

1. Introduction

At Mount Biggs School, we are committed to ensuring all tamariki have every opportunity to learn, thrive, and succeed through regular attendance. This Attendance Management Plan (AMP) outlines how we will support attendance in partnership with whānau, recognising the diverse needs that may influence attendance, including medical needs, cultural diversity, and the needs of neurodiverse learners.

The AMP aligns with the Ministry of Education's **Stepped Attendance Response (STAR)** framework and upholds our school values:

Manaakitanga, Kaitiakitanga, Mahitahi, and **Takakawe**.

Why Attendance Matters

Regular attendance is essential for every child's learning, well-being, and sense of belonging. Tamariki who attend school consistently are more likely to:

- Build strong foundations in literacy and numeracy
- Develop social confidence and positive friendships
- Maintain routines that support emotional well-being
- Engage in rich learning experiences across the curriculum
- Feel connected to their peers, teachers, and school community

Even small absences add up. Missing just **one day every two weeks** equals a full week of school lost each term. Over time, this can significantly impact progress and achievement.

Barriers to Attendance That We Can Help With

We recognise that every whānau has unique circumstances. A range of barriers can impact attendance, including:

- **Transport challenges** or changes in family routines
- **Anxiety**, transitions, or worries about school
- **Illness** or ongoing medical needs
- **Family stress**, bereavement, or changing home situations
- **Neurodiverse learning needs**, sensory overload, or social difficulties
- **Cultural commitments** and whānau obligations
- **Uniform or resource needs**
- **Friendship difficulties**

At Mount Biggs School, we work alongside whānau to problem-solve with empathy, respect, and practical support.

Our Commitment to Equity

We acknowledge that attendance support must look different for different learners.
At Mount Biggs School we are committed to:

- Providing **non-judgmental, compassionate support**
- Recognising that whānau navigate complex challenges
- Tailoring attendance plans to meet individual needs
- Collaborating with external agencies where appropriate
- Honouring cultural values, practices, and whānau voice
- Ensuring neurodiverse learners have **appropriate routines, supports, and adjustments**

Our goal is to partner with whānau so that every child has the opportunity to participate fully in school life.

2. Principles Guiding Attendance

- **Regular attendance** is defined as attending **90% or more** of each term.
- **Every day counts:** Small absences accumulate quickly and can significantly affect learning progress.
- **Early, supportive intervention** is the most effective way to remove barriers to attendance.
- **Cultural responsiveness** and respect for diversity are central to our practice.
- **Shared responsibility:** Attendance is a collective effort between the school, whānau, community, and the Ministry of Education.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Trustees:

- Oversees AMP implementation.
- Receives regular attendance reports.
- Reviews attendance annually through Board Reports and Every Day Matters reporting.

Principal, Leadership and SENCo:

- Ensures consistent practices across staff.
- Liaises with external agencies.
- Provides regular reporting to the Board and Ministry.

Teachers & Administration Staff:

- Mark rolls accurately and on time.
- Identify emerging patterns or concerns.
- Make early contact with whānau to offer support.

Whānau & Caregivers:

- Communicate absences promptly.
- Work collaboratively with the school to address challenges impacting attendance.

Students:

- Attend school regularly and engage actively in learning.

Attendance Services / Ministry:

- Provide external support and intervention where significant barriers exist.

4. Attendance Monitoring Process

- Rolls are marked **twice daily** using our SMS (Student Management System).
- Attendance codes follow **Ministry of Education guidelines**.
- Teachers monitor daily patterns and inform the leadership team of concerns.
- Leadership reviews attendance **fortnightly**.
- Attendance data is analysed **twice per term**, with trends and summaries shared with the Board and, where appropriate, the school community.

5. Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) at Mount Biggs School

Attendance Level	What the School Will Do	What Whānau Can Expect
0-4 days absent/term	• Positive reinforcement, • Class updates • regular communication	• Encouragement to continue strong attendance
5-10 days absent/term	• Teacher contacts whānau, • Hui arranged, if needed, a simple Attendance Plan co-created	• Invitation to meet and discuss support. • Attendance plan co-created
11-14 days absent/term	• Leadership involvement, • The Attendance Plan is reviewed • Referral to external support is made if required	• Meeting with leadership and whānau to discuss barriers to attendance. • Formal attendance plan reviewed
15+ days absent/term	• Escalation to external agencies • Board notified • Continual communication and support for whānau • Legal options are considered as a last resort	• Meeting with whānau and leadership to discuss barriers • School to assist in facilitating meetings with external agencies • Inform whānau of the implications of attendance issues • Whanau work alongside the school and agencies for intensive support

6. Culturally Responsive and Inclusive Practice

- Hui/Meeting options available: **in-person, online, or phone**
- Engagement with **iwi, Pasifika, and other cultural leaders** where appropriate
- Flexible support for neurodiverse learners, including:
    - Visual schedules
    - Buddy systems
    - Sensory-friendly spaces

7. Communication with Whānau

- Absences can be reported via **phone, Skool Loop, notes, or email**
- Regular reminders are included in newsletters and on the school app
- Attendance expectations shared at enrolment and reinforced each term
- Whānau invited to provide feedback on AMP effectiveness
- Attendance letters are used as part of the STAR pathway

8. Data, Reporting & Review

- Attendance data is tracked **daily**, monitored **fortnightly**, and analysed **twice termly**
- Reports provided to the Board and shared in **community-friendly formats**
- Annual AMP review completed by the Board with **whānau and staff input**
- Continuous improvement guided by **ERO evaluations** and **MoE guidelines**

9. Support & Contacts

- **School Office:** office@mountbiggs.school.nz | (06) 329 3646
- **Attendance Lead (SLT), Principal:**
  Kyle Harris — principal@mountbiggs.school.nz
- **Ministry of Education Resources:** education.govt.nz/attendance

10. Publication & Accessibility

- This AMP is published on the **Mount Biggs School website**
- Printed or digital copies available **on request**

Stepped Attendance Response – STAR

Responding to all absence

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



Stepped Attendance Response – STAR

Responding to all absence

The Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) sets expectations for school, student, parent/guardian, Ministry of Education and broader system responses to student absence.

From Term 1, 2026, schools will need to have regard for the STAR when developing their Attendance Management Plan. It is important schools use this direction to develop their own school specific response to attendance at the set absence thresholds.

How to use the STAR

The STAR outlines actions at absence thresholds and promotes school-wide approaches to:

- strengthen attendance culture
- improve data quality and use
- enable timely support and escalation
- identify what works well and areas for improvement to support student attendance

When responding to absences, schools should consider:

- the student's learning aspirations and whānau context
- reasons for absence and likelihood of reoccurrence
- the student's attendance history, and prior interventions
- requesting support from Attendance Services for students with chronic absence

Regional and National teams work alongside schools to support them improve attendance.



Ongoing Responsibilities

Day-to-day attendance management activities

Schools

- Set attendance targets and regularly review attendance data
- Communicate clearly with parents: expectations, procedures and follow-up steps the school will take when a student is absent
- Act early in following up absences to support students to stay engaged
- Escalate as needed, develop support plans, involve other services, consider requesting support from Attendance Services
- Assess attendance history of new students and share attendance history when students move between schools
- Use school-wide strategies, including strong relationships and minimising disruptions to the school day and week

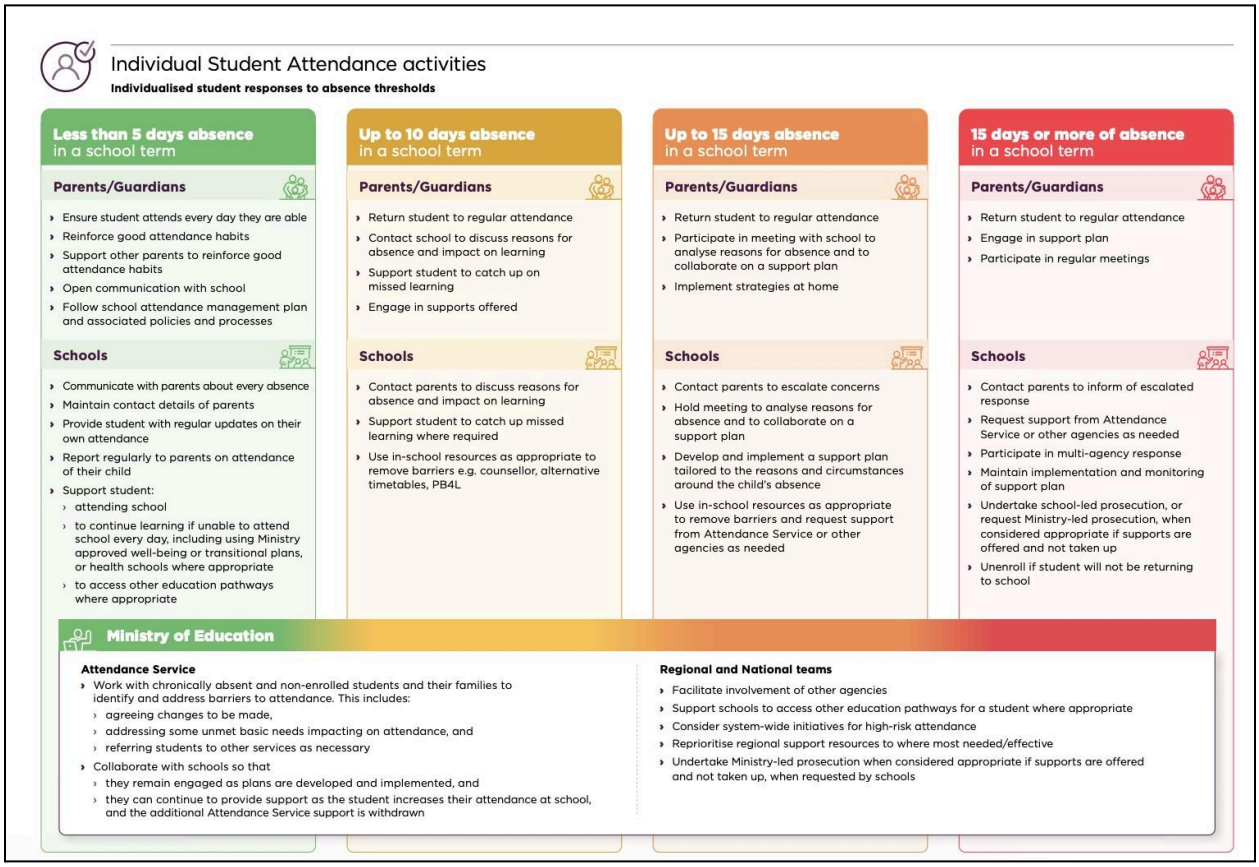
Ministry of Education

Attendance Services – local catchment providers

- Build enduring relationships with schools in catchments
- Support chronically absent/non-enrolled students and their families
- Address barriers, develop and monitor plans with schools
- Provide advice and support directly to schools with the aim of reducing the need for requests for support in the future

Regional and National teams

- Provide targeted supports and services to schools including assistance with:
  - Understanding attendance data and trends
  - Support development of attendance policies and procedures, including Attendance Management Plans
  - Provide access to specialist services and alternative pathways where needed
  - Whānau and community engagement
  - Attendance leadership and governance
  - Attendance barriers arising from factors in the wider community


Individual Student Attendance activities
Individualised student responses to absence thresholds
Less than 5 days absence in a school term
Parents/Guardians
Ensure student attends every day they are able
Reinforce good attendance habits
Support other parents to reinforce good attendance habits
Open communication with school
Follow school attendance management plan and associated policies and processes
Schools
Communicate with parents about every absence
Maintain contact details of parents
Provide student with regular updates on their own attendance
Report regularly to parents on attendance of their child
Support student:
attending school
to continue learning if unable to attend school every day, including using Ministry approved well-being or transitional plans, or health schools where appropriate
to access other education pathways where appropriate
Up to 10 days absence in a school term
Parents/Guardians
Return student to regular attendance
Contact school to discuss reasons for absence and impact on learning
Support student to catch up on missed learning
Engage in supports offered
Schools
Contact parents to discuss reasons for absence and impact on learning
Support student to catch up missed learning where required
Use in-school resources as appropriate to remove barriers e.g. counsellor, alternative timetables, PB4L
Up to 15 days absence in a school term
Parents/Guardians
Return student to regular attendance
Participate in meeting with school to analyse reasons for absence and to collaborate on a support plan
Implement strategies at home
Schools
Contact parents to escalate concerns
Hold meeting to analyse reasons for absence and to collaborate on a support plan
Develop and implement a support plan tailored to the reasons and circumstances around the child's absence
Use in-school resources as appropriate to remove barriers and request support from Attendance Service or other agencies as needed
15 days or more of absence in a school term
Parents/Guardians
Return student to regular attendance
Engage in support plan
Participate in regular meetings
Schools
Contact parents to inform of escalated response
Request support from Attendance Service or other agencies as needed
Participate in multi-agency response
Maintain implementation and monitoring of support plan
Undertake school-led prosecution, or request Ministry-led prosecution, when considered appropriate if supports are offered and not taken up
Unenroll if student will not be returning to school
Ministry of Education
Attendance Service
Work with chronically absent and non-enrolled students and their families to identify and address barriers to attendance. This includes:
agreeing changes to be made,
addressing some unmet basic needs impacting on attendance, and
referring students to other services as necessary
Collaborate with schools so that
they remain engaged as plans are developed and implemented, and
they can continue to provide support as the student increases their attendance at school, and the additional Attendance Service support is withdrawn
Regional and National teams
Facilitate involvement of other agencies
Support schools to access other education pathways for a student where appropriate
Consider system-wide initiatives for high-risk attendance
Reprioritise regional support resources to where most needed/effective
Undertake Ministry-led prosecution when considered appropriate if supports are offered and not taken up, when requested by schools