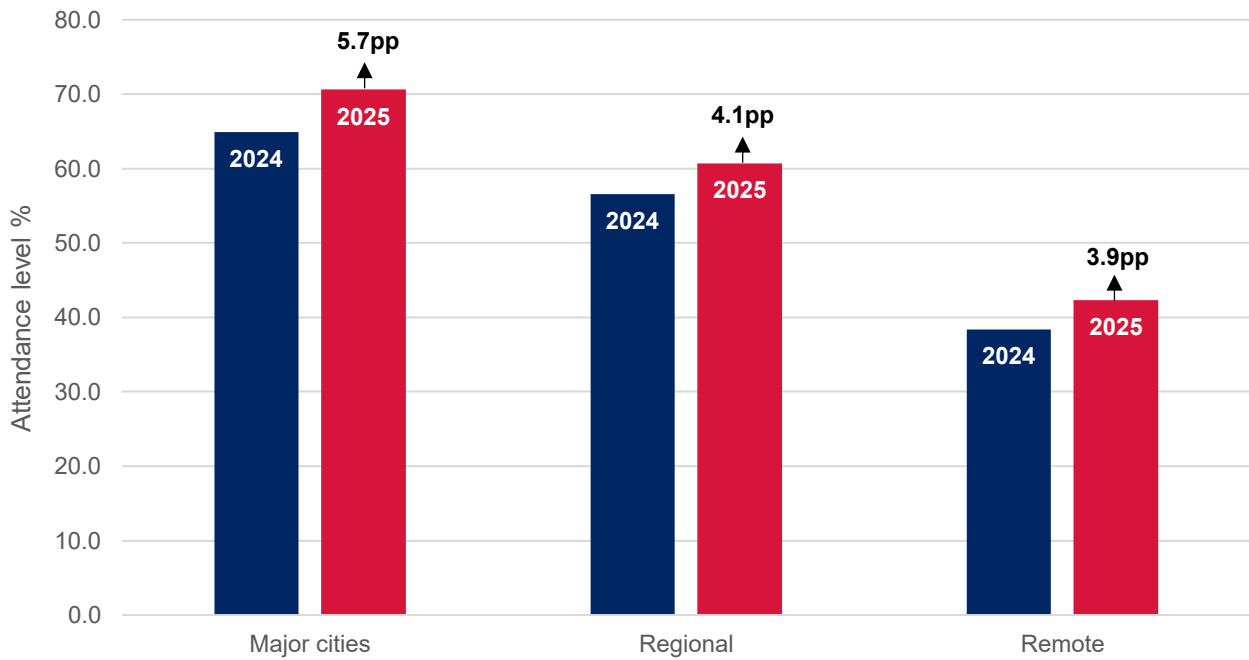


Note: pp = percentage points.

Figure 9 shows primary students in major cities of NSW experienced the greatest increase in attendance rate, rising by 1.1 percentage points (from 90.5% in 2024 to 91.6% in 2025). This was followed by primary students from regional areas, whose attendance rate increased by 0.7 percentage points (from 88.4% in 2024 to 89.1% in 2025). Primary students in remote areas increased by 0.5 percentage points (from 81.5% in 2024 to 82.0% in 2025).

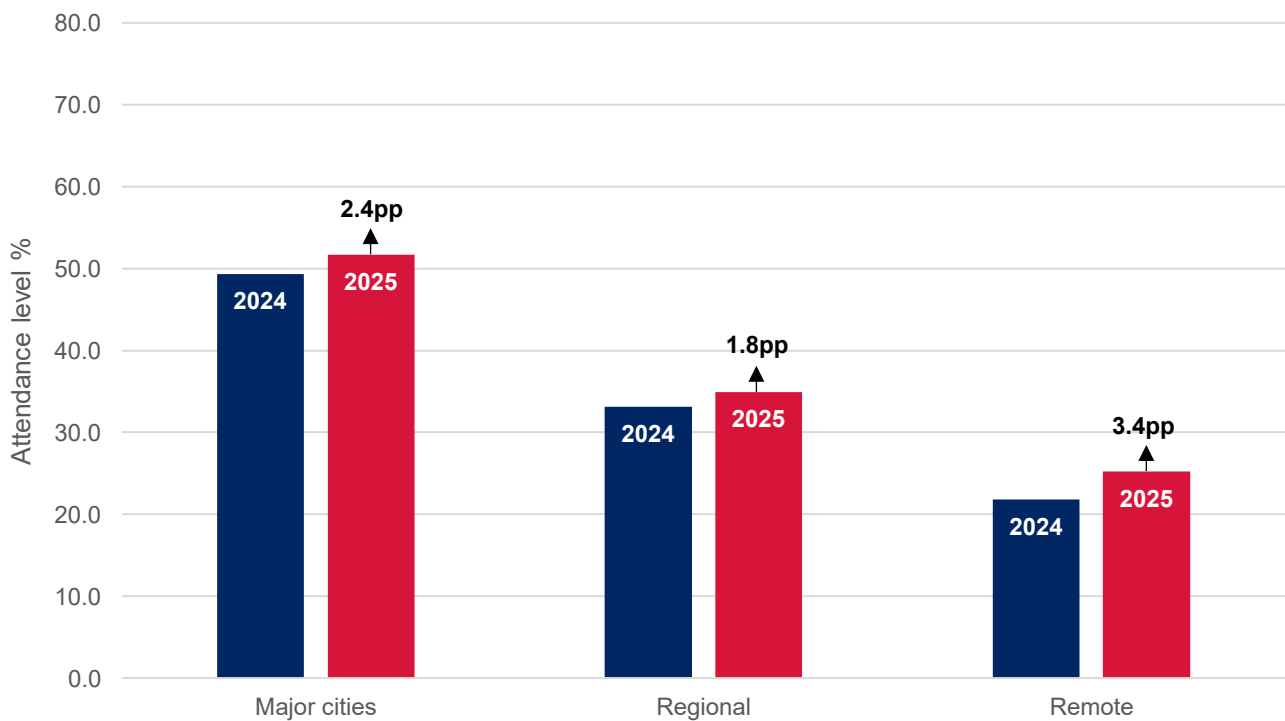
Figure 10 shows that for secondary students, however, schools in remote areas had the highest increase in attendance rate, of 1.5 percentage points (from 67.0% in 2024 to 68.5% in 2025). This was followed by secondary students in major cities with an increase of 0.4 percentage points (from 84.9% in 2024 to 85.3% in 2025). Regional areas of NSW remained unchanged at 77.6% in 2024 and 2025.

Figure 11: Semester 1 2024 and 2025 attendance level (%) by NSW remoteness classification, primary students



Note: pp = percentage points.

Figure 12: Semester 1 2024 and 2025 attendance level (%) by NSW remoteness classification, secondary students



Note: pp = percentage points.

Figure 11 shows the attendance level for primary students from major cities recorded the highest increase of 5.7 percentage points (from 64.9% in 2024 to 70.6% in 2025). This was followed by primary students in regional areas, which increased by 4.1 percentage points (from 56.6% in 2024 to 60.7% in 2025). The attendance level for primary students in remote schools also improved, increasing by 3.9 percentage points (from 38.4% in 2024 to 42.3% in 2025).

As shown in Figure 12, secondary students in remote areas of NSW experienced the largest increase in attendance level, an increase of 3.4 percentage points (from 21.8% in 2024 to 25.2% in 2025). This was followed by secondary students in major cities with an increase of 2.4 percentage points (from 49.3% in 2024 to 51.7% in 2025), and then regional secondary students, whose attendance level increased by 1.8 percentage points (from 33.1% in 2024 to 34.9% in 2025).

Overall, attendance levels increased across all remoteness areas for both primary and secondary students between 2024 and 2025.

## Analysis of absence reasons

The attendance codes provide insight into the reasons behind changes in attendance measures. There are 2 sets of measures: total absence days; and absence days per 1,000 enrolled days. Total absence days can be misleading because it does not account for variation in the number of enrolled days in the reporting period. In contrast, absence days per 1,000 enrolled days offers a more reliable way to compare attendance over time and between primary and secondary students.

Table 5 shows the total number of absence days across all NSW Government schools decreased by 952,846 days, from 9,710,309 days in 2024 to 8,757,463 days in 2025.

Table 5: Semester 1 total absence days by reason, 2024 and 2025 by education level

Reason	Primary		Secondary		Total	
	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025
<b>Leave</b>	778,871	734,626	537,709	509,022	1,316,580	1,243,647
<b>Sick</b>	2,289,277	1,858,206	1,972,247	1,780,998	4,261,524	3,639,203
<b>Suspended</b>	28,852	29,939	141,413	130,268	170,265	160,207
<b>Unexplained / pending explanation</b>	945,150	771,245	2,059,903	1,993,192	3,005,053	2,764,436
<b>Unjustified explanation received</b>	510,538	491,823	446,351	458,147	956,888	949,970
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,552,687</b>	<b>3,885,837</b>	<b>5,157,623</b>	<b>4,871,626</b>	<b>9,710,309</b>	<b>8,757,463</b>

Note: Due to rounding, the total number of absence days may not equal the sum of absence days for primary and secondary students.

For both primary and secondary students, the decrease in student absences in 2025 was mainly due to less days off due to leave, sickness and unexplained / pending explanation.

The largest decrease overall (14.6%) was for absences related to sickness, with the total number of sick days for both primary and secondary students dropping by 622,321 days (from 4,261,524 days in 2024 to 3,639,203 days in 2025).

The number of days off due to suspension decreased by 7.9% (11,145 days) for secondary students from 141,413 days in 2024 to 130,268 days in 2025. However, there was a small increase (3.8% or 1,087 days) for primary students from 28,852 days in 2024 to 29,939 days in 2025).

Primary students also had less days off due to unjustified explanation received in 2025, with a 3.7% (18,715 days) decrease, from 510,538 days in 2024 to 491,823 in 2025.

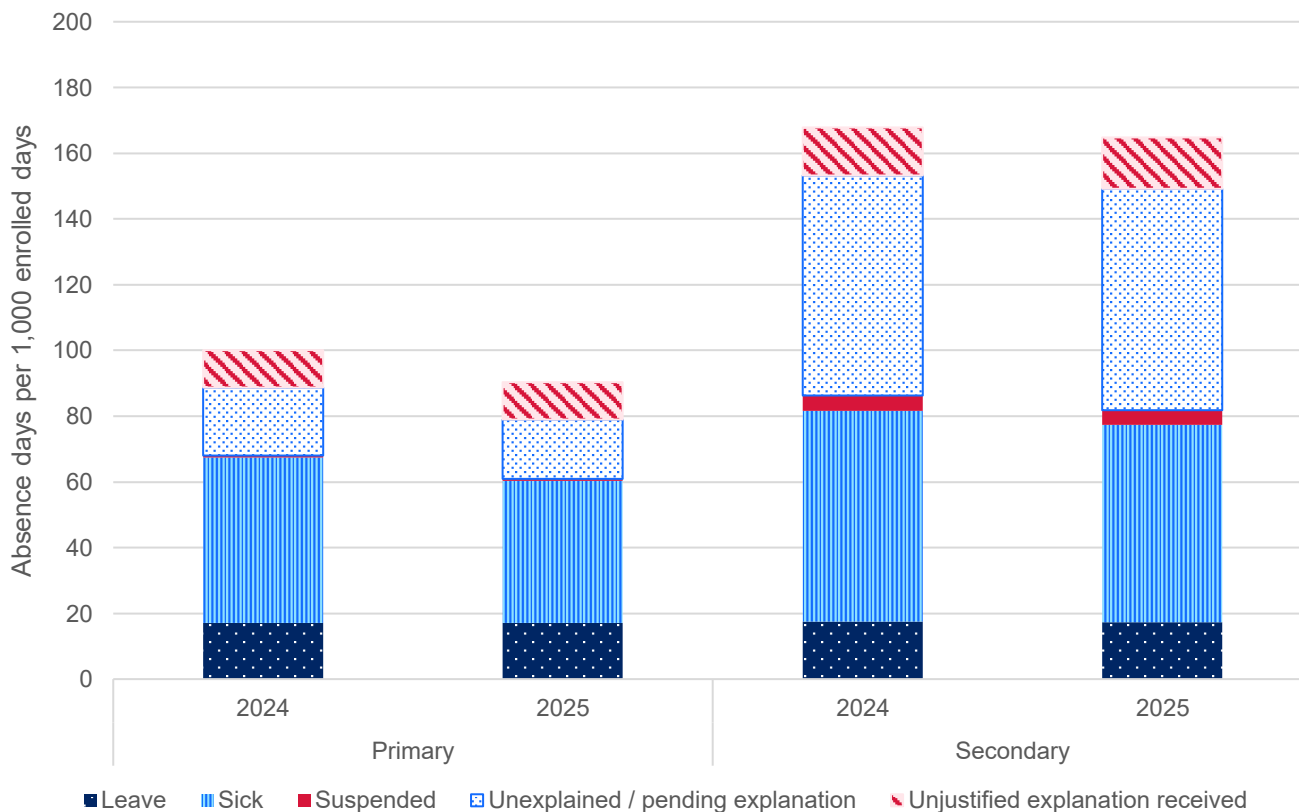
Table 6: Semester 1 absence days per 1,000 enrolled days by reason, 2024 and 2025, primary and secondary

Reason	Primary		Secondary		Total	
	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025
Leave	17.1	17.1	17.5	17.2	17.3	17.1
Sick	50.3	43.2	64.2	60.2	55.9	50.1
Suspended	0.6	0.7	4.6	4.4	2.2	2.2
Unexplained / pending explanation	20.8	17.9	67.0	67.4	39.4	38.1
Unjustified explanation received	11.2	11.4	14.5	15.5	12.5	13.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>90.4</b>	<b>167.9</b>	<b>164.7</b>	<b>127.3</b>	<b>120.7</b>

Table 6 presents the number of absence days per 1,000 enrolled days for primary and secondary students and shows the overall absence days has decreased by 6.6 days per 1,000 enrolled days (from 127.3 days in 2024 to 120.7 days in 2025).

Absences due to sickness saw the largest decrease of 5.8 days per 1,000 enrolled days (from 55.9 days in 2024 to 50.1 days in 2025). This was followed by a decrease of 1.3 absence days per 1,000 enrolled days for unexplained / pending explanation, and a 0.2 days per 1,000 enrolled days decrease for absences due to leave. In contrast, absence days due to suspensions showed no change from 2024 to 2025. The only increase was for absences with unjustified explanations received, which rose by 0.6 days per 1,000 enrolled days.

Figure 13: Semester 1 absence days per 1,000 enrolled days by reason, 2024 and 2025, primary and secondary



The frequency of sick days per 1,000 enrolled days has decreased overall for both primary and secondary students in 2025. Notably, sick days for primary students saw a higher decrease of 7.1 days per 1,000 enrolled days (from 50.3 days in 2024 to 43.2 days in 2025), compared to a smaller decrease of 4.0 days (from 64.2 days in 2024 to 60.2 in 2025) for secondary students.

Absences due to leave decreased for secondary students by 0.3 days per 1,000 enrolled days (from 17.5 days in 2024 to 17.2 days in 2025). However, the rate remained steady for primary students on leave, at 17.1 days in both 2024 and 2025.

Absence days for suspended secondary students decreased by 0.2 days per 1,000 enrolled days (from 4.6 days in 2024 to 4.4 days in 2025). In comparison, primary students experienced a small increase of 0.1 days per 1,000 enrolled days (from 0.6 days in 2024 to 0.7 days in 2025).

Conversely, unexplained absences decreased for primary students in 2025, by 2.9 days per 1,000 enrolled days. While for secondary students, there was a small increase of 0.4 days per 1,000 enrolled days (from 67.0 days in 2024 to 67.4 days in 2025).

Only absences with unjustified explanations received increased for both primary and secondary students in 2025. For primary students, the increase was 0.2 days per 1,000 enrolled days (from 11.2 days in 2024 to 11.4 days in 2025). For secondary, the increase was higher at 1.0 day (from 14.5 days in 2024 to 15.5 days in 2025).

CESE regularly reviews and refines its quality assurance processes to improve data accuracy and consistency. As a result, there may be minor variations in the absence reasons data provided in previous years.

## Notes

Government school systems in Australia measure attendance rates and levels throughout the first semester, which includes Term 1 and Term 2. This is the period of data collection as specified in National Education Agreements between the Commonwealth and state and territory governments. Attendance data from NSW schools for specific purposes was collected for the first time in 2020.

Nationally, the **attendance rate** is defined as the number of actual full-time equivalent student days attended by full-time students in Years 1 to 10 in Semester 1 as a percentage of the number of possible student-days attended in Semester 1 (Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia – Key Performance Measure 1(b)).

The **attendance level** is defined as the proportion of full-time students in Years 1 to 10 whose attendance rate in Semester 1 is equal to or greater than 90% (Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia – Key Performance Measure 1(c)).

National student attendance data for Years 1 to 10 is published annually on the National Report on Schooling in Australia (ANR) data portal. The data portal includes more information on the Measurement Framework for Schooling Australia and Key Performance Measures previously mentioned. 2020 attendance data was not published due to the impact of COVID-19 on student attendance.

The attendance rates and levels in the fact sheet are different to the nationally published figures, due to the inclusion of Kindergarten, Year 11 and Year 12 students.

Remoteness classifications in this fact sheet are determined according to Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) – 2021 Remoteness Structure. This standard outlines 5 possible location areas: major cities, inner regional, outer regional, remote and very remote. This fact sheet combines inner regional and outer regional into one regional location and combines remote and very remote into one remote location.

# Explanatory notes

## 1. National standards for student attendance data reporting

Since 2018, NSW Government schools have reported attendance data in accordance with the National Standards published on the [ACARA website](#).

ACARA published the '[National standards for student attendance data reporting – third edition](#)' ([PDF 374KB](#)) in July 2020. As a result, in 2021, the following changes to attendance calculations were made:

- no rounding to determine whether a student's attendance rate meets the 90% threshold for attendance level calculations
- including the final week of Term 2
- treating partial absences over 120 minutes as a half-day absence instead of their actual value as a proportion of a 6-hour day.

## 2. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students

Students are included in the reporting as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander if they or their parents, families or carers identified them on the school enrolment form. Throughout this report, the term 'Aboriginal' is inclusive of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students may fall into multiple other equity groups including more remote locations.

## 3. Reasons for absences

Students may be absent from school for a variety of reasons, including sickness, truancy, or other circumstances. Some other reasons include:

- misadventure or unforeseen event
- participation in special events not related to the school
- domestic necessity, such as serious illness of an immediate family member
- attendance at funerals
- travel in Australia and overseas
- recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions
- other absences not explained by parents, or the principal does not accept the provided explanation
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students may also be absent from school when they are engaging in cultural practices/obligations. Note: There are currently no attendance codes that reflect cultural obligations as a justified reason for a student to be absent from school.

In certain communities, attendance rates can also be affected by other factors, such as the level of sickness within the community or natural events like floods.