



## What would children change about School?

Many children focused on the significant pressures and expectations they feel to do well at school. While many enjoy school and like learning, many children do not think school is set up in the best possible way to engage all students. They want school to be more inclusive and less punitive.

Others described their “tough schedule” as the worst thing about being a kid and said that the amount of schoolwork and homework they’re given leaves them with little time for family and friends, sport, or other extracurricular activities.

**“ ‘Getting sent to sit out during class and the environment getting killed’**  
– 9 year old (Eyre and Western)

**“ ‘learning pressure (some things are hard to understand) but I like learning’**  
– 13 year old (Metropolitan Adelaide)

**“ ‘It would be the pressure we hae on our shoulders at the moment with every subject and heaps of tests’** – 13 year old (Far North)

All children shared many ideas for changing some aspect of school from the curriculum and structure of the school day to the nature of physical learning environments and uniforms.

A higher proportion of boys than girls wanted to change some aspect of their school to make lessons more engaging, and to find ways to provide more help for kids who are struggling to learn, including having more opportunities to have breaks and be active.

In addition to making school more affordable, tweens offered a range of ideas to improve both the school curriculum and the physical and social environment of their school. They said this could be done in ways that would benefit both their learning and their wellbeing.

They wrote about wanting more help from teachers and SSOs (Students Support Officers) to help ‘kids feel safe and to learn’, and they wanted to see more flexible learning options introduced to help those who ‘struggle’ or who ‘learn differently’.

Specific suggestions included providing more opportunities to be active and creative at school, with more fitness lessons and music teachers on staff. Others wrote about ‘making mindfulness part of the curriculum’, putting plants in classrooms, improving school toilets and air conditioning, creating spaces at school for students to relax, and letting people have a pet at school ‘so they have a good friend’ and ‘wouldn’t feel sad’.

**“ ‘I would give more funds to schools so they can get more SSO teachers to help stressed out kids.’** – 11 year old (Metropolitan Adelaide)

**“ ‘I would have a fitness subject at the end of the day. I would upgrade all school’s internet and buildings.’** – 11 year old (Metropolitan Adelaide)

**“ ‘I’d like to have more outside learning time for kids in SA.’** – 12 year old (Barossa, Light and Lower North)



