



“Mā te mahi ngā tahi, ka tutuki - Better Together”

Attendance Management Plan

At Ashley Rakahuri School, we aim for all learners to attend regularly so they can engage, achieve and thrive at school. All students in Aotearoa are legally required to attend school every day as well, and schools are also legally required to have an attendance management plan in place to support this expectation. Our plan has been shaped by the attendance data we have gathered over 2024-2025 and addresses the patterns in this data. This plan aligns with the Government's target for 80% of students to be present for more than 90% of the time. If a student misses one day of school every two weeks, they will have missed more than a whole year of school by the time they complete year 10 and are therefore ready for the formal qualification stages of their education. Together, school and whānau can build strong attendance habits and attitudes that set every child up for success.

This aligns with our strategic plan below:

Strategic Goal	Action	Success Criteria
<p>Nurture the hauora of all ākonga (Hauora)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To create engaging, hands on learning opportunities that reflect the local curriculum and our school values Explore strategies for supporting neuro-diversity and the social and emotional literacy of all ākonga Enact recommended attendance plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ākonga are able to recognise and manage their own behaviour through the school values Teachers will develop a broad, rich curriculum Teachers are able to identify and use inclusive practices to support wellbeing High student engagement shown through improved attendance rates

Board Responsibilities

As required by the Education and Training Act 2020 (s35), all students between six and sixteen years old must be enrolled at school. Once enrolled, it is compulsory to attend school regularly, unless a specific exemption has been approved by the school and Ministry of Education. The board takes all reasonable steps to ensure all students enrolled attend when it is open for instruction (Education and Training Act 2020 s36).

The board is responsible for taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the school's students attend the school when it is open for instruction.

The board will comply with the provisions in the legislation in relation to student attendance by:

- having a commitment to support students return to regular attendance

- having processes and procedures in place to support a Stepped Attendance Response to student absence that uses data-based thresholds to identify students
- recording all absences, and responding accordingly
- having an effective method in place for identifying and monitoring student absence, including identifying patterns and barriers to student attendance
- publishing this attendance management plan on the school's website

Principal's Responsibilities

The principal is responsible for:

- developing and implementing a stepped attendance response aligned with the thresholds to support student attendance
- ensure that student absence is investigated, responded too and actions taken recorded aligned with the thresholds
- ensure all students, whanau and staff understand the processes and procedures that support student attendance
- Report to the board on any trends, barriers to attendance and interventions being used to support student attendance.
- provide a termly attendance report to the School Board showing the analysis of data, trends and narratives

Parent/Whānau Responsibilities

Whānau have legal obligations to ensure their tamariki attend school (Education and Training Act, s244). We expect whānau to:

- notify the kura as soon as possible if their tamaiti is going to be late or absent
- Arrange appointments or trips outside of kura hours or during school holidays where possible
- Work with us (kura) to manage attendance concerns

Legislative Compliance/Legislation

[Education and Training Act 2020](#)

[Education Attendance rules](#)

[Education \(School Attendance\) Regulations 2024](#)

Context- Analysis of 2025 Attendance Data

Context- analysis of 2025 attendance data

Tamariki at Ashley Rakahuri School have attendance rates that are close to the national average of 65.9% and the Canterbury average of 61.9%. In Term 1, 72% of all ākonga attended school for at least 90% of the time, an improvement from 68% in Term 1, 2024. However, there are still some

trends that need attention if we are to reach the Government target of 80% of students attending 90% of the time. Attendance in Terms 2 and 3 is less in both 2024 and 2025 mostly due to illness.

Annual attendance: Annual attendance has followed a pattern over the past two years of being higher in Term 1 and 4 and falling away in Term 2 and 3 dipping below the National average in these two terms. Winter illness accounts for the majority accounting for 65- 67% of the absences of this with holidays accounting for 12-14% of the absences. While we acknowledge that overseas travel and family time can provide valuable experiences, these absences are unjustified under Board policy and the law. Holidays can be conducted during school break time. Teachers observe that time away on holiday can affect ākonga when they return, including lost learning opportunities planned for with their class and with their peers at school, reduced confidence, and challenges in maintaining social connections.

Friday absence: Friday is the least attended day at Ashley Rakahuri School and this has consistently been the case for the past year.

Procedures to Support Attendance

At Ashley Rakahuri School, we follow the procedures below to support and manage student attendance.

These have been developed in response to:

- Our attendance data over the past two years
- Ministry of Education: *Every Day Matters* reporting
- Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) guidance
- Schoolwide attendance self-review using the Ministry of Education Reference Guide

Reporting Attendance	Personnel
<p>1. Every day a child is away, by 9:15 am, parents are expected to notify the school and provide a clear reason for absence. Saying a child is "not at school today" will not be accepted as an explanation and will be recorded as truant. Notifying the school can be done by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phoning through an absence to the office 03 3138907 • eMailing the office: office@ashleyrasahuri.school.co.nz or the classroom teacher 	<p>Parents/Caregivers Office staff/Teachers</p>
<p>2. Every day, classroom roles are marked on eTap by 9:20 am and 12.45pm pm. Non-school staff use paper rolls and send these to the office. The office then records the paper roll on eTap. For every student away, the teacher uses the ?/M or D code. Any child that arrives late needs to go to the office to check in.</p>	<p>Teachers Office staff</p>

<p>3. The school monitors daily attendance by checking on any students with a ?. Using parent/caregiver notifications, the correct code is recorded. By 9:45 am, any ? codes still in place are followed up by a phone call from the office. If this is not responded to, an eMail will be sent. If no explanation message is received, a T (truant) code will be recorded until a parent notification is received to say otherwise. Please refer to the tables in Figure A Attendance Codes and Explanations for further detail.</p>	<p>Whānau/Caregivers Office Staff</p>
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Monitoring Attendance	
Unjustified Absence	
<p>If a student is absent for more than 5 unjustified days in a term, the school will consider carrying out an intervention following the STAR plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send a formal notification and contact the parent/guardian to discuss the reasons for the absences • Support students to catch up on missed learning where required • Use in-school resources as appropriate to remove barriers, e.g. provide food, or counselling with school staff, address support strategies for parents and teachers for school refusal. <p>If unjustified absence continues for 10 days in a term, the school will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send escalated formal notification to parents • Hold a meeting to diagnose the reason for absence and to collaborate on a support plan • Develop and implement a plan tailored to the diagnosis and circumstances around the child's absence • Use in-school resources as appropriate to remove barriers and request support from the Ministry or other agencies as needed <p>If unjustified absence continues for 15 days in a term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send a warning notice and make contact to arrange a meeting with parents/caregivers • Escalate to multi-agency response • Implement and monitor the improvement plan <p>When unjustified attendance of 5 days or more persists in subsequent terms, the school will determine at which level of STAR to intervene and seek collaboration with parents/caregivers, depending on the circumstances.</p> <p>If the reason for the unjustified absence of more than five days is for a holiday, then upon return, the school will send a formal notification to the parent/caregiver and request that the child not have any more unjustified absences for the year.</p>	
Justified Absence	
<p>Where justified absence is longer than five consecutive days for illness, the school will request a</p>	

doctor's certificate.

Where justified absence from school is more than 10 intermittent days over two terms, the school will notify the parent/caregiver and request a conversation about how best to support wellbeing and attendance.

Attendance Policy and Communications

Once a term, parents and caregivers are reported to about their child's attendance for the year so far, using the eTap attendance calendar.

Reporting to the Board: The "Everyday Matters" report is made available to the board each term, and each month, an attendance update is noted in the principal's report to the board.

Leadership team: Intervention actions are decided upon receipt of eTap notifications.

Intervention actions are initiated to support chronic absence if required. Clear attendance expectations are made for students involved in school-level interventions.

Attendance policy: Parents and caregivers have ongoing access to the school-wide attendance policies on School Docs. They're invited to provide feedback about these policies as part of the Board review process.

Parent/caregiver communications: Information about school wide expectations, procedures, data and reminders about attendance is frequently communicated to parents/caregivers/whānau through:

- The school newsletter
- The whānau handbook- updated yearly and given to parents upon enrolment
- Parent-teacher interviews
- This attendance management plan is posted on our website.
- [Knowing If Your Child Is Well Enough To Attend School](#) information is provided to all whānau.

Absence Codes

Present Codes

P Present	L Late To Class	Q Board Approved Offsite Learning	D Approved External Appointment
The student is present in class	The student has arrived at school after 9:05am and is in class.	The student is off-site on board-approved activities: School-organised trips, including camps	The student is off-site at a short-term appointment: Medical appointment- eg Medical, Dentist, physio Appointment with a

			<p>social worker, counsellor, or psychologist</p> <p>Meeting with government agencies</p> <p>Court proceedings</p> <p>Principal-approved learning specialists</p> <p><i>When students do not return from appointments, parents should inform the school of the reason why, or a T code will be used.</i></p>
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Justified Absence Codes			
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J Explained and Approved	M Illness/Medical Absence	U Stood Down/Suspended	
<p>Explained Family emergencies</p> <p>Bereavement</p> <p>Extreme weather conditions/road closures</p> <p>Competing in non-school events at a regional or national level (not board-approved)</p>	<p>Short illness, injury, or medical event; the student is unable to self-regulate or co-regulate.</p>	<p>The student is absent due to a formal stand-down or suspension.</p>	

Unjustified Absence			
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T Truant	E Explained But Not Approved	G Holiday During Term Time	? Unknown
<p>The parent or caregiver supplies no reason, or "xx is not at school today"</p>	<p>An explanation has been provided for the student's absence, but it does not meet the school's attendance</p>	<p>The student is on holiday- domestically or internationally.</p>	<p>The temporary code is used when a student's absence is unexplained—replaced by the appropriate</p>

	<p>policy. Examples include:</p> <p>Personal grooming</p> <p>Visiting family or friends</p> <p>Student is avoidably tired- eg after holidays, late nights</p> <p>The student is avoiding school-arranged events such as sports days or special days</p> <p>Birthday celebrations</p> <p>The parent is sick</p> <p>Parent is working away from home</p> <p>Persistent and unaddressed school refusal</p> <p>Attending private coaching, lessons or outside of school activities (e.g dance</p>		<p>code or T after attempts by the school to reach the parent/care.</p>
Reviewed:	February 2026	Next Review Date;	December 2028

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