Attendance Management Plan

Introduction and Purpose

Pūrākaunui School is committed to providing a high-quality education for all students. Regular and punctual attendance is fundamental to student success, fostering strong academic progress, social development, and a sense of belonging within our school community.

The purpose of this Attendance Management Plan is to:

- Outline clear expectations for student attendance.
- Establish consistent procedures for monitoring, recording, and managing student attendance.
- Provide a framework for early intervention and support for students whose attendance is a concern.
- Promote effective communication between the school, students, and whānau/caregivers regarding attendance matters.
- Comply with Ministry of Education regulations regarding student enrolment and attendance.

Scope

This plan applies to Administration, Board of Trustees, all students enrolled at Pūrākaunui School and their whānau/caregivers, as well as all school staff members involved in the monitoring and management of student attendance.

The Ministry of Education has identified a range of interrelated reasons for New Zealand's overall decline in regular school attendance for the Pūrākaunui school community to consider.

Out-of-school factors include:

- Health and mental health issues
- Lack of resources for transport, food, or school-related materials
- Disruptions in the family or low parental expectations
- Community or system-level factors like housing and poverty.

In-school factors include:

- Bullying and discrimination
- Poor teacher-student or teacher-parent relationships
- Relaxed attitudes towards attendance in the school
- Curriculum is not sufficiently engaging or culturally responsive.

School Target

Our school's overarching target is to achieve 90% regular attendance (present & justified absences) for all students across the school year. This target reflects our commitment to maximising student presence in learning environments while acknowledging legitimate reasons for absence.

As of the end of Term 4 2025 our data shows that we are at 64% regular attendance (students attended school missing fewer than 5 days across the term) which is an improvement from last year where 44% of students attended regularly in Term 4.

Definitions

For the purpose of this plan, the following definitions apply:

Attendance	A student is marked as present when they are at school and engaged in timetabled learning activities for the full school day, or for part of the day as formally agreed with the school.
Justified Absence	An absence that has been formally approved by the school, typically due to: ● Illness or medical appointment (with supporting evidence if requested, e.g., medical certificate). ● Bereavement. ● Approved family events (e.g., tangi, significant cultural events, with prior arrangement). ● Participation in approved school-related activities (e.g., sports, cultural events, EOTC). ● Exceptional circumstances, approved by the Principal or delegated authority, where a student is unable to attend.
Unjustified Absence	Any absence that does not meet the criteria for a justified absence, or for which the school has not received a valid explanation from a parent/caregiver within a reasonable timeframe (24 hours). This includes, but is not limited to: ● Staying home without a valid reason. ● Shopping or non-essential family outings during school hours. ● Overdue explanations for absence.
Truancy	Persistent or habitual unjustified absence from school.
Partial Absence/Lateness	Arriving at school after the designated start time, or leaving school prior to the designated finish time, without justified reason or prior arrangement

Roles and Responsibilities

It is a legal requirement that every child aged 6 to 16 (and 5-year-olds enrolled in school) attend school every day that it is open.

Board of Trustees	The support boards to focus on this requirement Section 127 has been amended by the Education and Training Amendment Act 2025 to now include a supporting objective requiring school boards "to give effect to its obligation to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school's students attend the school when it is open". The Education and Training Amendment Act 2025 also brought in the requirement for all school boards to have an attendance management plan. While the principal and staff handle the day-to-day management of attendance, your board is responsible for: ● Setting clear expectations in policy and having an attendance management plan. ● Ensuring the school meets its legal duties, including having your attendance management plan available to the public on your school's website. ● Ensuring systems are in place to track, report, and support student attendance through appropriate school resourcing, based on the Stepped attendance response (STAR) framework. Ensuring the school is an emotionally and physically safe environment for all students and staff, and is inclusive of and catering for students with differing needs.
School Leadership (Principal)	● Oversee the implementation and review of the Attendance Management Plan. ● Ensure staff are trained in attendance procedures. ● Provide resources and support for attendance initiatives. ● Analyse attendance data and report to the Board. ● Make decisions on complex or persistent attendance cases. ● Liaise with external agencies (e.g., Oranga Tamariki, truancy services) when necessary.

Teachers	● Record student attendance accurately and promptly at the start of each learning day and after lunch. ● Follow up immediately on unexplained absences from their class. ● Identify and report students with emerging attendance patterns of concern to the principal. ● Foster a positive and inclusive classroom environment that encourages attendance. ● Communicate proactively with whānau/caregivers regarding student attendance.
Administration	● Record student attendance accurately and promptly at the start of each learning day and check that it is completed after lunch. ● Follow up immediately on unexplained absences, note late arrivals, early pick ups and appointments from their classes. ● Identify and report students with emerging attendance patterns of concern to the teaching staff and principal. ● Be friendly, caring, positive and inclusive at reception to encourage attendance. ● Communicate proactively with whānau/caregivers regarding student attendance.
Parents/Caregivers	● Ensure their child attends school regularly and on time, every day the school is open for instruction. ● Notify the school promptly (preferably by [e.g., 9:00 AM] on the day of absence) of any student absence, providing a clear reason and expected duration. ● Provide supporting documentation (e.g., medical certificate) for extended or frequent absences when requested. ● Communicate with the school about any difficulties impacting their child's attendance. ● Work collaboratively with the school to address attendance concerns.
Students	● Attend school every day, punctually and prepared for learning. ● Be aware of the importance of good attendance. ● Communicate any attendance difficulties or concerns to a trusted adult at school or at home.

Procedures for Monitoring and Recording Attendance

Daily Attendance Recording	● Classroom teachers will take attendance at the start of each morning and again after the lunch break. ● Attendance will be recorded accurately in the school's Student Management System (SMS) EDGE. ● Late arrivals must inform the office manager, principal or teacher ensuring their attendance is officially recorded and the reason for lateness noted. ● The principal or teacher must be notified of early departures by a parent/caregiver.
Unexplained Absences	● For any student absent without prior notification, the school office will initiate contact with parents/caregivers, usually by text message and/or phone call, by 9.15am on the day of absence. ● If contact cannot be made, attempts will continue throughout the day. ● If an explanation is not received within 24 hours, the absence will be recorded as unjustified.
Justifying Absences	● Parents/caregivers must provide an explanation for absence by phone call, text, email, message, or written note. ● For extended illness of 5 consecutive days or more, a medical certificate will be requested. ● For planned absences (e.g., family holidays, appointments), prior notice and approval from the Principal are required. These may be recorded as unjustified if they are not considered exceptional circumstances by the Principal.

Intervention Strategies (Tiered Approach)

The school employs a tiered approach to support student attendance, providing targeted interventions based on the level of concern.

Tier 1: Universal Support (For All Students)	Tier 2: Targeted Support (For Emerging Concerns)	Tier 3: Intensive Support (For Persistent Concerns)
Positive School Climate: Foster a welcoming, inclusive, and engaging school environment. **Clear Expectations:** Communicate attendance expectations regularly through newsletters. **Attendance Awareness:** Educate students and whānau on the importance of regular attendance for learning and future opportunities. **Administration:** Daily attendance is recorded and clear open communication is embedded between teachers, principal, students and parents.	**Trigger:** When a student's justified attendance falls below [e.g., 90%] or a pattern of unjustified absences/lateness emerges (e.g., 3-5 unexplained absences in a term, or 5-10 days of justified absences within a term).	**Trigger:** When a student's justified attendance falls below [e.g., 85%] or there are persistent, ongoing unjustified absences despite Tier 2 interventions (e.g., 5-10 unjustified absences in a term, or 10-15 days of justified absences within a term).
Action: **Administration:** ● Records daily attendance promptly in the morning and checks that teachers have recorded attendance straight after lunch daily. ● Make contact with parents is a child is absent before 9:30 am. **Teachers:** ● Provide a safe, welcoming and engaging environment for students. ● Provide programs to support children with understanding bullying and how we can prevent it at school. ● Follow PB4L restorative practice procedures to support children with conflict. ● Are aware of neuro-diverse learners and plan	**Action:** **Administration informs the teaching staff:** Staff discuss attendance under pastoral care and formulate a plan. **Initial Communication:** Teacher makes personal contact (phone call/meeting) with whānau/caregivers to discuss concerns, identify potential barriers and offer support. This information is passed on to the principal. **Further communication:** Principal makes personal contact (phone call/meeting) with whānau/caregivers to discuss concerns, identify potential barriers, and offer support. **Monitoring:** Increased monitoring of attendance.	**Action:** **Formal Meeting:** Principal convenes a formal meeting with whānau/caregivers to develop a comprehensive, formal attendance improvement plan. **Internal and External Agency Involvement:** Involve relevant internal school support services and, if appropriate and with whānau consent, external agencies (e.g., Truancy Service, Oranga Tamariki, health professionals, Spark Tank community support organisations). **Referral:** Consider formal referral to truancy services if unjustified absences persist and other avenues have been exhausted.

to support their learning. ● Celebrate attendance at fortnightly hui's with a certificate. ● Report on attendance twice a year- mid-term report and end of year reports. ● Support families with intervention plans and revisit to see if they are improving attendance or not. **Principal:** ● Report to the Board of trustees regarding attendance. ● Oversee attendance is recorded accurately and daily by teaching staff and administration. ● Discuss intervention plans to support families with attendance. **Board of Trustees (BOT) :** ● BOT are kept informed by the principal about attendance data and interventions that are in place to support families.	**Action Plan (Informal):** Develop an informal attendance plan with whānau, setting clear expectations and identifying strategies (e.g., morning routines, wake-up calls) **Monitor attendance**: regular check-ins and positive affirmations for improved attendance. .	**- Review:** Regular review meetings to monitor progress and adjust the plan as needed.

Communication

Effective communication is paramount to successful attendance management.

- The school will use multiple channels to communicate attendance expectations and procedures (e.g., school website, newsletters, enrolment packs).
- Parents/caregivers will be contacted promptly regarding absences.
- Attendance data and progress will be discussed during parent-teacher interviews or specific attendance meetings.
- Confidentiality will be maintained regarding individual student attendance records, shared only on a need-to-know basis or with explicit consent.

Review and Evaluation

This Attendance Management Plan will be reviewed annually by the school leadership team in conjunction with the Pūrākaunui School Board. The review will include:

- Analysis of school-wide and cohort attendance data against the 90% justified attendance target.
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of intervention strategies.
- Feedback from staff, students, and whānau/caregivers.
- Updates to reflect any changes in Ministry of Education guidelines or school policy.
- Review of Student Attendance Policy and Attendance Procedures as per SchoolDocs Review Process

This plan will be published on the school's website and made available to all staff and whānau.

Approval: Mikaela Wilson & Basil Harrison		Published on:	
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