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Department of  
**Education**

**CONFIGURATION OF THE SCHOOL DAY IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
POLICY**

**CONFIGURATION OF THE SCHOOL DAY IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
PROCEDURES**

This PDF contains the following documents:

**Document 1:**

Configuration of the School Day in Public Schools policy v3.0

Effective 3 February 2026

**Document 2:**

Configuration of the School Day in Public Schools procedures v1.0

Effective 3 February 2026

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Department of  
**Education**

## **CONFIGURATION OF THE SCHOOL DAY IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS POLICY**

**EFFECTIVE: 3 FEBRUARY 2026**

**VERSION: 3.0**

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## 1 POLICY STATEMENT

The hours of instruction provided to students comply with the requirements of legislation and industrial agreements.

## 2 POLICY RULES

Principals will:

- configure the school day to ensure the minimum hours of instruction are responsive to student needs and the context of the school community
- communicate relevant and accurate information about school hours to the school community
- manage the configuration of the school day in accordance with the Configuration of the School Day in Public Schools procedures.

### **Guidance**

*The minimum hours of instruction for students, exclusive of recess or lunch times, are set by the School Education Regulations 2000. The minimum hours of instruction for students are not the same as the minimum hours of face-to-face teaching time for teachers.*

*The minimum hours of instruction:*

- *Kindergarten: an average of 15 hours a week during each 2 week period in which the school is open for instruction with the delivery model determined by the principal (link for internal staff use only)*
- *Pre-primary to Year 12:*
  - *a minimum 25 hours and 50 minutes during each week in which the school is open for instruction as determined by the principal*
  - *a minimum 4 hours and 10 minutes during each day on which the school is open for instruction as determined by the principal.*

*Schools are not open for instruction on proclaimed Western Australian public holidays if they fall in a school term. A public holiday reduces the hours of instruction for students in that week. Part-time Kindergarten students who are timetabled to attend on a public holiday do not attend on that day and are not expected to attend on an alternative day.*

## 3 RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND COMPLIANCE

Implementation of the policy is the responsibility of the principal.

Compliance monitoring is the responsibility of line managers.

## 4 SCOPE

This policy applies to all principals in public schools and directors of education.

## 5 SUPPORTING PROCEDURES

Configuration of the School Day in Public Schools procedures.

## 6 DEFINITIONS

**School day** is a gazetted term date on which the school is open for providing instruction to students.

**Hours of instruction** is the amount of time students receive instruction in a school. It does not include recess or lunch breaks, or learning time outside of school, such as time for homework, tutoring, training for sports teams, music and drama rehearsals.

## 7 RELATED DOCUMENTS

**Relevant legislation or authority**

[School Education Act 1999](#)

[School Education Regulations 2000](#)

**Related Department policies**

[Curriculum Assessment Reporting in Public Schools](#)

[Duty of Care for Public School Students](#)

[Incident Management on Department of Education Sites](#)

[Student Attendance in Public Schools](#)

**Other documents**

[Incident Management Manual](#) (link for internal staff use only)

## 8 CONTACT INFORMATION

Policy manager: Assistant Executive Director, Public Schools Planning

Policy contact officer: Manager, Schooling Planning  
T: (08) 9264 4322

## 9 REVIEW DATE

3 February 2029

## 10 HISTORY OF CHANGES

Effective date	Last update date	Policy version no.	Ref no.	Notes
This table will be completed by the Governance Unit				
5 November 2009	15 December 2014	2.1	D14/0546624	Minor changes to reflect Year 7 move to a secondary setting D14/0522947.

5 November 2009	21 August 2018	2.2	D18/0333541	Minor changes to include reference to Public Schools D18/015165 and updated legislation links D18/0207680.
5 November 2009	26 February 2020	2.3	D20/0094101	Minor changes to contact information D20/0094086
3 February 2026		3.0	D25/0999149	Policy and procedures submitted to the DG for approval 23 January 2026



**Department of  
Education**

## **CONFIGURATION OF THE SCHOOL DAY IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS PROCEDURES**

**EFFECTIVE: 3 FEBRUARY 2026**

**VERSION: 1.0**

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## 1 POLICY SUPPORTED

Configuration of the School Day in Public Schools policy.

## 2 SCOPE

These procedures apply to all principals in public schools and directors of education.

## 3 PROCEDURES

### 3.1 Setting the configuration of the school day for a new school

The principal will:

- confirm that the configuration of the school day:
  - provides the required minimum hours of instruction
  - considers the start, finish and duration of recess and lunch breaks for students
  - addresses duty of care and risk management requirements
- whenever possible, schedule school start and finish times within the school zone times for the school's location
- consider local factors that may impact on the configuration of the school day
- consult with the school board or council, the school community and other schools in the area on the configuration of the school day
- if required, consult with the providers of dedicated school transport services regarding service timetables
- give the school community notice of the configuration of the school day.

#### Guidance

The Department of Education's [School hours](#) website provides information about configuration of the school day.

#### Western Australian school zone times.

Location	Hours of operation
Gascoyne, Pilbara	7:30 to 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 to 3:30 p.m.
Kimberley	7:00 to 8.30 a.m. and 2:00 to 3:30 p.m.
Carnarvon	7:30 to 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.
Rest of WA	7:30 to 9:00 a.m. and 2:30 to 4:00 p.m.

These times are expected where school zone signage is installed and strongly recommended for other schools.

#### Considerations for the school day include:

- the start and finish times of nearby schools
- out of school hours care services
- seasonal weather variations.

*When determining the school start and finish times, duty of care and risk management considerations may include:*

- *consultation with Western Australian Police regarding the impact on the rostering of crossing attendants and any increase in the cost of this service*
- *arrangements for the supervision of students until the normal school start time, if students enter the school premises*
- *arrangements for the supervision of students after the normal school finish time, if students do not leave the school premises.*

*The Director General determines term dates and the days in each year on which schools are to be open for the instruction of students. These dates are published in the Government Gazette and on the Department of Education [Term Dates](#) website.*

### **3.2 Changing the configuration of the school day**

The principal will:

- confirm that the change to the configuration of the school day continues to:
  - comply with the minimum hours of instruction
  - address duty of care and risk management requirements
  - consider the school zone times for the school's location
- consult with the school board or council, the school community and other schools in the area prior to changing the configuration of the school day
- if required, consult with the providers of dedicated school transport services regarding service timetables
- give the school community reasonable notice of the change to the school day.

#### **Guidance**

*Wherever possible, changes to the school day are made from the beginning of a school year with a minimum of 6 months' notice to the school community.*

### **3.3 Temporary change to the school day: reporting to parents sessions and school development days**

The principal will:

- schedule temporary changes to the school day for reporting to parents sessions and flexible school development days each year in consultation with school staff and the school board or council
- give the school community reasonable notice of a scheduled change to the school day for:
  - reporting to parents
  - a school development day
- record the temporary change to the school day in the school's administrative system
- advise the director of education of any changes to the duration of reporting to parents from the previous year.

**Guidance**

All public schools have the flexibility to schedule up to 2 full days each year for reporting to parents. Refer to [Plan for changes to the school day for the purpose of reporting](#) (link for internal staff use only) for information about managing reporting to parents sessions.

This is in addition to the Schools General Agreement 2023 Clause 9.5(a) - Teachers are required to conduct up to 2 formal interviews/meetings with parents/carers outside the Normal School Day or Normal Operating Hours each year to discuss students' progress.

The Department of Education's [School hours](#) website provides general information about school development days. Refer to [Plan school development days](#) (link for internal staff use only) for information about managing school development days.

Refer to [Record student attendance](#) (link for internal staff use only) for instructions and appropriate codes for a temporary change to the school day.

### 3.4 Temporary school closure: proclaimed regional public holiday

The principal will:

- provide the school community with reasonable notice that the school will be closed on the date of a proclaimed regional public holiday
- record the temporary school closure in the school's administrative system.

**Guidance**

Some regional areas in Western Australia hold the King's Birthday public holiday on an alternative proclaimed date, usually to coincide with a significant date or event for that area.

The dates of regional public holidays can be found at [Public holidays in Western Australia](#). Schools in these areas will not be closed when the King's Birthday public holiday is observed in the rest of Western Australia.

Refer to [Record student attendance](#) (link for internal staff use only) for instructions and appropriate codes for the school closure on the regional public holiday.

### 3.5 Temporary school closure: emergency or incident

The principal will:

- manage an emergency or incident in accordance with the [Incident Management on Department of Education Sites policy](#) and [Incident Management Manual](#) (link for internal staff use only)
- if required, record a temporary school closure in the school's administrative system.

## 4

## DEFINITIONS

**School day** is a gazetted term date on which the school is open for providing instruction to students.

**Hours of instruction** is the amount of time students receive instruction in a school. It does not include recess or lunch breaks, or learning time outside of school, such as time for homework, tutoring, training for sports teams, music and drama rehearsals.

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