



ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR FAIRFIELD COLLEGE

Rationale:

At Fairfield College we understand that regular attendance is closely linked to student achievement and wellbeing. School age children are required to attend school every day that it is open and everyone (school personnel, parents, whaanau and communities) play a vital role to ensure this is a top priority. Fairfield College's Attendance Management Plan provides a clear process to improve regular attendance by identifying patterns of absenteeism and implementing culturally responsive strategies. It complies with Ministry of Education requirements to monitor and report student attendance and aligns with STAR guidelines (Stepped Attendance Response).

Current state, strategic priorities and projected targets:

1. Regular attendance:

Fairfield College has established regular attendance targets that align with the government's aim of achieving 80% regular attendance by 2030. The table below outlines the school's regular attendance levels for each term in 2024 and 2025, as well as the projected targets for 2026–2028. As the table indicates, the school made strong progress in Terms 1 and 2 of 2025; however, progress in Terms 3 and 4 was limited and will require more deliberate focus moving forward.

The target of 44% regular attendance in 2026, calculated as an average across all four terms, represents a realistic and evidence-based progression from our current performance and aligns with the national trajectory toward 2030. The stepped increases to 54% in 2027 and 65% in 2028 establish a clear and sustainable improvement pathway over the next three years, ensuring Fairfield College remains on track to meet national expectations for regular attendance by 2030.

Regular Attendance Percentage				
	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2024	35	30	29	32
2025	38	34	28	32
2026	46	44	40	46
2027	54	54	54	54
2028	65	65	65	65

2. Chronic absence:

Reducing the number of students who are chronically absent is Fairfield College's second major attendance priority. The targets outlined in the table below are informed by the school's chronic-absence patterns across 2024 and 2025, with the goal of achieving a 23% chronic-absence average across all four terms representing a realistic and achievable improvement benchmark.

Chronic Absences Percentage				
	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2024	29	34	36	40
2025	27	33	37	36
2026	20	25	27	20
2027	18	23	25	18
2028	15	20	20	15

These incremental targets aim to reverse current attendance challenges and provide a solid foundation for improved academic outcomes.

Monitoring and Reporting Progress against the Attendance Management Plan

Progress toward Fairfield College’s attendance targets—including regular attendance, reduced chronic absence, and movement toward the national 2030 goals—will be monitored and reported to the Board through a structured schedule aligned with key points in the school year.

1. Reporting Schedule

Progress will be formally reported at Board meetings on

- March 2 (Feb 2 – Feb 20)
- April 13 (Term 1 data)
- June 8 (May 4 – May 29)
- July 6 (Term 2 data)
- September 7 (July 20 – August 28)
- October 5 (Term 3 data)
- December 7 (Term 4 data)

School-level attendance data, including regular attendance, chronic absence, and unjustified absence patterns.

- Comparisons with:
 - historical data (2024–2025),
 - annual 2026 targets
 - and the national 2030 regular attendance trajectory

. Measures Reported

Each report to the Board will include both percentages and the corresponding number of students.

A. Regular Attendance (students attending > 90%)

- Percentage of students attending regularly and the exact number of students this represents.
- Progress against termly staged targets (e.g., 44% / ___ students in 2026).
- Commentary on trends, cohorts of concern, and interventions initiated.

B. Chronic Absence (students attending < 70%)

- Percentage of chronically absent students and the number of students in this category.
- Movement toward the 23% target across all 2026 terms, reported as both % and student count.
- Breakdown by equity groups (year level, gender, ethnicity) shown in numbers and percentages.
- Comparison with national EDM benchmarks.

C. Notifications to Barnardos Aotearoa (Attendance Services, AS) and Ko te Puutake o te Haere (Internal Attendance Services, IAS)

- Reports will include what action the school took for each threshold (e.g., whaanau contact, notifications to AS and IAS, pastoral engagement, attendance planning).
- Data summaries will include counts of interventions delivered to ensure accountability and transparency.

Outcome of These Changes

These changes ensure that Board reporting becomes:

- **More transparent** – showing the real scale behind percentages.
- **More actionable** – enabling better targeting of interventions.
- **More aligned with national expectations** – using counts and Every Day Matters categories as required by the Ministry.
- **More responsive to inequity** – with clearer insight into which groups are most affected.

4. How the Board Will Track Progress

At each reporting point, the Board will receive:

- A data table showing progress toward term-based targets.
- A brief analysis outlining improvements, challenges, and next steps.
- Evaluation of initiatives within the Attendance Management Plan will include a detailed breakdown of the number of students in each response category, along with ongoing tracking of their movement and outcomes over time. Reporting will also specify how many students were referred to Barnardos Aotearoa or Ko Te Puutake o te Haere. This ensures full transparency around intervention volumes, responsiveness, and the effectiveness of support provided.
- Data outcomes from Ko te Puutake o te Haere and Barnardos Aotearoa and how these are contributing to reductions in chronic absence.
- Recommendations for adjustments to actions or resourcing based on observed trends.

5. Annual Review

The December Board report will include:

- A full-year analysis across all terms
- Assessment of whether the school is on track to meet the next year's targets.
- Confirmation of alignment with the national 2030 regular attendance goal trajectory

Supporting Documentation:

Include links to attendance policy and strategic plan (an attendance goal should be part of the next cycle of 3-year strategic planning).



Fairfield College

Fairfield College's Stepped Attendance Plan

For students with less than 5 days absence in a school term - **GOOD**

Action	Who Is Responsible	Intended Outcome
Recognition & Celebration		
Acknowledge students with excellent attendance through certificates, assemblies, newsletters.	Dean	Students feel recognised and motivated to maintain strong attendance.
Include attendance achievements in student reports.	DP with school reporting delegation	Attendance success is reinforced formally and noted by whaanau.
Award "Maunga Points" for regular attendance.	DP with Attendance Delegation	Attendance contributes to positive behaviour systems, boosting engagement.
Include Regular Attendance as a criterion for Year 13 Graduation with Excellence. Students with justified absence can also meet this criterion.	Principal	Year 13 students are encouraged and supported to sustain regular attendance to maximise engagement, learning progress, and pathway readiness.
Incentives & Rewards		
Offer small rewards (e.g., stationery, vouchers).	Dean	Positive reinforcement encourages ongoing consistent attendance.
Run a termly prize draw for students meeting attendance goals.	DP with Attendance Delegation	Students have additional motivation to stay under the absence threshold.
Provide VIP privileges where appropriate.	DP with oversight of VIP activity	High attendance is associated with valued school privileges.
Monitor and promote Y13 Graduation with Excellence attendance criteria.	Pouako of year 13 student	Seniors work purposefully to meet attendance requirements for graduation honours.

Positive Reinforcement		
Provide verbal praise and encouragement.	All Classroom Teachers	Students receive immediate, positive feedback reinforcing good habits.
Display attendance achievements publicly.	DP with Attendance Delegation	Celebrations build a culture where attendance is visible and valued.
Whaanau Engagement		
Use a systemised, timely communication process to send positive messages home that recognise and value the support of whaanau.	Pouako	Whaanau feel appreciated and remain supportive of consistent attendance.
Invite families to attend the attendance milestone celebrations.	Deans Secretary	Whaanau engagement strengthens the school-home partnership.
Monitoring & Feedback		
Track attendance regularly and check that students remain on track.	Deans	Data identifies any early risks and allows fast intervention if needed.
Provide feedback to students on their attendance progress.	Deans	Students understand how they're tracking and stay motivated to maintain attendance.

For students with up to 10 days absence in a school term - WORRYING

Action	Who Is Responsible	Intended Outcome
Early Identification and Monitoring		
Use weekly attendance reports to flag students approaching or exceeding 10 days of absence.	Pouako	Students feel noticed and supported before attendance becomes a serious concern.
Track patterns (e.g. frequent Mondays/Fridays, illness-related absences.	Pouako	Attendance patterns are identified and support provided
Provide catch-up work and maintain a welcoming classroom environment.	Classroom Teachers	Student learning and improved attendance is supported
Initial Contact and Check-In:		
Initiate a friendly check-in with the student to discuss attendance	Pouako	Students begin to attend more regularly as strengthened relationships increase their sense of support, connection, and motivation to engage.
Contact whaanau to understand the reasons for absence and offer appropriate support,	Pouako	Absences decrease over time, especially when barriers are addressed.
Supportive Conversations		
Hold informal meetings with students and whaanau to discuss attendance and any barriers.	Pouako	Trust grows between students, dean, and whaanau as attendance barriers are identified and addressed through co-constructed strategies.
Use restorative practices to build trust and encourage open dialogue	Pouako	Trust grows between students, school and whaanau as attendance barriers are identified and addressed through co-constructed strategies.
Tailored Support Plans		
Develop short-term attendance goals with the student.	Pouako	Students receive immediate, positive feedback reinforcing good habits.

Offer support such as counselling, learning catch-up sessions, or mentoring.	Pouako	Celebrations build a culture where attendance is visible and valued.
Whaanau Collaboration		
Invite whaanau to participate in planning and support strategies	Pouako	Whaanau feel appreciated and remain supportive of improved attendance.
Provide resources or referrals to external agencies if needed.	Pouako	Whaanau engagement strengthens the school-home partnership.
Positive Reinforcement		
Recognise improvements in attendance with praise or small incentives.	Pouako	Students are motivated to maintain improved attendance
Celebrate progress publicly or privately, depending on student preference.	Pouako	Students are further motivated to maintain improved attendance

For students with up to 15 days absence in a school term - CONCERNING

Action	Who Is Responsible	Intended Outcome
Comprehensive Attendance Review		
Review the student’s attendance history and patterns, and identify the causes of their absence, such as health issues, anxiety, family challenges, or disengagement.	Dean	Students have a clear plan and know who is supporting them, and staff work together to address barriers and monitor progress.
Formal Meeting with Student and Whaanau		
Schedule a meeting involving the student, whaanau, and key staff.	Dean	Students begin to attend more regularly as strengthened relationships increase their sense of support, connection, and motivation to engage.
Co-construct an Attendance Improvement Plan (AIP) with clear goals, timelines, and support strategies,	Dean	Whaanau and school partnership is strengthened and students begin to re-engage with school and attend more consistently.
Referral to Support Services		
Engage internal supports (e.g. SENCO, counsellors) and external agencies (e.g. RTLB, social workers, health services).	Dean	Trust grows between students, dean, and whaanau as attendance barriers are identified and addressed through co-constructed strategies.
Ensure wraparound support is coordinated and culturally responsive	DP that oversees student’s mountain affiliation	Trust grows between students, school and whaanau as attendance barriers are identified and addressed through co-constructed strategies.
Regular Monitoring and Follow-Up:		

Weekly check-ins with the student to review progress and adjust support.	Dean	Student stays on track because progress is monitored closely each week, and support is adjusted quickly when needed.
Maintain ongoing communication with whaanau	Dean	School whanau partnership is strengthened which supports improved attendance
Escalation if Necessary:		
If attendance still does not improve, move to the next step in the school's escalation process. This can involve formal letters, Attendance Service support, or other agency referrals.	Dean	Clear documentation and procedures support accountability, and escalation is only used when all support efforts have been tried..

For students with 15 days or more absence in a school term - SERIOUS CONCERN

Action	Who Is Responsible	Intended Outcome
Urgent Case Review		
Conduct a full review of the student’s attendance, wellbeing, academic progress, and previous interventions, and identify any chronic patterns and contributing factors such as mental health needs, family challenges, or disengagement.	Dean	The review provides a full picture of the student’s needs, allowing the school to identify what is working, what is not, and what support is needed next to improve attendance, wellbeing, and progress.
Formal Intervention Meeting:		
Convene a formal meeting with the student, whaanau, senior leadership, and relevant support staff. Include external agencies such as Barnardos, Ko te Puutake o te Haere, Oranga Tamariki, or health professionals if appropriate.	Dean	A shared plan is discussed because everyone involved—student, whaanau, school leaders, support staff, and any external agencies—has a full understanding of the issues and agrees on the next steps to improve attendance, safety, and wellbeing.
Comprehensive Re-engagement Plan:		
Create a detailed plan that sets clear attendance goals, timelines, and wraparound support for the student. The plan should include flexible learning options—such as part-time attendance, online learning, or alternative education pathways—so that the student has a realistic, personalised pathway back to regular attendance	Dean	The student, whaanau, school team, and any external agencies create a shared plan with clear goals and supports. Everyone understands their role, and the student has a personalised pathway—using flexible learning options where needed—that helps them return to regular attendance and stay engaged.
Multi-Agency Collaboration:		
Work with external services to support the student’s complex needs—such as housing, mental health, or family support—and make sure all actions use culturally responsive and trauma-informed approaches.	Dean	The student and whaanau receive the right support because external services work together with the school, using approaches that are culturally responsive and trauma-informed. This leads to safer,

		more stable conditions for the student and removes barriers that prevent regular attendance..
Maintain ongoing communication with whaanau	Dean	School whanau partnership is strengthened which supports improved attendance
Intensive Monitoring and Support:		
Assign a key adult to check in with the student several times a week and track their attendance daily, adjusting support when needed.	DP that overseas student's mountain affiliation	The student feels supported and stays more connected to school because a key adult checks in with them regularly, and their attendance is monitored each day. Any issues are noticed early, and support can be changed quickly to help the student attend more often.
<i>Ko te Puutake o te Haere framework</i>		
Use a case-management approach for up to 25 selected students each term whose attendance sits between 45% and 65%, with the goal of supporting them to move out of the chronically absent zone	Tuuhono and Kaihono	Students in the case-managed group receive focused, consistent support, which helps them remove barriers to attendance and make steady progress. As a result, more of these students move out of the chronically absent range and begin to build regular attendance habits.
Escalation and Legal Compliance		
If non-attendance persists, consider moving to the legal escalation stage. This will include issuing formal notifications and completing the required legal steps.	DP that overseas student's mountain affiliation	Student engages and attends more often. Barriers are identified and addressed. Whaanau partnership strengthens. Progress is tracked and reported in numbers and percentages each term.



Enhanced Barriers-Identification Process

1. Early Identification of Barriers (Weeks 1–5 each term)

- Use SMS-generated alerts to flag students reaching 5, 10, and 15 half-day absences.
- Every alert triggers a check-in to identify potential barriers such as:
 - health needs
 - transport challenges
 - whaanau stressors
 - disengagement from learning
 - peer or social concerns
 - bullying or safety issues
 - curriculum misalignment or workload stress
 - financial or uniform needs
- Each identified barrier will be recorded as a category and linked to an individual student profile.

2. Structured Whaanau Engagement and Information Gathering

- First contact within 24–48 hours for emerging patterns.
- Whaanau discussions follow a consistent script to determine underlying issues.
- Key findings recorded in SMS to support tracking across the year.

3. Pastoral, Academic, and Wellbeing Assessment

- Pouako, teachers, Deans, Counsellors, and member of senior leadership team collaborate to identify whether barriers relate to:
 - attendance behaviours
 - wellbeing
 - curriculum engagement
 - social-emotional factors
 - external agency needs
- Each case receives a documented intervention plan.

4. Tracking of Students by Response Category

To address the feedback directly:

Reports will include the *number of students* in each of the following categories:

1. Early contact (phone, text, whaanau communication)
2. Whaanau meeting / pastoral support
3. Learning support or timetable adjustments

4. Counselling or wellbeing interventions
5. External agency involvement
6. Attendance Services referral (with pathway breakdown)
 - Number referred to Barnardos
 - Number referred to ISP (Intensive Support Programme)

All students in these categories will be tracked over time to monitor improvements in regular attendance, return-to-school patterns, or further escalation needs.

5. Intervention Review and Escalation

- Weekly pastoral meetings review students who are not improving.
- Any student whose attendance continues to decline despite Tier 1–2 interventions moves into Tier 3 tracked support (SLT + Attendance Lead).

6. Evaluation Built into the Plan

- Termly evaluation of:
 - barriers identified
 - number of students per barrier type
 - effectiveness of interventions
 - re-engagement rates
- Findings inform updates to the AMP and Board reporting.

Fairfield College Coding: Reference Guide: Student Attendance Codes

Attendance & Sign-In Protocol

- **Initial Entry:**
 - **Students arriving late to school** are to go directly to their schedule class
 - Teacher will use the **L** code and enter the time of arrival in the comment box.
- **During the Day:**
 - If a student is late to *any class* (already present at school), the **class teacher** marks the student **Late (L)**.
 - Teachers are responsible for managing classroom lateness consequences.
- **Absence Follow-Up:**
 - Teachers should initially mark a student **? (Unknown)** if they are absent without explanation. The **Pouako** (in some cases; Dean/Admin) is expected to follow up and correct any '?' codes as soon as possible. It is expected that codes will be corrected within two school days.



Tier 1: Roll taking - Codes (Present, Late, Unknown)

Code	Meaning	Rules for Use
	Present (present for ½ calculations)	Student is present and on time for their timetabled class.
L	Late (present for ½ calculations)	Student arrives up to 79 minutes late to a timetabled class. Action: Comment box must include the time of arrival.
?	Unknown Reason (unjustified absence)	Temporary Code. Use this code when a student is absent and no explanation has been provided. The Pouako must follow up and ensure the code is resolved or updated within two school days. If no reason is obtained within that timeframe, the code must be changed to T (Truant). If a reason is provided after the code has been changed, the attendance code will be updated accordingly.

Tier 2: Approved, Justified & External Absence Codes

These codes cover absences that are either unavoidable, justified, or part of a formal program.

Code	Meaning	Rules for Use
M	Illness/Medical (justified absence)	Absent due to physical or mental illness. Note: A medical certificate is required for 3+ consecutive days. Otherwise, the code must be changed to E .

D	Approved External Appointment (present for ½ calculations)	Approved appointments out of the student's control (e.g., Doctor, Court, Physio, ICAMHS, driver's license test).
Q	Board Approved Off-Site Learning (present for ½ calculations)	School-approved activities: Camps, Trips, EOTC, sports events, cultural events (like a tangi), or approved overseas travel. Action: In some individual cases, requires a completed student form on the portal.
A	Alternative Provision (present for ½ calculations)	Student is off-site attending an approved external course (e.g., Gateway, AE, WINTEC, Tertiary).
U	Stood Down or Suspended (justified absence)	Student absence due to formal school intervention. Action: Used only by SLT/Deans Secretary.
J	Explained and Approved (justified absence)	A justified absence that doesn't fit another code 9e.g., critical family emergency). Limit: Can only be used for 5 consecutive days . After 5 days, it must change to E (Explained).

Tier 3: Internal Statuses & Exam Codes (Student is ON SITE or OFF SITE for Exams)

Code	Meaning	Rules for Use
N	Present but Out of Class (present for ½ calculations)	Student is ON SITE but not in their scheduled class (e.g., meeting with Dean, buddy room, removed from class).
V	Unsupervised Exam Study (present for ½ calculations)	Student is ON SITE but not in class, doing unsupervised exam study (e.g., in the library). Mainly for senior students.
X	Exam Leave (justified absence)	Student is OFF SITE preparing for exams. Note: This code is not included in Ministry data.

Tier 4: Unjustified Absence Codes

These codes reflect absences where the reason is not justified by school policy, even if the family is aware.

Code	Meaning	Rules for Use
E	Explained (Unjustified absence)	Student is absent, and an explanation is given and condoned by whānau, but the reason does not meet school policy (e.g., 'sleeping in,' 'visiting relatives').
G	Holiday During Term Time	Student is absent due to a personal holiday taken during the school term.

	(Unjustified absence)	
T	Truant (Unjustified absence)	Student is absent with no explanation and is ditching, sleeping in (no whānau support for absence), or attending an unscheduled activity. Note: Whānau do not condone the absence.

The Ministry of Education sets the national policy, and each school is responsible for having its own attendance management plan.



Fairfield College attendance policy

Student Attendance

Fairfield College is transitioning towards the new attendance model and attendance management plan required by the Ministry of Education. This policy will be updated to meet the new requirements before term 1 2026.

For information about enrolment, see [Enrolment](#).

At Fairfield College, we recognise that [regular attendance](#) at school is crucial for student achievement. The board ensures we meet all legislative and regulatory requirements around student attendance, including recording and monitoring attendance and following up absences and attendance concerns. We expect students and their parents/guardians/caregivers to work with us to make sure students attend school regularly.

Students are required to attend school whenever the school is open (Education and Training Act, s 36), with some [exceptions](#).

School responsibilities

As required by the Education and Training Act 2020, the board:

- takes all reasonable steps to ensure the attendance of students enrolled at our school
- has an attendance management plan that sets out a strategy and a process for the school to identify and respond to student absences
- has regard to any guidelines on the management of school attendance issued by the Secretary of Education when preparing our attendance management plan
- reviews our attendance management plan in accordance with regulations
- makes our attendance management plan publicly available online.

As required by the School Attendance Rules 2025 (published under section 237A of the Education and Training Act 2020) and the Education (School Attendance) Regulations 2024, the principal ensures that the school:

- keeps attendance records for each student enrolled at the school (either by half-day or period) for each half-day that it is open for instruction
- has an absence notification process to enable the accurate and timely collection of attendance records
- uses a Ministry-approved Electronic Attendance Register (eAR) unless [exempt](#)
- uses Ministry-approved attendance codes to record attendance or absence for each student for each half-day the school is open for instruction
- provides these attendance records to the Secretary of Education at the end of each school day.

Accurate recording of student attendance ensures all students are accounted for during school hours, EOTC activities, and emergency events, and provides information to help identify and respond to student attendance concerns.

- If a student does not arrive at school or goes missing during the day (including from an EOTC event), we check there are no errors in how attendance information was recorded or updated (e.g. if a student has gone home due to illness) and notify parents/guardians/caregivers in a timely manner so they can respond. If there is reason for concern, we follow our [Missing Student Procedure](#).
- We work with students, parents/guardians/caregivers, staff, and external agencies where needed to identify any barriers to attendance, develop a plan to support attendance and learning, and improve student attendance at our school.
- The principal reports to the board on attendance trends, barriers, and interventions, including by sharing the termly Every Day Matters report.

We ensure that all attendance-related procedures, documentation, and records comply with privacy requirements. We keep attendance records for the length of time required by the School Records Retention and Disposal Schedule.

Attendance management plan

Our attendance management plan outlines how we monitor student attendance and respond to student absences. Our plan has regard to Ministry of Education attendance guidelines, including the stepped attendance response (STAR), and is reviewed and updated in line with regulations. We seek feedback from the school community when developing and reviewing our plan. Also see [Attendance Management Plans](#) (Ministry of Education).

Our attendance management plan includes our:

Any absence with no valid explanation is Explained by not approved (E) whanau have given a reason, it does not meet Fairfield College policy for justified absence or Truant (T) whanau have not condoned this absence.

- strategic priorities related to attendance (including our attendance targets and other key attendance objectives)
- processes to identify and respond to patterns, barriers, and underlying causes of student absences
- strategies, actions, or interventions at different attendance thresholds (based on numbers of days absent in a term)
- how we will monitor and measure progress in attendance, including any targets set by the board or the government and links to student achievement.

Our plan also may also include other information relevant to our attendance management, such as:

- our expectations of students, parents/guardians/caregivers, and our school staff, including roles and responsibilities
- how we will communicate with students and parents/guardians/caregivers about attendance
- our use of Ministry-approved attendance codes, including the thresholds for discretion and any limitations of discretion (including timeframes) for justified absences
- how we will review and update our attendance management plan.

The board approves our attendance management plan before it is published online.

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver and student responsibilities

As attendance is a shared responsibility, our school communicates with parents/guardians/caregivers and students about attendance requirements and expectations. The school monitors attendance and updates students and parents regularly.

- Parents/Guardians are legally required to make sure their [enrolled student](#) attends school every day the school is open (Education and Training Act, s 244).
- We expect students and their parents/guardians/caregivers to communicate and work with the school to ensure regular attendance. We ask parents/guardians/caregivers to contact us as soon as possible to discuss anything that may be a barrier to student attendance and/or to make any requests for [exceptions](#).
- Parents/Guardians/Caregivers are expected to notify the school as soon as possible (before or during the school day) if their child will be absent or late. A reason must be provided no later than the end of the school week. The school will contact parents/guardians/caregivers directly if no explanation is provided.
- Students are not allowed to leave the school during school hours unless permission is requested by parents/guardians/caregivers and given by the school. The student must sign out at the office. Year 13 students may be allowed to leave school grounds (e.g. during lunch time or study periods). This is at the discretion of the principal and permission may be withdrawn if students do not return on time or do not meet our behaviour expectations while away from the school. They are required to sign out at reception before leaving school.

The principal assures the board that the school meets all legislative and regulatory requirements for attendance and is managing attendance effectively. See [Review Schedule and Board Assurances](#).

Related policies

- [Board Responsibilities](#)
- [Principal Responsibilities](#)
- [Communicating with Parents and Whānau](#)
- [Enrolment](#)
- [Managing Injuries and Illness](#)
- [School Records Retention and Disposal](#)

Legislation

- Education and Training Act 2020
- Education (School Attendance) Regulations 2024
- School Attendance Rules 2025

Resources

- Ministry of Education | Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga (Education professionals): [Attendance](#)
- Ministry of Education | Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga (Parents/Caregivers):
 - [Attendance](#)
 - [When your child should be at school](#)

- [Attendance plans if your child needs reduced hours at school](#)

Release history: [Term 4 2025](#), [Term 1 2025](#), [Term 2 2024](#), [Term 2 2023](#)

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Last review	Term 4 2025
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Topic type	Core
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Our philosophy

Fairfield College's strategic goal is to improve student engagement and achievement by increasing regular attendance. Regular attendance is defined as being at school more than 90% of the time or missing no more than five days per ten-week term. We are committed to working with whānau to achieve this goal.

Parent/caregiver responsibilities

By law, parents and caregivers must ensure their child attends school every day from age 6 to 16, unless they have a valid reason for absence.

- **Notification:** If your child is going to be absent, you must notify the school before the start of the school day. You can do this by:
 - **Calling:** 0800 332 332 (0800 FFC FFC) or 853 5660, extension 837.
 - **Emailing:** absentees@faircol.school.nz.
 - **Using the Skool Loop App.**
- **Reason for absence:** You must state the reason for the absence. For prolonged or frequent absences, additional information, such as a doctor's note, may be required.
- **Medical certificate** is required for 3+ consecutive days medical absence (physical or mental).
- **Justified absence** issued for a maximum of 5 days.
- **Term time holidays:** Family holidays or non-essential activities should not be taken during term time, as this is not a justified reason for absence.
- Where whānau have given a reason but it does not meet Fairfield College policy for justified absence, the absence will be Explained but not approved (E). Where whānau have not condoned the absence and no justifiable reason is provided the student will be regarded as Truant (T).

Student responsibilities

- **Daily attendance:** Students must attend all their timetabled classes on all days the school is open for instruction.
- **Signing in and out:** Students who arrive late to school must sign in at the student services (SSC) or any students that need to leave during school hours for an appointment must sign out at the Student Service Centre (SSC) with permission from their parent or caregiver.
- **On-campus during lunch:** Students are expected to remain on campus during lunchtime (excluding year 13 students, who must follow signing in and out procedure).

School procedures

- **Daily monitoring:** Fairfield College will record and monitor student attendance daily and follow up on all unexplained absences.
 - Initial follow up by pouako, ongoing or continual absence referred to relevant year level dean.
 - Initial Subject specific absence to be followed up by teacher.
- **Notification to parents:** If a student's absence has not been reported, the school will contact via automated SMS services the family on the same day.
- **Intervention for persistent absence:** The school will use attendance data strategically to develop and implement targeted interventions for students with persistent unjustified absences.
 - **Initial contact:** For students with concerning attendance patterns (e.g., more than 10% unjustified absences per term), the school will contact the family for a face-to-face conversation.
 - **Attendance plan:** An individual attendance plan may be developed in collaboration with the family.
 - **Referral to Ministry of Education Attendance Service:** If attendance issues continue, the school may refer the matter to the Ministry of Education's Attendance Service, which can involve further support or enforcement measures.
 - Interventions can include but not limited to; Weekly lunchtime intervention, daily/weekly report, internal stand down, school community service (eg. Litter picks up).

- **Mountain Competition:** To encourage regular school attendance, the school includes "Regular Attendance" in its Mountain Activity competition, awarding points to the mountain with the highest percentage of regular attenders each term.
- Pizza Rewards (and certificate) for regular attenders (by term).
- VIP pass into Selectives (end of year activity) for Juniors who are regular attenders (above 90% for year).
- Award weekly grocery vouchers that are drawn from students that have met attendance criteria (Week 3 term 1 to week 4 term 4)
- Incorporate regular attendance as a key criterion for students in the top tier of Year 13 graduation recognition
- School emails – PAROT emails, weekly updates for Deans, students, parents, and pouako.

What happens when attendance is a major concern (beyond school processes)

For students aged 6 to 16, persistent truancy or unjustified absence can lead to further action by the Ministry of Education. In rare cases, this may result in prosecution and fines for parents or caregivers. If significant underlying issues like potential neglect are identified, Oranga Tamariki may become involved.

Key aspects of the attendance policy

Regular attendance is crucial

- The government has a target for 80% of students to attend regularly (more than 90% of the time) by 2030.
- "Regular attendance" is defined as attending school for more than 90% of a term, which means missing no more than five days in a ten-week term.

Notifying absences

- If a child is going to be away, parents must notify the school.
- Schools require notification of an absence, preferably on the same day and before school starts.

Justified vs. unjustified absences

- **Justified absences** are for acceptable reasons, such as:

- Sickness or injury.
- Medical or dental appointments.
- Going to a tangi or funeral.
- **Unjustified absences** are for unacceptable reasons, such as:
 - Family holidays taken during term time.
 - Sleeping in.
 - Going to the shops.
- Absence reasons must be provided within 5 school days. If no reason provided, coded Truant.

Attendance management and follow-up

- The Ministry of Education requires schools to maintain accurate daily attendance records.
- Schools must follow up with parents and caregivers on the same day if they haven't heard from them about a child's absence.
- If a student's attendance is poor, schools must investigate and may create an individual attendance plan in collaboration with the family.

Intervention for persistent absence (beyond school process):

New measures and services are being implemented to improve attendance, including the following:

- **Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) scheme:** This scheme outlines required actions from schools, government agencies, and families based on a student's level of absence.
- **Attendance services:** If attendance issues persist despite a school's interventions, the Ministry of Education's Attendance Service can become involved. It will work with the whānau to develop a plan to re-engage the student with school.
- **Fines for parents:** For students aged 6 to 16, parents and caregivers can be fined for failing to ensure their child's regular attendance without a good reason. Fines can be up to \$300 for a first offense and up to \$3,000 for repeat offenses.
- **Oranga Tamariki involvement:** In cases of chronic truancy, agencies like Oranga Tamariki may become involved to address underlying issues of potential neglect or abuse.

To report an absence at Fairfield College, parents should call the school's attendance line at 0800 332 332 (0800 FFC FFC) or 853 5660 ext 837, email absentees@faircol.school.nz, or use the Skool Loop app. A note signed by a parent/caregiver must also be given to the student's Whanau teacher on their first day back, which includes the date and reason for the absence. During school hours, students must have a permission slip to leave class or the school grounds.

How to report an absence

- **Phone:** Call the attendance line at 0800 332 332 or 853 5660 ext 837.
- **Email:** Send an email to absentees@faircol.school.nz.
- **App:** Use the Skool Loop app to report absences.

Student responsibilities

- **For all absences:** Permission from a parent or caregiver is required on the first day back to school. This could be a signed note, email or phone call.
- **For leaving during the day:** Follow code plan above.
- Student to check and manage their own attendance data. Eg student checks portal and follows up with a teacher who has not changed a '?'.
- Check school email for weekly attendance updates.

Summary of Fairfield College’s Attendance Management Plan -Template

This template is intended to support schools to create a summary of your attendance plan to share with your community.

<p>In line with the government's target of 80% of students regularly attending school by 2030.</p>		<p>Our school uses the Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) to guide when and how we respond to absences.</p>			
<p>We're currently at</p> <p>32</p> <p>%</p> <p>Regular attendance^[1] by Term 4, YEAR 2025</p>	<p>Our school has a target of</p> <p>46</p> <p>%</p> <p>Regular attendance in Term 4, YEAR 2026</p>	<p>Good chance of success</p> <p>GOOD ATTENDANCE</p>	<p>Less chance of success</p> <p>WORRYING ATTENDANCE</p>	<p>Hard to make progress</p> <p>CONCERNING ATTENDANCE</p>	<p>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14</p>
<p>Our Attendance Management Plan sets out</p>		<p>If your child is regularly</p>	<p>If your child has some</p>	<p>If your child has many</p>	<p>If your child has a lot of</p>

- Why attendance is a priority for our school
 - Legal requirements about attendance
 - Our expectations of students, parents and our school staff
- This includes
- How we manage attendance in our school
 - How we identify concerning attendance
 - How we respond to absences at different thresholds
 - How we monitor and review the impact of our actions
 - How we give the Board assurance that the school is managing attendance effectively

attending, you can expect	absences, you can expect	absences, you can expect	absences, you can expect
We will stay in regular contact with you about your child's attendance. We will follow up to find out the reason when they aren't at school.	We will work with you to identify any barriers to attendance. We may provide support to help them catch up and stay on track.	We will work with you to develop a plan to support their attendance and learning. We may seek support of the Attendance Service or other agencies to remove barriers to attendance.	We will continue to work with you to implement the plan to support their attendance and learning. We will seek support of the Attendance Service or other agencies to support their return to school.

📖 “Regular attendance” means attending more than 90% of a term, or 9 days in a fortnight

Fairfield College’s Attendance Management Plan will be reviewed every three years, and its effectiveness will be evaluated with reference to reports that will be regularly provided to the Board. These reports will include:

- Student numbers and percentages across regular, at-risk, and chronic attendance categories,
- Numbers of students in each response category within the stepped attendance process,
- Tracking data showing movement between categories over time,
- Analysis of identified barriers and underlying causes of non-attendance and the interventions used to address them,
- Referrals made to Attendance Services, including how many students were referred to Barnardos and to the Intensive Support Programme (ISP) and the outcomes of those referrals, and
- Evaluation commentary assessing the impact of interventions on engagement, retention, and progress toward learning goals.

This review process ensures that the Attendance Management Plan remains responsive, evidence-based, and aligned to national expectations for improving student attendance and engagement.

Glossary

- **Barnardos Aotearoa (Attendance Services, AS)** – The Attendance Service for the Hamilton East Area, which supports Fairfield College. The college works with this service to help students experiencing chronic absences re-engage and attend school regularly.

- **Ko te Puutake o te Haere (Internal Attendance Services, IAS)** – The reason to go/attend” captures the purpose of Fairfield College’s Internal Attendance Service (IAS). Jointly funded by the Ministry of Education and the Fairfield College Board, IAS uses a case-management approach to strengthen chronically absent students’ motivation and underlying reasons to attend school regularly.
- **Tuuhono** – The staff member, under the leadership of the Deputy Principals, is responsible for overseeing the attendance delegation within the *Ko te Puutake o te Haere* programme.
- **Kaihono** – A mentor in the *Ko te Puutake o te Haere* programme.