



1. Introduction and Guiding Principles

This document outlines the Attendance Management Plan for Okaihau Primary School. This plan is designed to be a living document, reflecting our commitment to ensuring every student attends school regularly and engages in their learning. It aligns with the Ministry of Education's requirements for mandatory Attendance Management Plans and the Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) framework.

Our guiding principles are:

- **Whānau Partnership:** We believe that strong, trusting relationships with our students, their families, and the wider community are the foundation of good attendance.
- **Early Intervention:** We will act promptly and compassionately when a student's attendance begins to decline, addressing barriers before they become chronic issues.
- **Community Collaboration:** We will work with local agencies, community groups, and the Ministry of Education to provide holistic support for our students and their families.
- **Celebration:** We will celebrate and acknowledge good and improved attendance to reinforce its importance and value.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Board of Trustees	• Oversee the implementation and regular review of the attendance plan and policy. • Ensure the plan is published on the school's website. • Set an attendance target of students attending school at least 90% of the time.
Principal / Senior Leadership	• Lead the implementation of the plan and provide professional development for staff. • Monitor school-wide attendance data and trends. • Act as the primary contact for moderate and chronic absence cases. • Liaise with the Ministry of Education Attendance Service and other support agencies.
Teachers	• Record attendance accurately at the start of each morning and afternoon session. • Build strong relationships with students and whānau. • Act as the first point of contact for students with irregular absences.
Administration Staff	Record and update absence notifications daily. Contact parents/caregivers via txt on the first day of an unexplained absence. Refer cases to Attendance Services after 3 unexplained absence days. Maintain accurate contact details for all students.
Whānau/Caregivers	• Ensure their child attends school every day, unless they are unwell. • Notify the school promptly of any absence. • Work in partnership with the school to address any attendance concerns.

3. Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) Framework

We use a tiered approach to identify and respond to student absences.

Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) Framework

Good Attendance 90% or more, Less than 5 days absence in a school term	Worrying Attendance 80%-89%, Up to 10 days absence in a school term	Concerning Attendance 70%-79%, Up to 15 days absence in a school term	Very Concerning Attendance Less than 70%, 15 days or more of absence in a school term
Parents/Guardians  › Ensure student attends every day › Reinforce good attendance habits › Open communication with school › Follow school attendance management plan and associated policies and processes	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	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	Parents/Guardians  › Return student to regular attendance › Engage in support plan › Participate in meetings
Schools  › Communicate with parents about every absence › Acknowledged and celebrated through class and school-wide recognition. › Teachers maintain positive communication with whānau. › Report twice a year on attendance through school reports.	Schools  › Contact parents to discuss reasons for absence and impact on learning › Support student to catch up missed learning where required › The school offers support to address any emerging barriers (e.g., transport, food).	Schools  › Principal contacts 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	Schools  › Principal to 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 › Request Ministry-led prosecution, when considered appropriate if supports are offered and not taken up › Unenroll if student will not be returning to school

4. Targets for 2026

**To have 50% of students attending
90% of the time.**

**To have a school average to 90%,
up from 83% in 2025.**

5. Procedures for Absence Notification and Follow-up

5.1 Daily Attendance Recording

- Teachers will mark the electronic attendance register for all students by 9:15 am each morning and by 1:50 pm each afternoon.
- If a child is absent and no reply is received from whānau, they are marked as Truant.
- Attendance will be submitted daily to the Ministry of Education.
- The school is using the refreshed set of attendance codes as required by the Ministry.
- When notified, teachers record reason for absence in the comments section on eTap.
- Administrator will do the same if notified. This forms a good history log.

5.2 First-Day Absence Follow-up

- If a student is marked absent without a prior explanation, the administration staff will txt the caregiver via eTap by 10:00 am.
- If the caregiver cannot be reached, alternative contacts may be tried.
- Absences that remain unresolved by the end of the school day will remain as 'T' (Truant).

5.3 Absence Notification by Whānau.

- Whānau are expected to notify the school of an absence by 9:00am on the day of the absence.
- This can be done via phone call to the school office, txt school cellphone, email or notified via the Skoolloop app.

5.4 Justified vs. Unjustified Absences

- Justified: Medical certificates (for prolonged illness), bereavement, or religious observances are considered justified. The code 'M' or 'J' will be used.
- Unjustified: Planned holidays during term time or extended family visits are considered unjustified. The code 'E' will be used.

5.5 SMS Recording

- Record Attendance Management Plan response data in our Student Management System (SMS) every time a student reaches a threshold.

5.6 Notifying Attendance Services

- Attendance Officer is contacted if your child is away for 3 consecutive days without us being notified.

6. Addressing Barriers to Attendance

Recognising the unique challenges of a rural community, we will proactively address common barriers:

- Transport: We will work with families to identify transport issues and connect them with available community options or transport assistance where possible.

7. Addressing 'Late' Students

- Students and or caregivers need to come to the office when a child is late and sign in the book. The teacher will then update their attendance to L when they get to class and make a comment on Etap as to what time they arrived.
- Lateness is reviewed by the Principal to identify students with frequent lateness.
- The teacher contacts whānau to understand the reasons for absence.
- The school offers support to address any emerging barriers.

8. Data Monitoring and Plan Review

- Attendance data is reviewed regularly by the principal to identify students in the Irregular and Moderate absence categories.
- The Board of Trustees receives a termly attendance report.
- This plan will be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees
- The board will review its attendance policy as per School Docs requirements.

Ministry of Education Guidance:

- The [Ministry of Education NZ](#) provides a guide for schools and kura on managing student attendance.
- The [Ministry of Education NZ](#) refreshed attendance codes