

Attendance Management Plan

Rationale

Regular attendance is crucial for student learning, wellbeing, and long-term success. Consistent attendance ensures tamariki have equitable access to the curriculum during their key developmental years.

An attendance plan helps us 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. This means a student is not to miss more than one week per term or four weeks in a year. To achieve this a student's individual rate needs to be greater than 94%.

Regional target 2026: 58%

2027: 65%

2028: 70%

2029: 75%

2030: 80%

Identified Barriers to Attendance

At Te Kura o Whangamarino our attendance data shows a trend of unexplained/trivial absences (?) and medical absences (M) as being barriers to achieving this target. To address these barriers, we will

- Staff will accurately code all attendance and promptly investigate any temporary or unexplained codes to maintain compliance and student safety
- Immediate follow up on unknown or temporary codes is essential to ensure accurate reporting and support student wellbeing
- 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 absence due to illness, if a child's absences are causing concern
- Make referrals to the Whatu Ora when medical absences are impacting a child's attendance

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 notified 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 half-day 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.

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:

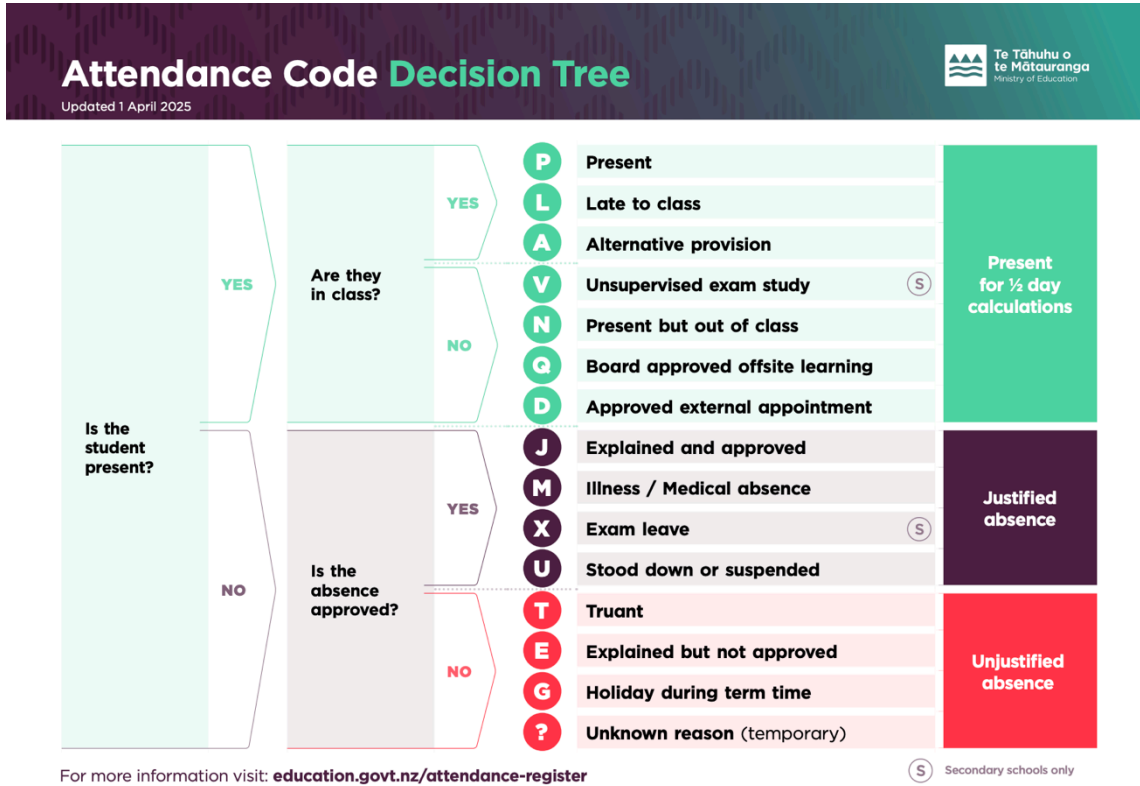
- distinguish between presence, justified absence and unjustified absence
- provide high-level indicators to support monitoring of trends and patterns
- support school attendance activities e.g. tracking the location of students.

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 staff e.g. 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 are based on the following



Attendance Code Descriptions

Updated 1 April 2025



Present for ½ day calculations

P Present

Student is present in class. This includes supervised dual tuition with Te Kura.

L Late to class

Student is late to class. Schools set the threshold for lateness (e.g. 10 minutes) in their school policy.

A Alternative provision

Student is present in a Ministry-approved alternative provision, such as a teen parent unit, alternative education, secondary-tertiary program, health school or activity centre.

V Unsupervised exam study ^(S)

Student is present in an examination or unsupervised study where the student is on-site.

N Present but out of class

Student is present but out of class due to an on-site school activity (cultural or sporting event), internal appointment, temporary removal from class, or time in the sickbay.

Q Board approved offsite learning

Student is present in Board-approved off-site learning, including courses, school-organised activities, and work experience.

D Approved external appointment

Student is present but has a medical appointment which is unable to be scheduled outside of school hours (e.g. doctor or dentist and includes travel time) or is participating in court proceedings.

Justified absence

J Explained and approved

Student is absent due to explained and approved reasons (e.g. family emergencies, bereavement, representing in national / cultural events, approved exemptions, or accompanying parents on overseas diplomatic / military postings).

M Illness / Medical absence

Student is absent due to illness or medical reasons, including mental health-related absences (e.g. anxiety).

X Exam leave ^(S)

Student is absent studying offsite preparing for exams. NOTE: Time allocated to this code is not included in Ministry attendance calculations.

U Stood down or suspended

Student is absent due to formal stand down or suspension. This code applies to the period of the stand-down or suspension, excluding the day it was imposed.

Unjustified absence

T Truant

Student is absent without explanation or permission from a parent / caregiver (e.g. skipping class)

E Explained but not approved

Student is absent and the reason provided does not meet the school's policy for a justifiable absence (e.g. a parent states their child didn't want to attend sports day).

G Holiday during term time

Student is absent due to a holiday taken.

? Unknown (temporary)

Temporary code used when the reason for a student's absence is initially unknown. This will be updated once the reason is confirmed.

^(S) Secondary schools only

School policies and procedures support the consistent application of attendance codes.

At Te Kura o Whangamarino:

L	Late	Arriving after the 9am bell
J	Explained and approved	Absences that are explained and approved by the Principal
E	Explained but not approved	Absences that are explained but not approved by the principal

Absence Due to Kaupapa Māori

To be discussed and negotiated with whānau and hapu

Extended absence (illness and medical)

Students who are not able to attend school as they are unwell or injured should be recorded as M – illness/medical. This includes short-term hospital stays and rehabilitation programmes if the student is not admitted to a Regional Health School. If a student is engaged with a Health School, then the A – alternative provision code applies. Extended and recurring illness and medical related absences may require consideration of a wellbeing plan or admission to Health School.

Extended absence (overseas)

If a student is absent overseas for more than 15 consecutive weeks in one year, then the student should be recorded as NA – not attending or removed from the school roll and re-enrolled on their return.

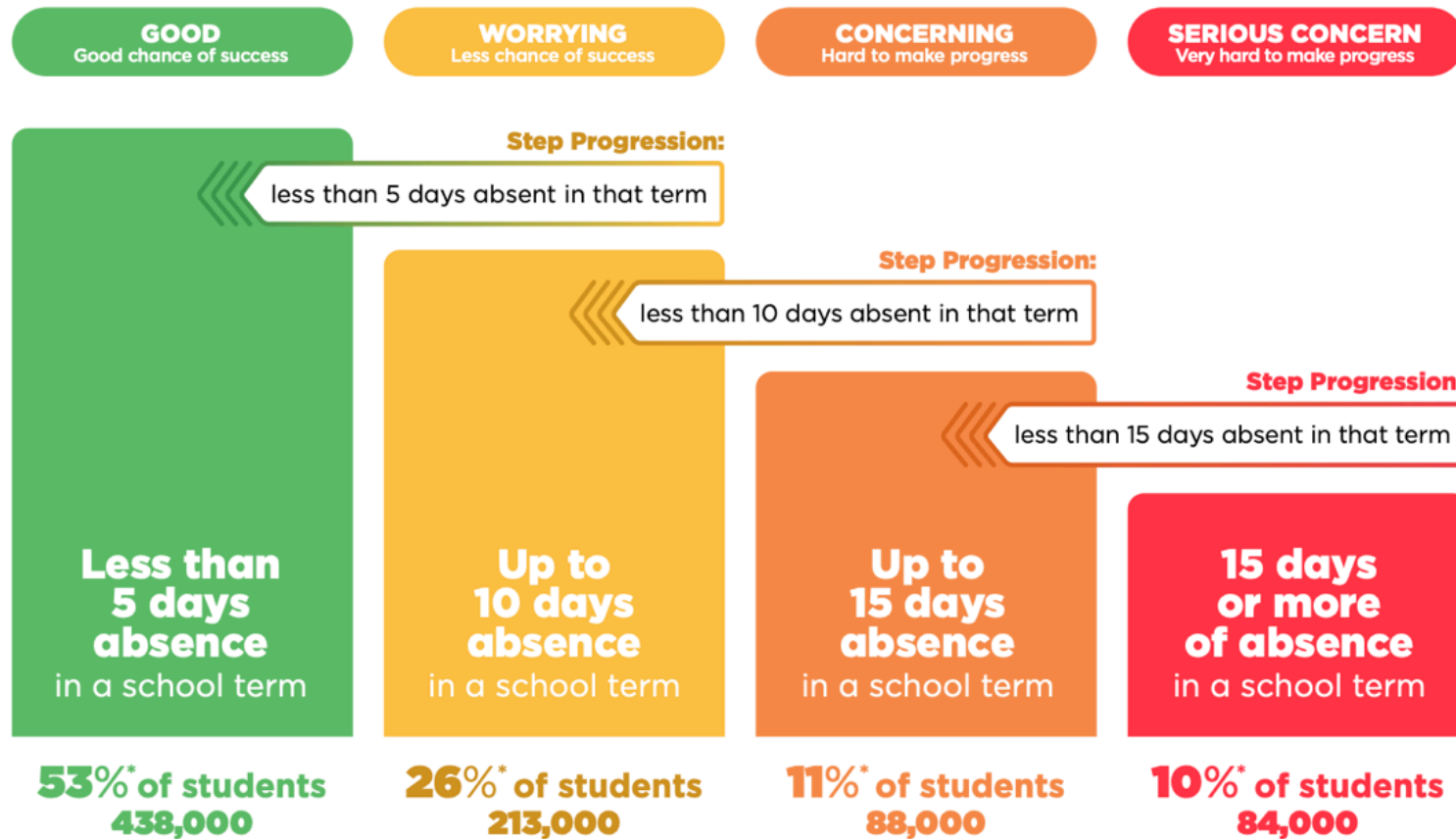
Extended absence (unknown cause)

Schools are required to unenroll students if they have been absent for 20 consecutive school days unless the principal has been informed that the absence is temporary. At Te Kura o Whangarino school we unenrol students earlier if we have received an ENROL notification that a new school enrolment has been made, or we have been informed the student is not intending to return (e.g. moving overseas).

Stepped Attendance Response – STAR

Responding to all absences

The Government's target is for **80% of students to attend regularly**, that is to attend school more than **90% of the time**.



* These approximate numbers of students are based on the numbers of students in the regular attendance categories in Term 2 2024.

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,

Rehua Mihaka

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]

	Every day	Worrying Up to 10 days absence in a term term	Concerning Up to 15 days absence in a term term	Serious Concern 15 days or more of absence in a term
Mātua	Informs school of absence before school starts via School app or absentee phone line Informs office of any contact detail changes Support students to catch up on missed learning Provides medical certificate to school after 3 days consecutive absence due to illness			
		Responds to formal notifications of absence and arranges a meeting to explain absences		
			Responds to formal notification Collaborates with school to make a plan	
				Works with agencies/MoE to improve attendance Responds to prosecution notification
Kaiako	Completes attendance register before 8:40 am and 1:25 pm each day, ensuring it is recorded accurately Pass on any absence messages to the office Check SMS for further information regarding reason for absences Support students to catch up on missed learning Raises concerns re attendance with tumuaki			
Kaiako	Checks attendance registers Inputs absentee messages Sends text messages to any unexplained absences Phones any unexplained absences who do not respond to text Updates parent contact details in SMS Raises concerns re attendance with tumuaki Request a medical certificate after 3 consecutive days absence due to medical			
Tumuaki		Send formal notification of 10 days/term absence to parent Utilise in school resources to remove barriers to attendance		
			Request support from external agencies and MoE as required Monitor attendance	
				Escalate to multi-agency response Work with agencies/MoE to remove barriers
Tumuaki	Promotes positive attendance practices with students and families via newsletters, Facebook etc			
			Escalate formal notification and hold a meeting with parents Collaborate with parents to make a plan for attendance	
				Send a warning notice and range a meeting with parents Consider MoE led prosecution if support measures are not being adhered to

Recognition of “Good” Attendance

At Te Kura O Whangamarino School we acknowledge “Good” attendance and progress in attendance rates of students. This is done through:

(consult with ākonga and kaiako about this)

Where learners have 10 or more absences in a term, the STAR prompts you to hold a meeting to discuss reasons for absence. This meeting is used to collaborate with the student and their parents, guardians or caregivers on a support plan tailored to the reasons and circumstances around the child's absence. Refer to [Individual Attendance Plans](#) for more guidance



My every day attendance plan

My name: _____

Date of plan: _____

My **CURRENT** attendance: _____

My **GOAL** attendance: _____

Date of review: _____

Things **AT SCHOOL** that make it **harder** for me to attend:

Things **OUTSIDE SCHOOL** that make it **harder** for me to attend:

Attendance is **IMPORTANT** to me because:

WHO I can talk to at school if I need support:

What **I'LL** do:

WHEN:

SIGNED:

What my **WHĀNAU** will do:

What my **SCHOOL** will do:

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



31.03.2026

Presiding Member

Date



31.03.2026

Principal

Date

Appendix

[School Rules 2025](#)

[Attendance Code Guidance](#)

[Individual Attendance Plans](#)

[STAR Communicating with Parents](#)