

# Attendance Plan

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## Legal Obligation:

### **Students of registered schools are required to attend whenever schools are open**

1. Except as provided in this Act, a student is required to attend a registered school whenever it is open if the student—
  - A. is required to be enrolled at a registered school;
  - B. is aged 5 years and is enrolled at a registered school
2. A board or sponsor must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school's students attend the school when it is open.
3. For this section, a student attends a school on any day if, on the day, —
  - A. It has been open for instruction for 4 hours or more, and
  - B. The student has been present for 4 hours or more when the school is open for instruction.

## School Attendance Rules 2025

### **Amendment—School Attendance Rules 2025**

These rules, effective 1 January 2025, are made under section 237A of the Education and Training Act 2020 and are complementary to the Education (School Attendance) Regulations 2024.

### **Rule 1: The principal of a State school (other than a distance school) must ensure that attendance records are kept.**

- 1.1 The principal must ensure that an attendance record is kept for each student who is enrolled at the school (either by half-day or period) for each half-day that it is open for instruction.
- 1.2 To enable the accurate and timely collection of attendance records, the principal must ensure that the school has an absence notification process so that absences can be reported by and to the school promptly.

- a. Every notification process (e.g. text or e-mail) for advising a parent/caregiver that a student is absent without explanation must be based on up-to-date contact information.
- b. Notifications must be sent as soon as practicable on the day that a student has not arrived at school without explanation.

**Rule 2: The principal of a State school (other than a distance school) must use a Ministry-approved Electronic Attendance Register (“eAR”) unless exempt.**

- 2.1 The Secretary for Education may exempt a principal from using a Ministry-approved eAR if:
  - a. the school has a roll of less than 30 students; and
  - b. The principal agrees to use a Ministry-approved mechanism for the collection and submission of attendance data.

**Rule 3: The principal of a State school (other than a distance school) must use Ministry-approved attendance codes.**

- 3.1 The principal must ensure that:
  - a. the school’s eAR or other Ministry-approved mechanism uses attendance codes approved by the Secretary for Education.
  - b. an attendance code is recorded for each student in the school’s eAR (either by half-day or period) for each halfday that the school is open for instruction.
  - c. A default attendance code is used to record a student’s absence for each half-day or period that the student is absent without explanation.

**Rationale**

Regular attendance is crucial for student learning, well-being, and long-term success. In a full primary school (Years 1–8), consistent attendance ensures tamariki have equitable access to the curriculum during their key developmental years.

An attendance plan helps the school meet its legal obligations under the Education and Training Act 2020 and supports the Ministry of Education’s national goal of improving attendance and engagement. It enables the school to:

- Monitor attendance patterns and respond early to concerns
- Identify and address barriers affecting students and whānau
- Strengthen relationships through clear expectations and communication
- Support wellbeing by recognising attendance as a key indicator
- Promote a positive school culture where every day matters

A clear, proactive plan fosters a shared commitment to regular attendance, helping every learner thrive.

**Targets**

The Ministry of Education has a national goal of 80% of students attending school 90% of the time by 2030.

- Term 1: 85%
- Term 2: 65%
- Term 3: 65%
- Term 4: 85%

## Identified Barriers to Attendance

At St Mary's Catholic School, our attendance data shows that medical appointments and holidays in term time are barriers to achieving this target. To address these barriers, we will

- Regularly share information with families about recognising when a child is sick enough to stay home from school
- May request a medical certificate after 3 continuous days of absence due to illness, if a child's absences are causing concern
- Make referrals to the Public Health Nurse when medical absences are impacting a child's attendance
- Regularly communicate with families about the impact of holidays during term time on education
- Have a set message to email families who indicate they are planning to take a holiday during term time, outlining the potential impacts of this leave
- Teachers will not be expected to provide learning for a child on holiday during term time, but we will develop a resource which outlines some tasks which could be completed

Roles and Responsibilities	
<b>Students</b>	<i>Expected to attend every day, arrive on time, and remain on-site during the school day.</i>
<b>Whānau and Caregivers</b>	<i>Ensure student attendance and inform the school of absences on the day via the SchoolApp or a phone call to the school office</i>
<b>Teachers</b>	<i>Mark attendance accurately at the beginning of the day and after lunch. Engage students in fulfilling purposeful learning. Provide opportunities for students to make up for missed work. Acknowledge good attendance. Identify concerning patterns of absence. Discuss attendance concerns at Team Meetings.</i>
<b>Administration Staff</b>	<i>Follow up on unexplained attendance at the start of the day. Update attendance in SMS</i>
<b>SLT</b>	<i>Lead the attendance strategy, support interventions, and oversee referrals to external agencies.</i>
<b>Deputy Principals</b>	<i>Track daily data, contact whānau, and coordinate with external agencies as needed. Provide attendance data for Senior Leadership Meetings</i>

Attendance Procedures	
<b>Teachers</b>	<p><b>DAILY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accurately mark the roll before 9 am and before 2 pm</li> <li>• Follow up on unexplained absences promptly (if attendance is still unexplained, the teacher must follow this up with the parent).</li> </ul> <p><b>WEEKLY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor attendance patterns and refer concerns to the Team Leader at Team meetings. Record this in the Team Meeting minutes</li> </ul> <p><b>REGULARLY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate with whānau about attendance patterns, both good and concerning (informal and formal).</li> <li>• Support catch-up learning for returning students.</li> </ul>
<b>Team Leaders</b>	<p><b>WEEKLY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review attendance data for specific students and intervene when needed.</li> <li>• Support teachers to contact whānau for students &lt;90%.</li> </ul>
<b>Senior Leadership</b>	<p><b>DAILY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support roll compliance.</li> </ul> <p><b>WEEKLY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SLT to discuss attendance concerns and document in SLT minutes.</li> <li>• Monitor schoolwide weekly attendance using SMS report</li> </ul> <p><b>REGULARLY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead responses to chronic absence.</li> <li>• Refer students to the Attendance Service after 20+ days of concerning absences.</li> <li>• Escalate concerns to external services.</li> <li>• Termly reporting and data management.</li> </ul>
<b>Administration Staff</b>	<p><b>DAILY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Track student attendance and flag concerning trends.</li> <li>• Contact whānau for unexplained absences.</li> </ul>

## Attendance Codes

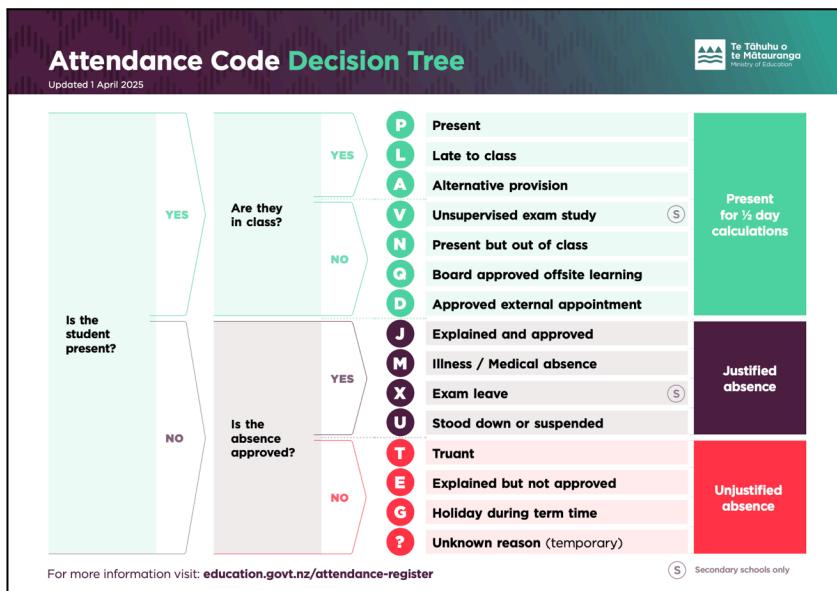
The Attendance Rules 2025 require schools to use Ministry-approved attendance codes to record student attendance. The attendance codes and guidance are designed to support schools and the Ministry to:

- distinguish between presence, justified absence and unjustified absence
- provide high-level indicators to support monitoring of trends and patterns
- support school attendance activities e.g. tracking the location of students.

Attendance codes are not intended to record causal factors for absences such as transport barriers, bullying, anxiety, birthdays, or teacher practice. It is not practical for codes to record this level of granularity. This information is recorded on our SMS by office staff eg type of illness, and exact reason for being absent so we can analyse trends and patterns for this student and our school.

## Application of Codes

Application of codes is based on the following:



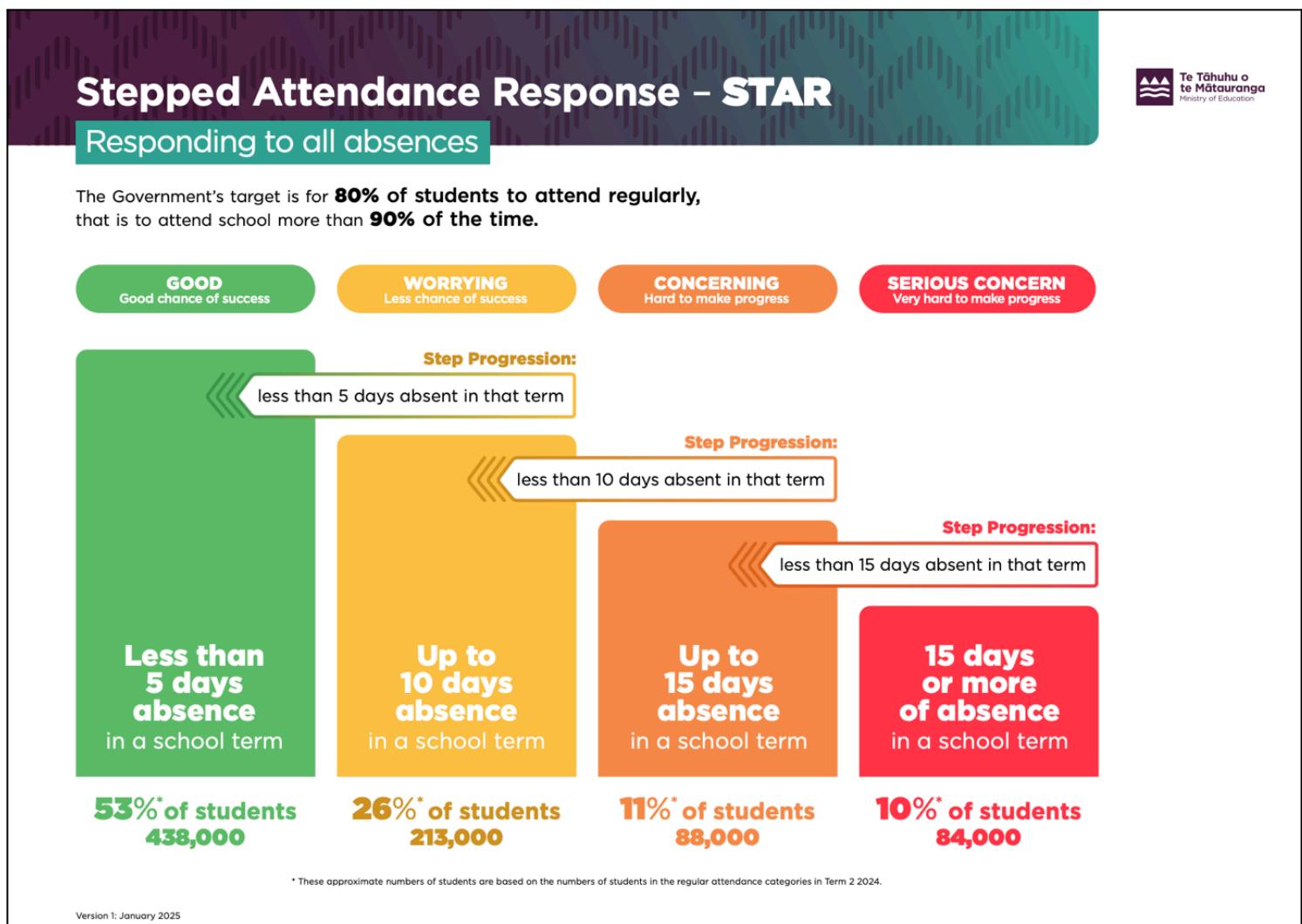
Code Group	Sub-Group	Code	Examples
Present	On-site	P – Present	In class and present
		L – Late to class	Late to class and present
		V – Unsupervised exam study	Unsupervised exam study (ON-SITE)
		N – Present but out of class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal appointment</li> <li>On-site school-based activity e.g. cultural / sporting event like Sports Day.</li> <li>Temporary removal from class</li> <li>Prefect meeting</li> <li>Time in sickbay</li> </ul>
	Off-site	D – Approved external appointment	<p>If a student cannot attend an appointment out of hours e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medical appointments (doctor, dentist),</li> <li>specialist appointments</li> <li>appointments with other professionals (e.g., counsellor, social worker).</li> </ul>
		Q – Board approved offsite learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tangihanga</li> <li>Cultural / Arts/ Sports event</li> <li>Performing, playing, participating in a regional or national school event</li> <li>Overseas BUT committing to a learning program.</li> <li>Driving licence test</li> <li>Wellbeing plan or flexible learning plan = Q on days off</li> <li>Attending an off-site program for IEP</li> <li>Attending a work placement or a Gateway placement</li> <li>Rostering home for group or year levels. NOTE: work needs to be available</li> </ul>

Code Group	Sub-Group	Code	Examples
		A – Alternative provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students present at <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alternative Education</li> <li>Teen parent unit</li> <li>STP program (Trades)</li> <li>Health school</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Absent	Justified Absences	M – Illness / Medical absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Absent due to illness (includes health-related e.g. anxiety)</li> </ul>
		J – Explained and approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family arrangement</li> <li>Overseas holiday (no work or commitment to work)</li> </ul>
		U – Stood down or suspended	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stood down or suspended</li> </ul>
	Exam Leave	X – Exam Leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Study leave off-site (not included in MOE attendance calculations)</li> </ul>
	Unjustified Absences	T – Truant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student is absent without explanation</li> </ul>
		E – Explained but not approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Absent without justifiable reason e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Didn't come to school because of sports day</li> <li>Went to watch siblings school production</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
		G – Holiday during term time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holiday taken. Student refuses to commit to study or learning program.</li> </ul>
		? – Unknown reason (temporary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is a TEMPORARY code. This will be updated once the reason is specified.</li> </ul>

# Attendance Thresholds and Responses (the thresholds shown are in line with the STAR, based on a 10 week term)

- *Green Zone ( $\geq 90\%$ ) - minimal intervention required.*
- *Yellow Zone (80–89%) - teacher contacts whānau, may introduce an attendance plan.*
- *Orange Zone (70–79%) - Deputy Principals meet with student and whānau. A plan is created.*
- *Red Zone ( $<70\%$ ) - SLT leads intensive intervention. External agencies involved where needed.*

(You may wish to include an element of discretion here. For example, if a student has covid and is absent for 5 days, do they immediately move to the yellow zone? If an element of discretion **is** used, a suggestion would be to name the person(s) with whom the discretion lies)





# St Mary's Catholic School Attendance Management Plan

Communication – Monitoring -- Support – Reporting – Teaching and Modelling

**For students with less than 5 days absence** in a school term - 90% + attendance

Goal - To maintain and reinforce regular attendance patterns,

Activities	What we do (A description of the schools actions)	How we do it... (Including linked resources)	Who is responsible
<b><u>Communication</u></b>  <i>Clear communication to parents on attendance expectations on enrolment, at the start of school year, and each term</i>  <i>Communicate to parents what steps the school will take in the event their child is absent from school</i>	<i>Include a newsletter on attendance requirements with enrolment packs, to go out with new students and to remind all students of attendance protocols at beginning of year and each term</i>  <i>Explain to parents the codes used to record attendance of each student at enrolment.</i>	<i>Attendance is shared with whanau through the school newsletter.</i>  <i>Attendance letters to update parents on rates and requirements</i>  <i>Attendance codes on display</i>	<i>SLT</i>
<b><u>Monitoring</u></b>  <i>Monitor attendance</i>  <i>Communicate to parents about every absence</i>  <i>Maintain contact details of parents</i>	<i>Roll is marked by teacher between 8.50 and 9.00 am, and before 2:00 pm.</i>  <i>Children of concern are shared with the team at weekly team meetings.</i>  <i>SMS generates the list of students absent for the full day.</i>  <i>Gather details at enrolment.</i>  <i>Re-establish the details at the start of every year at Korero Mai days.</i>  <i>Regularly text and email parents.</i>  <i>Text caregivers ahead of school events and when</i>	<i>SLT monitor weekly attendance shared at the end of the week</i>	<i>SLT</i>

	<i>students are recognised for achievements.</i>		<i>Reception</i>
<b><u>Reporting</u></b>	<p><i>Provide students with regular updates on their own attendance</i></p> <p><i>Report regularly to parents on attendance of their child</i></p>	<p><i>Accurate data on school reports.</i></p>	<p>.</p> <p><i>DP</i></p> <p><i>I</i></p>
<b><u>Support</u></b>	<p><i>Support students to catch up missed learning where required</i></p>	<p><i>Teachers build strong relationships with students. Provide work for students to complete ahead of absence if it is a planned absence.</i></p>	<p><i>Explicit Direct Instruction with supporting resources.</i></p> <p><i>Classroom teacher.</i></p>
<b><u>Teaching and modelling</u></b>	<p><i>Use assemblies to acknowledge regular attendance</i></p>	<p><i>Termly certificates for 100% attendance</i></p>	<p><i>Public recognition</i></p> <p><i>Teacher</i></p>



# St Mary's Catholic School Rotorua

## Attendance Management Plan

Communication – Monitoring -- Support – Reporting – Teaching and Modelling

**For students with up to 10 days of absence in a school term - 80% attendance**

**Goal -To restore students' attendance to above 90%**

Activities	What we do (A description of the school's actions)	How we do it... (Including linked resources)	Who is responsible
<b><u>Communication</u></b>  <i>Send formal notification and contact parent/ guardian to discuss reasons for absence</i>  <i>Communicate to parents what steps the school will take in the event their child is absent from school</i>	<i>Team Meeting will be used to identify children who have 80% attendance. Any patterns are identified</i>  <i>Contact whānau via a message or phone call home. This will be recorded in our SMS as a pastoral note.</i>	<i>Team Meetings</i>  <i>Pastoral support is recorded in SMS, and learner is identified by LSC as an at-risk learner due to irregular attendance.</i>  <i>Teacher to check to see if absence has been explained, and if not ring home and make a plan regarding attendance. Plan is to be logged on SMS.</i>	<i>Teacher, Team Leader, Admin staff</i>
<b><u>Monitoring</u></b>  <i>Monitor attendance</i>  <i>Communicate to parents about every absence</i>  <i>Maintain contact details of parents</i>	<i>SMS flags students who have been absent after 5 days. Edge will send out an email to whanau</i>  <i>Monitor contact details of parents and ensure these are up to date</i>	<i>Teachers use this to: discuss the week's attendance at Team Meetings</i>	<i>Teachers and Admin Staff</i>
<b><u>Reporting</u></b>  <i>Report regularly to parents</i>	<i>Termly Interviews with whanau</i>	<i>Written and Oral reports to parents</i>	<i>Teachers</i>

<i>on attendance of their child</i>	<i>Mid-year and end-of-year reports</i>		
<b><u>Support</u></b>  <i>Support students to catch up missed learning where required</i>	<i>Teacher supports additional catch up</i>  <i>LSC supports additional catch up</i>  <i>The Learning Village programme will be given to students to use who will be away for extended periods of time</i>	<i>Ensure students have access to The Learning Village</i>	<i>Class Teacher</i>  <i>LSC</i>
<b><u>Teaching and modelling</u></b>  <i>Use in-school resources as appropriate to remove barriers e.g. Manaake Supports,</i>	<i>Identify barriers that result in poor attendance</i>	<i>SLT to support whanau overcome any barriers</i>	<i>SLT</i>



# St Mary's Catholic School Rotorua

## Attendance Management Plan

Communication – Monitoring -- Support – Reporting – Teaching and Modelling

**For students with up to 15 days absence in a school term - 70% attendance**

Goal - to re-engage students and increase attendance.

Activities	What we do (A description of the schools actions)	How we do it... (Including linked resources)	Who is responsible
<b><u>Communication</u></b>  <i>Send escalated formal notification to parents</i>  <i>Hold meeting to analyse reasons for absence and to collaborate on a support plan</i>  <i>Develop and implement a plan tailored to the reasons and circumstances around the child's absence</i>	<i>Letter of concern sent inviting whānau to be part of solution</i>  <i>SLT hold Attendance Hui</i>  <i>Plan is developed</i>	<i>Hui held and plan developed and monitored</i>  <i>See template</i>	<i>SLT</i>
<b><u>Monitoring</u></b>  <i>Monitor attendance</i>  <i>Communicate to parents about every absence</i>  <i>Maintain contact details of parents</i>	<i>Discuss at Team Meetings and Leadership Meetings</i>  <i>Phone call home by Admin Team</i>	<i>The teacher checks to see if the absence has been explained, and if not, refers to SLT</i>	<i>Teacher</i> <i>SLT</i>
<b><u>Reporting</u></b>  <i>Report regularly to parents on attendance of their child</i>	<i>Use Seesaw to celebrate regular attendance.</i>  <i>Termly Interviews with whanau</i>  <i>Mid-year and end-of-year reports</i>	<i>Written and Oral reports to parents</i>	<i>Teachers</i>
<b><u>Support</u></b>  <i>Support students to catch up</i>	<i>Teacher supports additional catch up</i>	<i>Ensure students have access to The Learning Village</i>	<i>Class Teacher</i>

<p>missed learning where required</p>	<p><i>LSC supports additional catch up</i></p> <p><i>The Learning Village programme will be given to students to use who will be away for extended periods of time</i></p>		<p><i>LSC</i></p>
<p><b><u>Teaching and modelling</u></b></p> <p>Use in-school resources as appropriate to remove barriers e.g. Manaake Supports,</p>	<p><i>Identify barriers that result in poor attendance</i></p>	<p><i>SLT to support whanau overcome any barriers</i></p>	<p><i>SLT</i></p>



# St Mary's Catholic School Rotorua

## Attendance Management Plan

Communication – Monitoring -- Support – Reporting – Teaching and Modelling

**For students with up to 15 or more days absence in a school term - LESS THAN 70% attendance**

**Goal- Intensive intervention to overcome complex barriers.**

Activities	What we do (A description of the school's actions)	How we do it... (Including linked resources)	Who is responsible
<b><u>Communication</u></b>	<i>Send a warning notice and make contact to arrange a meeting with the parents</i>	<i>Phone call home and meeting arranged</i>	<i>Next Steps are planned and shared with whanau</i>
<b><u>Monitoring</u></b>	<i>Implement and monitor the improvement plan</i>  <i>When criteria are met, follow the prescribed processes to un-enrol the student</i>		<i>SLT</i>
<b><u>Reporting</u></b>	<i>Refer to the Ministry for consideration of action.</i>	<i>Refer students to Interagency Hui</i>	<i>Run two Interagency hui each term to develop a pathway for intervention</i>
<b><u>Support</u></b>	<i>Escalate to a multi-agency response</i>  <i>Participate in a multi-agency response</i>	<i>Refer students to Interagency Hui</i>	<i>DP Well runs two Interagency Hui each term with support agencies</i>

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

## **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

The government is working hard to improve student attendance nationwide. Currently, student attendance rates nationwide are a significant concern, and we want to ensure that our school community is doing its part to support this important initiative.

Attendance plays a crucial role in your child's education and overall success. The Ministry of Education considers regular attendance to mean no more than five days of absence per term unless there are valid reasons, such as illness or other approved circumstances.

As a school, we are required to report daily to the Ministry on:

- The number of students present.
- The number of students arriving late.
- The number of students with justified absences (e.g., due to illness or an approved reason).
- The number of students with unjustified absences (e.g., family holidays during term time or unexplained absences).

To help us maintain accurate records and ensure your child's regular attendance, we kindly ask for your support with the following:

- **Ensure your child arrives at school on time each day.** Punctuality is important for their learning and sets them up for a successful day. Classes start at 8:45. Ideally, children will be at school by 8:30 so that they can prepare for the day.
- **If your child is unwell or unable to attend school, please submit your child's absence online via our school app or website.** This saves our office staff a considerable amount of time spent calling parents to confirm absences. Alternatively, contact the school office (073481701) early in the morning to inform us of their absence.
- **If you plan to take your child on holiday during school time, you must notify me as the Principal in advance.** Please be aware that if the time away is excessive or we are not informed, it may result in your child being removed from the school roll as per Ministry guidelines.

We understand that life circumstances sometimes impact attendance, and we are here to support you. Teachers structure lessons in a sequence, making it difficult for students to catch up after excessive absences. For prolonged absences, English Language Learners in Year 4 and above are required to follow an online language program. If you are facing any challenges or need assistance ensuring your child's regular attendance, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Thank you for your ongoing support in prioritising your child's education. Together, we can work to ensure every student has the opportunity to thrive and succeed.

Kind regards,

David Macmillan

**APPENDIX:** Include links here to all other relevant documentation:

- 2026 - 2028 [Strategic Plan](#)
- Annual Implementation Plan (to be updated start of 2026)

OTHER RESOURCES:

[Blank STAR template.pdf](#)

[STAR Individual Attendance Plans \(Information for School Leaders\) - FINAL.pdf](#)

[Implementing the STAR.pdf](#)

## **Communicating with Parents**

### **Student Absence Text:**

#### **First Formal Notification (up to 10 days absence):**

Discussion about [student's name]'s attendance

Tēna koe [parent's name]

[Student's name] has been absent for [number of days absent] days this term. That means their attendance rate is less than [80]%. Please contact the office to make a time to have a discussion to better understand the reasons for their absences and to see if there is anything the school can do to support you to improve [student's name]'s attendance.

Please meet with me on [date] or send me an [email/message] to arrange a time.

Ngā mihi,

[Staff member's name and role]

#### **Escalated Formal Notification (up to 15 days absence):**

[Student's full name] – Continued low attendance

Tēna koe [parent's name]

Following on from our previous meeting, I wanted to let you know that [student's name] attendance has continued to cause concern. Our attendance records show that they have been absent for [xx] days this term.

It is important for students to attend school to set them up for success and they are legally required to attend school every day. We share responsibility to make sure students attend and engage in learning from when they first start school.

We need to meet and make a plan to make sure [student's name] gets back to regular attendance, so their learning stays on track. Please contact the office so we can arrange a time to develop this plan.

Ngā mihi,

[Principal's or deputy/associate principal's name]

## **Warning Notice ( 15 days or more absence)**

Referral / Consideration of Legal action:

Tēnā koe [parent's name]

This is to inform you that [student's name] has not had regular attendance at [school name].

[give brief details as to absences].

This letter is to inform you of your legal obligation to ensure that [student's name] attends school whenever it is open and request that [student's name] returns to regular school attendance immediately.

School staff have engaged with you on the occasions listed below, to discuss these ongoing absences and attempt to get [student's name] attendance back on track.

- [email/letter, date]
- email/letter, date
- details of meeting, date
- details of meeting, date]

The school has also involved [external agencies involved] to support [student's name] to return to regular attendance.

This has not resulted in the improvement of [student's name] attendance at school. Section 36 of the Education and Training Act requires a student to attend the registered school at which they are enrolled whenever it is open, while section 244 provides that a parent of that student commits an offence if they do not attend as required by section 36.

If there are insufficient improvements by [date], the board will consider the appropriate next steps available, which may include a referral to the Ministry of Education to consider prosecution for irregular attendance under section 244 of the Education and Training Act 2020.

Please contact [school leader name] as soon as possible with any questions you may have.

Yours sincerely/ Nāku iti nei, nā,  
[sender name and role title]



## **Review**

Our Attendance Management Plan will be reviewed in November 2026, once we have had a year of implementing these actions. Targets will be reviewed at this point.

Plan approved

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Presiding Member

Date

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Principal

Date

## **Appendix**

[School Rules 2025](#)

[Attendance Code Guidance](#)

[Individual Attendance Plans](#)

[STAR Communicating with Parents](#)

