



Attendance Management Plan

Waitati School
2026

Introduction & Purpose



Waitati 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.

Our purpose 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 whanau/caregivers regarding attendance matters.
- Comply with the Ministry of Education regulations regarding student enrolment and attendance.

Scope



This plan applies to all students that are enrolled at Waitati School and their whānau/caregivers, as well as all school staff members involved in the monitoring and management of students attendance.

School Target

Our school's overarching target is to achieve **90% justified attendance** for all students across the school year. This target reflects our commitment to maximising students presence in learning environments wholly acknowledging legitimate reasons for absence.

As of the end of Term 4 2025 our data shows we are at 72% attendance (present and justified absences)

Definitions



For the purpose of the 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Illness or medical appointment (with supporting evidence if requested, e.g. medical certificate)- Approved Family events (cultural events, tangi, 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 the 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Staying at home without a valid reason.- Shopping or non-essential family outing during school hours.- Overdue explanations for absences.
Truancy	Persistent or habitual unjustified or unexplained absences 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



BOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Monitor school attendance- Delegate the job to the Principal to do the day to day stuff- Develop and implement an Attendance Management Plan including publishing it online by the start of Term 1 2026- Have regard to our attendance guidelines, the Stepped Attendance Response (STAR)- Periodically review your plan.
School Leadership (Principal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Oversee the implementation and review of the Attendance Management Plan.- Everyday Matters Reporting to BOT- Ensure staff are trained in attendance procedures.- Provide resources and support for the attendance initiatives.- Analyse attendance data and report to the Board.- Make decisions on complex or persistent attendance cases.
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Record student attendance accurately and promptly at the start of each learning day and after lunch.- Identify and report students with emerging attendance patterns of concerns to the Principal.- Foster a positive and inclusive classroom environment that encourages attendance.- Communicate proactively with whanau/caregivers regarding students attendance.

Roles and Responsibilities Cont



Office Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Follow up on unexplained absences from the school.- Identify and report students with emerging attendance patterns of concerns to the Principal.
Parents/ Caregivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ensure their child attends school regularly and on time, everyday the school is open for instruction.- Notify the school promptly (preferably by 9:00 am on the day of the 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Attend school everyday, 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.- Late arrivals must inform the office person and then the teacher, ensuring their attendance is officially recorded and the reason for lateness noted.

Procedures for Monitoring and Recording Attendance



Daily Attendance Recording	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Classroom teachers will take attendance at the start of each morning and again after lunch break.- Attendance will be recorded accurately on the school's Student Management System (Edge)- Late arrivals must inform the office person and then the teacher, ensuring their attendance is officially recorded and the reason for lateness noted.
Unexplained Absences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- For any students absent without prior notification, the school office will contact the parents/caregivers, usually by text message and/or phone call, by 9:30 am on the day of the 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 or truant.
Justified Absences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Parents/Caregivers must provide an explanation for the absence by text/phone, email or via the Edge App.- For the extended illness of 5 consecutive days or more, a medical certificate will be requested.- For planned absences (e.g., family holidays, cultural leave), 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)

Tier 1: Universal Support (For All Students)	Tier 2: Targeted Support (For Emerging Concerns)	Tier 3: Intensive Support (For Persistent Concerns)
<p>Positive School Climate: Foster a welcoming, inclusive and engaging school environment.</p> <p>Clear Expectations: Communicate attendance expectations regularly through newsletters, website and Edge App.</p> <p>Attendance Awareness: Educate students and whānau on the importance of regular attendance for learning and future opportunities.</p>	<p>Trigger: When a student's justified attendance falls below 90% or a pattern of unjustified absences/lateness emerges. (E.g., 3-5 days unexplained absences in a term, or 5-10 days of justified absences with a term).</p>	<p>Trigger: When a student's justified attendance falls below 85% or there are persistent ongoing unjustified absences despite Tier 2 interventions (e.g., 5-10 days unjustified absences in a term or 10-15 days of justified absences within a term).</p>
	<p>Action:</p> <p>Initial Communication: Principal makes personal contact (Phone call/meeting) with whānau/caregivers to discuss concerns, identify potential barriers, and offer support.</p> <p>Monitoring: Increased monitoring of attendance.</p> <p>Action Plan (Informal): Develop an informal attendance plan with whānau, setting clear expectations and identify strategies (e.g., morning routines, wake-up calls)</p>	<p>Action:</p> <p>Formal Meeting: Principal convenes a formal meeting with whānau/caregivers to develop a comprehensive, formal attendance improvement plan.</p> <p>Internal and External Agency Involvement: Involve relevant internal school services and, if appropriate and with whānau consent, external agencies (Otago Youth Wellness Trust).</p> <p>Referral: Consider formal referral to the truancy services if unjustified absences persist and other ventures have been exhausted.</p> <p>Review: Regular review meetings to monitor progress and adjust the plan as needed.</p>

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, Edge App, Parent Information Booklet)
- Parents/caregivers will be contacted promptly regarding absences.
- Attendance data and progress will be discussed during 3-Way conferences or in specific attendance meetings.
- Confidentiality will be maintained regarding individual student 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 Waitati School 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 whanau/caregivers.
- Update 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 whanau.

Approval:	BOT 25/2/26	Published on:	26/2/26
Effective Date:	2/3/26	Review Date:	17/6/26