“Alice Springs businesses will be asked to support a proposal that would see them refusing to serve school aged children during school hours unless they have a note or a pass,” says the Shadow Minister for Business, Jodeen Carney.

“Everyday looks like school holidays in Alice Springs at the moment, there are just too many kids not going to school and a fresh approach is needed.

“During the week I was in a shop when a group of primary school aged children came in during school hours. The people behind the counter asked them why they weren’t at school and so did I – the children just shrugged their shoulders; were sold their soft drink, and off they went.

“It’s appalling that these kids are missing out on an education and totally unacceptable.

“Whilst it’s not the shop owner’s responsibility, I was encouraged by their obvious concern about the issue.

“No School – No Service is a variation of the reasonably successful No School, No Pool initiative that exists in some remote communities.

“No School – No Service has been operating in other towns in other states by agreement amongst local businesses. The aim is to make being in the CBD during school hours less appealing.

“I have already spoken to some Alice business owners about this proposal and they support it.

“Over the next few weeks, I will talk to more business owners about this, and next week, I will seek a meeting with the new Executive Officer of the Chamber of Commerce to discuss this proposal.

“Let’s see if by making it less attractive for kids to wag school we improve our truancy rates in Alice.”

Further comment: Jodeen Carney 0407 187 992