



Attendance Management Plan

1. Rationale

Regular and consistent school attendance is essential for every student's learning, wellbeing, and long-term success. Students who attend school regularly are more likely to make academic progress, develop positive relationships, and participate meaningfully in school life. Attendance is also a strong indicator of student engagement and overall wellbeing.

This Attendance Management Plan (AMP) outlines Ōropi School's systems, expectations, responsibilities, and responses relating to attendance. The plan ensures the school:

- Meets its legal obligations under the **Education and Training Act 2020**, including accurate attendance recording, monitoring, and follow-up.
- Aligns with the Ministry of Education's national priority to improve attendance and engagement.
- Identifies patterns of absence early and implements timely interventions.
- Responds consistently and appropriately at each attendance threshold through a Stepped Attendance Response (STAR).
- Supports whānau to address attendance barriers and removes obstacles that prevent students from attending regularly.

Our goal is to create a school culture where students, staff, and whānau understand that **every day matters** and where daily attendance is supported through strong communication, relationships, and practical systems.

2. National and School Attendance Targets

National Goal

The Ministry of Education aims for **80% of all students to attend school regularly (90%+)** by **2030**.

School Targets

To support national goals and lift our own attendance rates:

- **60% of students attending regularly by mid-2026.**
- **65% of students attending regularly by the end of Term 4, 2026.**

These targets will be reviewed annually in line with updated data and Ministry guidance.

3. Strategic Goals and Key Objectives

Our attendance strategy supports the school's broader vision for student engagement and achievement. The key objectives of this plan are to:

1. **Improve regular attendance rates** through consistent expectations and early intervention.
2. **Ensure accurate recording, monitoring, and reporting** of attendance in compliance with Ministry requirements.
3. **Use the Stepped Attendance Response (STAR)** to guide timely and appropriate actions based on days absent in a school term.
4. **Strengthen communication** with parents and whānau around attendance expectations, patterns, and support options.
5. **Identify and respond to barriers** that affect student attendance, particularly those unique to our school context.
6. **Engage external partners and agencies** when additional support is required.
7. **Promote the importance of daily attendance** through ongoing communication and school-wide messaging.

4. Board Responsibilities

In line with the Education and Training Act 2020, the Board will:

- Take all reasonable steps to ensure students attend whenever the school is open for instruction.
- Ensure that a clear attendance policy and Attendance Management Plan are in place.
- Investigate, respond to, and record actions associated with concerning attendance patterns.
- Support the implementation of the STAR framework.
- Receive twice-termly attendance reports from the principal, including:

- Trends and patterns
- Identified barriers
- STAR thresholds reached
- Interventions undertaken
- Ensure attendance information is reported to the Ministry accurately and in a timely manner.
- Publish the Attendance Management Plan on the school website.
- Review the AMP annually, or sooner if legislative changes occur.

5. Principal Responsibilities

The principal will:

- Implement this Attendance Management Plan and ensure all staff understand their responsibilities.
- Maintain and oversee the Ministry-approved **Electronic Attendance Register (eAR)**.
- Ensure all unexplained absences are promptly followed up.
- Ensure attendance codes are applied accurately according to Ministry guidelines.
- Lead the implementation of the Stepped Attendance Response (STAR).
- Provide twice-termly attendance reports and analysis to the Board.
- Communicate attendance expectations clearly to students, staff, and whānau.
- Coordinate referrals to external agencies when required (e.g., Attendance Services).

6. Daily Attendance Procedures

The school maintains consistent daily systems to identify, record, and respond to absences.

6.1 Roll Taking

- Rolls are taken **twice daily by the classroom teacher**:
 - Morning roll: by **9:00am**
 - Afternoon roll: immediately after lunch
- All rolls must be submitted in the eAR within ten minutes of these times.

6.2 Unexplained Absences

1. By **9:30am**, the SMS generates a list of students with unexplained absences.
2. Administration staff send a **text message** to caregivers requesting an explanation.
3. If no response is received by **10:00am**, a **follow-up phone call** is made.
4. If still unresolved, the student is marked as **Truant (T)**.

6.3 Lateness

- Students arriving any time after the morning bell must report to the office.
- Lateness is coded as **L by office staff**, with the time of arrival recorded.

6.4 Medical Absences

- A **medical certificate is required** after three consecutive days of illness.
- Ongoing or repeated medical absences may trigger a wellbeing referral or a meeting with the Deputy Principal or SENCO.

6.5 Record-Keeping

- Teachers must record the reason for absence in SMS notes when known.
- Office staff will record the reason for absence in SMS notes when reason is provided through the office.
- Emailed or written explanations must be kept for reference.

7. School Attendance Rules (Education and Training Act 2020, s237A)

The school is legally required to:

- Keep accurate attendance for every student for each half-day the school is open.
- Maintain an absence notification process.
- Use Ministry-approved attendance codes.
- Maintain up-to-date contact information for parents and caregivers.
- Use a Ministry-approved Electronic Attendance Register unless exempt.

8. Attendance Codes and Application

Attendance codes are applied according to Ministry guidelines to ensure national consistency. Examples include:

Present

- **P** – Present
- **L** – Late (arrived after bell)
- **Q** – Off-site activity (school approved)
- **A** – Alternate Provision (Ministry approved)
- **N** – Present but out of class
- **D** – Present but has a medical appointment

Justified Absence

- **M** – Medical
- **J** – Explained and approved by the principal
- **U** – Stood down or suspended

Unjustified Absence

- **T** – Truant
- **E** – Explained but not approved
- **G** – Family holiday during term time (unjustified unless approved)

Special Circumstances

- Extended overseas absences over 15 weeks may require unenrolment.
- Cultural commitments will be discussed with whānau before coding.

9. School-Identified Attendance Barriers

Our school has several unique challenges that influence attendance patterns:

- Families who prioritise **cultural events, performing arts, or professional-level sports** may request extended time away.

- As a **rural school**, many families rely on School Bus Transport. If students miss the bus, they often cannot travel to school.
- Many families live **out of zone**, limiting walking or biking options.
- Families may undertake **overseas travel during term time**, sometimes for extended periods.
- Weather, road conditions, and agricultural work cycles can impact daily routines.

The school will respond to these by maintaining supportive communication while prioritising the importance of attendance.

10. Stepped Attendance Response (STAR)

The STAR framework provides clear, consistent actions at each threshold of days absent **within a term**. Actions escalate based on need to prevent absences from compounding.

0–4 Days Absent (Low Concern)

Purpose: Maintain regular attendance habits.

Actions:

- Teachers monitor patterns and follow up any unexplained absences.
- Admin ensures daily follow-up text and phone calls occur.
- Teachers reinforce positive attendance messages.
- No formal intervention required unless a pattern emerges.

5–9 Days Absent (Emerging Concern)

Purpose: Identify early barriers and prevent further absence.

Actions:

- Class teacher contacts parents to discuss reasons for absence.
- Email or phone call used depending on the situation.
- All actions recorded in SMS under Parent Contact.
- Consider early referral to SENCO if patterns emerge.

10–14 Days Absent (Moderate Concern)

Purpose: Diagnose underlying causes and create an Attendance Support Plan.

Actions:

- Team Leader arranges meeting with parents and student.

- Discuss barriers (e.g., transport, anxiety, health, family challenges).
- Develop a written support plan specifying responsibilities and actions.
- Use in-school supports (SENCO, Mental Health Clinician, BTI counsellor).
- Monitor attendance weekly.
- Update Board if patterns appear across multiple students.

15–19 Days Absent (Significant Concern)

Purpose: Intensify support and escalate if needed.

Actions:

- Send escalated formal notification by email and letter.
- Arrange a multi-agency meeting if required.
- Review and adjust attendance plan.
- Consider referral to Attendance Services.
- Senior Leadership monitors closely.

20+ Days Absent (Chronic Absence)

Purpose: Ensure statutory interventions are enacted.

Actions:

- Mandatory referral to Attendance Services.
- Board notified and actions recorded.
- Multi-agency involvement (Oranga Tamariki, police if relevant).
- Reintegration plan created for student's return if required.

11. Identifying and Responding to Underlying Causes of Absence

The school will adopt a proactive, mana-enhancing approach to identifying causes of absence.

Strategies include:

- Analysing attendance data weekly to identify patterns.
- Following up all unexplained or repeated absences.
- Meeting with whānau to understand context and build trust.

- Asking questions such as:
 - "What is making it hard for your child to attend?"
 - "What support would make attendance easier?"
- Offering support such as:
 - SENCO involvement
 - Counsellor or RTLB referral
 - Food support
 - Information about transport options
- Referring to external agencies when appropriate.

12. Monitoring and Measuring Progress

Attendance will be monitored at multiple levels to ensure progress toward targets.

Daily

- Rolls completed and checked.
- Follow-up of unexplained absences.

Weekly

- Teachers follow up unexplained absences.

Termly

- Attendance data reviewed by SLT.
- STAR thresholds analysed.
- MOE "Every Day Matters" report shared with staff.
- Meetings arranged for moderate–serious concern levels.
- Board receives attendance reports.

Annually

- Attendance targets reviewed.

- Attendance Management Plan updated as required.
- Annual recognition of good attendance.

13. Review Process

This Attendance Management Plan will be:

- **Reviewed annually**, or earlier if Ministry of Education requirements change.
- Next full review: **Term 4, 2026**.
- Feedback will be sought from staff, parents, and students.

14. Links and References

- [Stepped Attendance Response \(STAR\)](#)
- [Education and Training Act 2020](#)
- [Attendance Rules 2025](#)
- See School Attendance Policy and Procedure on School Docs

15. Approval

Signed:

_____ (Presiding Member) Date: _____

_____ (Principal) Date: _____