Attendance Management Plan

1. Purpose and Rationale

- To promote regular attendance and engagement of all students, recognising that consistent attendance is critical for academic achievement, social development, and equity.
- Education.govt.nz
- +2
- The Beehive
- +2
- To implement a formal, transparent process for identifying, tracking, and responding to student absences, in line with the Ministry of Education's *Attendance Management Plan* requirement.
- Education.govt.nz
- +1
- To build a shared responsibility among school leadership, teachers, students, whānau (families), and, where appropriate, external agencies.

2. Policy and Legal Basis

- Under the Education (School Attendance) Regulations 2024, the school must maintain accurate attendance registers (half-day basis) and use Ministry-approved attendance codes.
- Legislation New Zealand
- +2
- Education.govt.nz
- +2
- The Board of Trustees is required to develop and publish an attendance management plan by Term 1, 2026.
- Education.govt.nz
- +1
- The plan should reflect the Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) framework, which defines thresholds of absence and associated responses.
- Education.govt.nz
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3. Goals and Targets

Set specific, measurable attendance goals. Example:

- Long-term goal: By 2030, 80% of students attend at least 90% of the term (in line with Government target).
- Education.govt.nz
- Short-term (school-level) targets:
    1. Reduce the number of students with more than 5 days of absence per term by ??% in the next year.
    2. Increase parent/whānau engagement in attendance meetings for students with chronic absence.
    3. Decrease unexplained/unjustified absence rates by strengthening communication and early intervention.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- Board of Trustees:
    - Approve and review the attendance management plan.
    - Education.govt.nz
    - Allocate resources (staff time, monitoring systems).
- Principal / Senior Leadership:
    - Oversee implementation of the plan.
    - Ensure school staff understand STAR thresholds and processes.
    - Report on attendance data to the Board and community.
- Teachers / Classroom Staff:
    - Take and submit daily attendance accurately, using approved attendance register and Ministry attendance codes.
    - Education.govt.nz
    - +1
    - Be alert to patterns of absence (e.g., regular days absent, late arrival).
    - Communicate promptly with whānau when attendance concerns arise.
- Whānau / Parents:
    - Make sure students attend school regularly.
    - Education.govt.nz
    - Engage in meetings or plans when school raises concerns.
- Ministry of Education / Attendance Service:

- Provide targeted support for students with high non-attendance.
- Work with school and whānau to address barriers to attendance.
- Escalate interventions for serious cases as per STAR, possibly including legal action, when all other supports have been offered.
- Education.govt.nz

5. Attendance Monitoring and Data

- Use a daily attendance register (morning and afternoon), following the Education (School Attendance) Regulations 2024.
- Legislation New Zealand

- Use Ministry-approved attendance codes to distinguish between justified and unjustified absences.
- Education.govt.nz
- Maintain historical attendance data (retain records for at least 7 years as required).
- Education.govt.nz
- Regularly analyze attendance data (e.g., weekly, termly) to identify students at risk, attendance trends, and areas requiring targeted intervention.

6. Thresholds & Response (STAR Framework)

Integrate the Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) into the plan.

Education.govt.nz

Threshold (per term)

Trigger Action / Intervention

Green (e.g., 0–5 days absent)

Monitor; positive reinforcement; regular communication. Provide reminders of school expectations.

Yellow (e.g., ~6–10 days absent)

Contact whānau (phone, email) to understand reasons; teacher or attendance lead meets whānau to discuss barriers; offer school-based support.

Orange (e.g., ~11–14 days absent)

Formal meeting (school leadership, teacher, whānau, student) to develop an Individual Attendance Plan; involve external support (e.g., social services, health).

Red (e.g., 15+ days absent)

Escalated response: involve Ministry Attendance Service; consider legal intervention only if support is offered but not taken up.

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For further details plese see attachment for Attendance procedure: **https://docs.google.com/document/d/1O7i7bRu6EWp0F6ncgvCJl4GVoKJGnvrfgRwHSRshs_w/edit?tab=t.0**

7. Barriers & Support Strategies

Recognize common barriers to attendance in a primary school context and plan interventions:

- Health / Illness: Partner with local health services; provide guidance to parents about when to keep kids home vs. return; ensure school is welcoming for students returning after illness.
- Transportation / Access: Work with parents/whānau to identify transport challenges; consider walking groups, community transport initiatives.
- Whānau Engagement: Build strong home-school relationships. Use regular communication, newsletters, hui (meetings), and culturally responsive practices.
- Psychosocial Issues: Connect with external agencies (e.g., social work, community organizations) when non-attendance is tied to family stress, mental health, or other complex factors.

8. Communication

- Publish the attendance management plan on the school website (required).
- Education.govt.nz
- Clearly communicate attendance expectations, processes, and STAR thresholds in student/whānau handbooks, newsletters, and at school meetings.
- Provide training for staff on using attendance codes, understanding STAR, and handling sensitive conversations.
- Engage students: teach them (in a developmentally appropriate way) why attendance matters.

9. Review & Evaluation

- Conduct a termly review of attendance data, interventions, and outcomes.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of strategies: Are attendance rates improving? Which interventions are working? Which barriers remain?
- Review and update the attendance management plan annually, or sooner if required by regulation.
- Education.govt.nz
- Involve whānau and possibly student voice in the review to get feedback on what's working and what's not

10. Risks & Mitigation

- Risk: Whānau disengagement / lack of response.
  Mitigation: Proactive communication; flexible meeting options (in person, online, phone); culturally responsive practices, translation where needed.
- Risk: Resource limitations (staff time, capacity).
  Mitigation: Delegate attendance lead role; integrate attendance tasks into existing roles; use data to triage high-risk students.
- Risk: Over-escalation / legal action without adequate support.
  Mitigation: Ensure all supportive steps are offered first; use legal escalation only after sustained non-engagement and once supports are reasonably available; follow STAR framework.

11. Professional Development

- Provide training for teachers and staff on the attendance codes (so they understand what each code means).
- Education.govt.nz
- Train staff in STAR, including how to run attendance meetings, develop individual attendance plans, and liaise with external agencies.
- Hold regular staff reflections / "attendance huddles" to review students of concern, share strategies, and coordinate responses.

How This Aligns With NZ Education Policy

- Mandatory Plan from 2026: Because of new regulations, all schools will need an attendance management plan.
- The Beehive

- STAR Framework: The Ministry strongly encourages using STAR, and attendance plans must have regard to it.
- Education.govt.nz

- Legal Record-Keeping: The plan respects obligations under the Education (School Attendance) Regulations 2024 to keep accurate registers and use correct codes.
- Legislation New Zealand
- Data & Accountability: Regular monitoring and data reporting supports national goals (e.g., increasing regular attendance).
- The Beehive
- Monthly attendance reminders in newsletters.
- Iwi and cultural considerations respected in communication approaches.
- Parents are encouraged to contact the school early if struggling with attendance.