



Attendance Management Plan

1. Introduction and Guiding Principles

This document outlines the Attendance Management Plan for **Wainuioru School**, a small rural school serving the Wainuioru community and surrounding Wairarapa area. This plan is designed to be a living document, reflecting our commitment to ensuring every student attends school regularly and engages in their learning. It aligns with the Ministry of Education's requirements for mandatory Attendance Management Plans and the Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) framework.

At Wainuioru school, we aim for all learners to attend regularly so they can engage, achieve and thrive at school in line with our vision '*curious, confident, connected*'. All students in Aotearoa are legally required to attend school every day, and schools are also legally required to have an attendance management plan in place to support this. This plan aligns with the Government's target for 80% of students to be present for more than 90% of the time.

Our guiding principles are:

- **Whānau Partnership:** We believe that strong, trusting relationships with our students, their families, and the wider community are the foundation of good attendance.
 - **Early Intervention:** We will act promptly and compassionately when a student's attendance begins to decline, addressing barriers before they become chronic issues.
 - **Community Collaboration:** We will work with local agencies, community groups, and the Ministry of Education to provide holistic support for our students and their families.
 - **Celebration:** We will celebrate and acknowledge good and improved attendance to reinforce its importance and value.
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2. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Board of Trustees	Oversee the implementation and regular review of the plan. Ensure the plan is published on the school's website. Set an annual attendance target for the school.
Principal / Senior Leadership	Lead the implementation of the plan and provide professional development for staff. Monitor school-wide attendance data and trends. Act as the primary contact for moderate and chronic absence cases. Liaise with the Ministry of Education Attendance Service and other support agencies.
Teachers	Record attendance accurately at the start of each morning and afternoon session. Build strong relationships with students and whānau. Act as the first point of contact for students with irregular absences.
Administration Staff	Record and update absence notifications daily. Contact parents/caregivers on the first day of an unexplained absence. Maintain accurate contact details for all students.
Whānau/Caregivers	Ensure their child attends school every day, unless they are unwell. Notify the school promptly of any absence. Work in partnership with the school to address any attendance concerns.

3. Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) Framework

We use a tiered approach to identify and respond to student absences.

Attendance Category	Definition	School Response
Regular Attendance	90% or more (absent less than 5 days a term)	Tier 1 – Universal Support: Acknowledged and celebrated through class and school-wide recognition. Teachers maintain positive communication with whānau. Whānau support by communicating any absences via HERO.
Irregular Attendance	80%-89% (absent 5-9.5 days a term)	Tier 2 – Targeted Support: The teacher contacts whānau to understand the reasons for absence. The school offers support to address any emerging barriers. Attendance is monitored closely for improvement. A post is put on HERO.

Moderate Absence	70%-79% (absent 10-14.5 days a term)	Tier 3 – Intensive Support: Principal/Senior Leader meets with whānau and students to develop a supportive plan. The plan may involve connecting the family with community resources. A formal attendance improvement plan is created, with clear goals and check-ins. This plan is linked to HERO.
Chronic Absence	Less than 70% (absent 15 or more days a term)	Tier 4 – Referral: All previous steps have been documented and a formal referral is made to the Ministry of Education Attendance Service (ASA). The school continues to work closely with the Attendance Service and whānau.
Critical Absence	Less than 50% (absent 15 or more days a term)	Tier 5 – Referral: All previous steps have been documented including engagement with Attendance services. The school continues to work closely with the Attendance Service and will decide if other agencies need to be contacted e.g Oranga Tamariki or ROCKON.

4. Procedures for Absence Notification and Follow-up

4.1 Daily Attendance Recording Teachers will mark the electronic attendance register for all students by 9:10 am each morning and 1pm each afternoon. Attendance will be submitted daily to the Ministry of Education. The school is using the refreshed set of attendance codes as required by the Ministry. Our SMS system is HERO.

4.2 First-Day Absence Follow-up If a student is marked absent without a prior explanation, the administration staff will contact the student’s primary caregiver via phone call or email by 10:00 am. If the caregiver cannot be reached, alternative contacts may be tried. Unexplained absences that remain unresolved by the end of the school day will be coded as ‘E’ (Explained and unjustified) or ‘T’ (Truancy), based on the situation and prior communication. We will avoid leaving any ‘?’ codes on the register.

4.3 Absence Notification by Whānau Whānau are expected to notify the school of an absence before 9:00am on the day of the absence. This can be done via phone call to the school office at **06 3722861**, email to **office@wainuioru.school.nz** or notify the school via HERO. It is always

best practice to include the teacher in any communication regarding absences. A note to explain the reason for the absence will be recorded on HERO.

4.4 Justified vs. Unjustified Absences

- **Justified:** Medical certificates, bereavement, or religious observances are considered justified. The code 'M' or 'J' will be used.
 - **Unjustified:** Planned holidays during term time, extended family visits, or unapproved sporting events are considered unjustified. The code 'E' will be used.
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5. Addressing Barriers to Attendance

Recognising the unique challenges of a rural community, we will proactively address common barriers:

- **Transport:** We will work with whānau to identify any transport issues and connect them with available transport assistance where possible.
 - **Community Links:** Our school will maintain strong connections with local iwi, community groups, Health school, and our learning support team. This network provides a valuable resource for supporting families.
 - **Kaupapa Māori Approach:** We will adopt a culturally responsive approach, ensuring all interactions with whānau are empathetic and uphold mana.
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6. Addressing 'Late' Students

Students and or caregivers sign in through the office with a reason for being late. Lateness is reviewed weekly by the Principal and Senior Management Team to identify students with frequent lateness. The teacher contacts whānau to understand the reasons for absence. The school offers support to address any emerging barriers.

7. Data Monitoring and Plan Review

Attendance data is reviewed fortnightly by the Principal and Senior Management Team to identify students in the Irregular and Moderate absence categories. The principal is also notified of any unexplained attendance alerts and continual unjustified absences. The Board of Trustees receives a termly attendance report via *Everyday matters*. A narrative is provided alongside this report at Board level. This plan will be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees in consultation with staff, whānau, and the community.

An annual attendance report is completed for the end of year Board report, with schoolwide attendance self-review using the Ministry of Education Reference Guide being completed by year end to refine systems and procedures to improve attendance outcomes further.

Ministry of Education Guidance:

[The Ministry of Education NZ provides a guide for schools and kura on managing student attendance.](#)

[The Ministry of Education NZ refreshed attendance codes.](#)

[The Ministry of Education Stepped attendance response \(STAR\) guide](#)