

# REWARDS AND INCENTIVES

Rewards and incentives can help improve school attendance. But rewarding only perfect attendance can make other students feel shame. Students who have never had their progress recognised are less likely to go to school. By rewarding small improvements you can have a big impact. Try to set small goals and work together as a community to achieve them. You can reward students, families or the whole community when goals are achieved. Below are some tips for how rewards and incentives can be used by RSAS teams in their communities.

## ➤ **Work with the Governance Committee to come up with a local rewards and incentives strategy.**

- It is good to have big and small prizes for rewarding different things.
  - Ask students to suggest ideas for big prizes they can work for during the term.
  - Have small prizes ready, such as stickers, to give to students when they do something good.
- Ask local businesses to be involved. Sporting organisations might offer merchandise or the local shop may offer a voucher.
- Ask local role models to participate. They could promote and present some of the rewards on offer.
- Avoid taking something away from students and giving it back as a reward. For example, if a student is only attending one class (such as music), taking this away will most likely stop them from coming to school all together.

## ➤ **Set clear goals and reward improvements, even when they are small.**

- Celebrate improvements, like coming to school four days when they usually only come three. Rewarding progress can help students feel good about being at school.
- Invite families to come and see students getting their awards.
- Remember that goals might be different for each student. For some students, this may be getting to school on time a few days in a row.

## ➤ **Rewards can be for students, families or even the whole community.**

- Make sure the rewards are things people want and like.
  - Students might like getting a certificate or some of the RSAS 'Gathering Knowledge' t-shirts or footballs.
  - Families could be rewarded with things they can use together, for example, footy tickets or shop vouchers.

- You could tell the community that if the whole school improves, RSAS will run an event to celebrate, such as a family fun day at the school.
  - Where possible, offer rewards that students and families might not get often, to make them more exciting.
- **Be careful you do not only reward perfect attendance. All progress is good and should be recognised.**
- If a student shows progress look for ways to reward them. Rewards work well on people who do not get them very often. You could reward:
    - Improved attendance or getting to school on time;
    - Paying attention in class or showing good behaviour;
    - Getting good grades in class;
    - Helping younger students and being a good role model;
    - Doing something nice for the community; or
    - Going to activities outside of school, such as dancing.
- **Make sure your rewards and incentives are not over the top.**
- Telling students they have done a good job can make a big difference.
  - Rewards and incentives should match the achievement of the student. For example, if a student helps on the bus run, you could give them a drink bottle. If they have improved attendance for the term, you might want to use something a bit bigger.
  - Incentives do not need to be too big or cost much. Simple rewards are often best, such as certificates, icy poles, funky hair days, face painting, sports or camps.

