



## Attendance Management Plan

### Rationale for Prioritising Attendance

At Tarawera High School, we recognise that regular attendance is critical to student wellbeing, achievement, and long-term success. Attendance is not only a reflection of student engagement, it is also a key indicator of connection to school, hauora (wellbeing), and whānau support. Students who attend regularly are more likely to develop strong relationships, engage positively with learning, and reach achievement milestones.

The commitment to our M.A.N.A. values *manaakitanga*, *āwhina*, *ngākau pono*, and *āko* drives our approach to supporting students holistically. We view attendance as a shared responsibility between school, students, whānau, and the wider community. By fostering positive relationships and early interventions, we aim to reduce chronic absenteeism and ensure that every ākonga feels valued, supported, and ready to learn.

### Strategic Alignment

Our attendance management plan is aligned with:

- **Tarawera High School's Strategic Plan**, which outlines our priority to raise achievement by strengthening student engagement and wellbeing.
- **PB4L (Positive Behaviour for Learning) Framework**, which supports a consistent, culturally responsive approach to building a positive school climate and reducing barriers to learning.
- **Ministry of Education Attendance and Engagement Guidelines**, which inform our approach to data monitoring, early intervention, and whānau partnership.

### Summary of Current Attendance Data (2024 baseline):

- Overall school attendance rate: 71%
- Regular attendance (90%+): 34% of students
- Students at risk (<70% attendance): 28%
- Identified equity gaps: Disparities exist in attendance for Year 9 males and students with additional learning or social needs.

### Definition of Success & Key Attendance Goals (2025–2026):

- Increase regular attendance (90%+) to 40% by the end of 2026
- Reduce the number of students with <70% attendance to below 20%
- Ensure 100% of students at risk are engaged in intervention or support programs
- Strengthen whānau engagement around attendance with at least 2 hui per year focused on student connection and progress
- Embed attendance as a pastoral and academic priority across all levels of the school

**Tarawera High School's commitment to lifting attendance is about connection. By supporting our ākonga through kaupapa Māori approaches, targeted supports, and consistent, respectful communication with whānau, we aim to ensure every student has the opportunity to thrive.**

### **Legal Obligations and Expectations:**

At Tarawera High School, we are committed to upholding the legal responsibilities outlined in the Education and Training Act 2020 to ensure all students are enrolled and attend school regularly. Our policies reflect both legal requirements and our collective belief that regular attendance is essential to student achievement and well-being.

Under **Sections 35 and 36** of the Education and Training Act 2020:

- Every child between the ages of **6 and 16** must be **enrolled** at and **attend** school **every day the school is open**, unless they are ill or otherwise excused under the Act.
- Students enrolled at school **must attend regularly**, regardless of whether they are within or outside the compulsory age range (i.e. including senior students aged 16+ still enrolled).

### **Board of Trustees' Responsibilities**

As per **Section 36**, the Board must take **all reasonable steps** to ensure that enrolled students attend school when it is open for instruction. This includes:

- Monitoring attendance through reliable systems
- Investigating frequent or unexplained absences
- Working with families and external agencies to address attendance concerns

### **Parent/Guardian Obligations**

**Section 36(2)** states that parents and guardians are **legally responsible** for ensuring their child attends school.

- It is not enough to simply inform the school of absences; ongoing unjustified or unexplained absence may be referred to Attendance Services or other agencies.

## **Expectations of Parents, Students, and Staff**

- Parents/Whānau
  - Ensure their child attends school every day unless they are unwell or have a justified reason
  - Notify the school as early as possible if their child is going to be absent
  - Engage with the school when concerns are raised about attendance
- Students
  - Arrive on time and be prepared to attend all timetabled classes
  - Communicate honestly with staff if challenges are affecting attendance
  - Participate in discussions or hui about their attendance when needed
- Staff (Teachers, Kaitiaki, Deans)
  - Record accurate period-by-period attendance in KAMAR daily
  - Follow up promptly on any unexplained or concerning patterns of absence
  - Work collaboratively with whānau and pastoral support to re-engage students
  - Maintain consistent communication about expectations and support available

## **Tarawera High School Attendance Practice and Response Plan**

### **1. Setting and Reinforcing Attendance Expectations with Families and Students**

- Attendance expectations are communicated through enrolment interviews, whānau hui, school newsletters, student handbooks, and on the school social media.
- Clear messaging is reinforced in assemblies, whānau class discussions, and during whānau time.
- Regular reminders are sent via the early notification text system (EN) for unexplained absences.
- Parents are expected to contact the school *on the day* of a student's absence.
- Students are educated about the importance of attendance through initiatives such as Hine Ora (girls group), PB4L values, and Tuakana–Teina mentoring.

## 2. Recording Attendance (Timing & Storage)

- KAMAR is used as the school's official Student Management System.
- Teachers record attendance every period, not just daily.
- Attendance is cross-checked by the attendance administrator and alerts are sent for patterns of concern.
- All contact and interventions (calls, hui, referrals) are logged in KAMAR to ensure a verifiable paper trail.

## 3. Following Up on Unexplained Absences

- The Attendance Administrator sends daily text messages to whānau for unexplained absences.
- If no response is received within 2 days, whānau teachers follow up with a phone call or letter.
- If absence persists or becomes a pattern, the case is referred to the year level kaitiaki for a formal whānau hui and pastoral planning.
- Repeat unexplained absences may be escalated to Attendance Services (ASA) after school-based efforts have been exhausted.

## 4. Monitoring Attendance & Identifying Patterns or Barriers

- Weekly reviews of attendance data by whānau teachers, kaitiaki, and SLT.
- Flags are raised when a student drops below **90%, 80%, or 70%** in a term (aligned with STAR framework):

Attendance Rate	Response
90–100% (Regular)	No action needed
80–89% (Moderate)	Whānau contact, pastoral check-in, attendance plan
<80% (Chronic)	Whānau hui, mentoring, agency referrals

<70% (Severe)

ASA referral, formal plan, inter-agency wraparound

- Patterns such as repeated lateness, same-day absences, or blocks of absences are noted and discussed in weekly pastoral meetings with kaitiaki and whānau teachers.
- Barriers identified include transport, home responsibilities, anxiety, disengagement, or peer issues.

## 5. Escalation Pathways

- If kaitiaki interventions don't improve attendance, the issue is escalated to:
  - Assistant Principal (Pastoral)
  - Guidance team
  - Referral to external support such as SWIS, Tuwharetoa ki Kawerau Hauora, Tūhoe Hauora or counselling
  - Attendance Services (ASA) when school-based interventions are not enough
- Inter-agency collaboration is coordinated as needed through pastoral case meetings, involving health, iwi, or social service agencies.

## 6. Supporting Return to School

When a student returns after a period of absence, we provide:

### *a. Learning Support Strategies*

- Teachers provide missed classwork or modified assessment timelines.
- Kaitiaki and teachers offer one-on-one academic check-ins.

### *b. Reintegration Actions*

- Whānau hui upon return to set clear expectations and re-establish goals.
- Tuakana–Teina mentors offer peer support to help students reconnect socially and emotionally.
- Students may have short-term modifications to their timetable or attendance if needed (e.g. partial reintroduction and reduced timetable).

### *c. Participation in School Life*

- Encouraged and supported to rejoin co-curricular activities such as sports and kapa haka.

- Incentives (e.g. sports gear) are used to motivate reintegration and celebrate attendance gains.

#### *d. Ongoing Whānau Communication*

- Weekly updates by Kaitiaki or whānau teachers to whānau on progress.
- Shared access to attendance summaries and behaviour notes via the KAMAR portal.
- Continued involvement of whānau in reviewing progress, adjusting plans, and celebrating attendance gains.

## **How We Review and Adjust Our Attendance Plan**

### **When We Review**

- We review our attendance policy and procedures every year in Term 4.
- The Attendance Plan is updated based on:
  - Student attendance data
  - Ministry of Education changes
  - Feedback from staff, students, and whānau

### **How We Check Procedures Are Being Followed**

- Teachers record attendance every period in KAMAR.
- Kaitiaki check weekly that follow-ups (texts, calls, meetings) are happening.
- The Deputy Principal checks that all actions are being logged correctly.

### **How We Know It's Working**

- We look at whether student attendance is improving after support is given.
- We track fewer stand-downs and better engagement.
- We collect student and whānau feedback during hui and check-ins.

### **How We Report to the Board**

- School leadership shares attendance data with the Board once a term.
- We report on overall trends, goals, and how well our support systems are working.

- This helps the Board see that we are meeting legal and school expectations.