

School Attendance Plan 2026

Takapuna Primary School

Purpose

This Attendance Plan outlines our school's commitment to promoting regular attendance, recognising its direct link to student achievement, well-being, and successful integration into the school community.

This plan is developed in alignment with **The STAR (School Attendance Response)** framework provided by the Ministry of Education. The STAR:

- **Sets the direction** so that no student will be left to accumulate absences without an appropriate response to return them to regular attendance.
- Will help us achieve the **Government's target of 80% of students present for 90% of the term by 2030.**
- **Tells us what should happen when students do not attend school.** It sets clear expectations that school attendance is a priority.

This document serves as our school's specific response to the STAR direction, ensuring a proactive and supportive approach to attendance management, involving students, whānau, and staff to maximise attendance and address barriers effectively.

Vision

Every student is present, engaged, and thriving in their learning journey, supported by a collaborative whānau and school community that values consistent attendance.

Key Principles

- **Attendance is a Priority:** Consistent attendance is paramount for learning and well-being, aligning with the STAR's emphasis on making attendance a clear priority.
- **Shared Responsibility:** Students, whānau, school staff, and the Ministry of Education all play a vital role in ensuring regular attendance.
- **Early & Proportionate Response:** No student will be left to accumulate absences. Any student reaching a clearly defined threshold of days absent will trigger an appropriate and proportionate response, as per the STAR framework.
- **Supportive Approach:** We prioritise understanding the underlying reasons for non-attendance and providing appropriate support, recognising that prosecution of parents for absences is a last resort when appropriate support is offered and not taken up.
- **Positive Relationships:** Strong, trusting relationships between school, students, and whānau are fundamental to improving attendance.
- **Data-Informed Decisions:** Regular monitoring and analysis of attendance data will guide our interventions and strategies, informing responses under the STAR framework.
- **Whānau:** We recognise the crucial role of whānau and will work in partnership with them, respecting cultural contexts and individual circumstances, and expecting their participation in the support offered.

Roles and Responsibilities

Students

- Understand why attendance is important and that their parents, teachers, and leaders will support them to be at school and learning.
- Attend school regularly and on time.
- Communicate with a trusted adult at school if facing difficulties attending.

Whānau (Parents/Caregivers)

- Ensure their child attends school regularly and on time.
- Notify the school promptly of any absence, providing a reason and expected duration.
- Communicate any concerns or barriers to attendance with the school.
- **Participate in the supports offered** by the school, and work with the school, the Ministry, and other agencies where required, to return children to regular attendance.

Teachers

- Monitor daily attendance and punctuality for their classes.
- Follow up on unexplained absences promptly according to school procedures.
- Create a positive, engaging, and inclusive classroom environment that encourages attendance.
- Identify and report attendance concerns to relevant school leaders/support staff.
- Maintain open communication with whānau regarding student progress and attendance.

School Administration / Leadership Team

- Oversee the implementation and review of this school-specific Attendance Plan, guided by the STAR direction.
- Maintain accurate attendance records and coding aligned with Ministry expectations.
- Analyse attendance data to identify trends and students who meet the absence thresholds that trigger a STAR response.
- **Take action when student absence is a concern**, coordinating and facilitating attendance interventions and support services.
- Lead communication with whānau regarding attendance issues, ensuring they understand the seriousness of non-attendance and the support available.
- Liaise with the Ministry of Education and other external agencies when necessary, including formal referrals for persistent non-attendance as per STAR guidelines.
- Provide professional development for staff on attendance best practices and the STAR framework.

Ministry of Education

- Provides the overarching STAR framework and direction for school attendance.
- Will take action when student absence is a concern, collaborating with schools and whānau.
- Provides guidance and support to schools in implementing the STAR.
- May initiate prosecution of parents for absences if appropriate support is offered and not taken up, with specified exemptions (chronic illness, disability-related health conditions, genuine engagement).

The Government’s target is for **80% of students to attend regularly**, that is to attend school more than 90% of the time



Good Attendance 1-5 days per term

- **Positive School Climate:** Foster a welcoming, inclusive, and engaging school environment where students feel safe, valued, and motivated to attend.
- **Clear Communication:**
 - ◆ Communicate attendance expectations clearly to students and whānau, highlighting the STAR framework and its implications.
 - ◆ Regularly remind the school community of the Government’s target of 80% of students present for 90% of the term by 2030.
- **Engaging Curriculum:** Provide a rich, relevant, and engaging curriculum that caters to diverse learning styles and keeps students interested in attending.
- **Recognition & Celebration:** Acknowledge and celebrate good and improved attendance. Termly attendance awards given at assembly.
- **Punctuality Focus:** Implement clear routines and expectations for punctuality.
- **Easy Absence Reporting:** Establish clear and accessible procedures for whānau to report absences (e.g., dedicated phone line, email, school app).
- **Follow up on medical absences:** Office staff phone whānau and request medical certificate when medical absence is longer than three days.

Worrying Attendance up to 10 days per term

Targeted Interventions (Early Response - Triggered by Emerging Absences)

These strategies are for students showing emerging patterns of non-attendance, before reaching the formal STAR threshold for more intensive intervention.

- **Attendance Monitoring:** Close monitoring of attendance patterns.
- **Alerts of concern:**
 - ◆ Office staff to alert SLT of any students who have recorded worrying attendance.
- **Initial Whānau Contact:**
 - ◆ Office staff initiate email (templated) to whānau of all students that have recorded worrying attendance, raising awareness that their child's attendance is now considered to be worrying and what this means in relation to the attendance plan while also acknowledging that there may be explained reasons for the absences. This letter is sent via the SMS (HERO).
 - ◆ SLT to review attendance information for these learners and advise any next steps for students whose worrying attendance is of additional concern. This may include a conversation between the teacher and student to check-in informally and identify any emerging barriers or an individual email to the whānau to understand the reason for the absence(s), and offer initial support. *NOTE: Ensure the student's absence circumstances are understood before initiating any further communication.*
- **Recording:**
 - ◆ Create an electronic record of any response on HERO via RECORD RESPONSE ACTIVITY.

Concerning Attendance up to 15 days per term

- **Attendance Monitoring:** Continue close monitoring of attendance patterns.
- **Alerts of concern:**
 - ◆ Office staff to alert SLT of any students who have recorded concerning attendance.
- **Whānau Contact:**
 - ◆ Office staff initiate email (templated) to all whānau of students that have recorded concerning attendance, raising awareness that their child's attendance is now considered to be concerning and what this means in relation to the attendance plan, while also asking for a response from whānau. This letter is sent via the SMS (HERO).
 - ◆ SLT to review attendance information for these learners and advise any additional next steps for each alert of concern.
- **Next steps in addition to initial whānau contact may include:**
 - ◆ **Whānau contact:** SLT to send follow-up, individualised email to whānau including where there has been no response from initial contact. *NOTE: Ensure the student's absence circumstances are understood before initiating any further communication.*
 - ◆ **Problem-Solving:** SLT to work with the whānau to identify key cause of attendance concerns and collaboratively develop a plan to improve attendance. This will include what the whānau responsibilities are and ways in which the school will support.
 - ◆ **Follow-up Assessment:** Carry out a more in-depth gathering of information to understand any complex underlying factors impacting attendance (e.g. wellbeing, family challenges, bullying, challenges with learning) and then adjust the plan as required.
- **Recording:**
 - ◆ Create an electronic record of any response on HERO via RECORD RESPONSE ACTIVITY.

Very concerning attendance - more than 15 days per term

- **Attendance Monitoring:** Continue close monitoring of attendance patterns.
- **Alerts of concern:**
 - ◆ Office staff to alert SLT of any students who have recorded very concerning attendance.
- **Whānau contact:**
 - ◆ SLT to review the student's attendance information and send individualised email to whānau letting them know that the school has recorded very concerning attendance for their child. May also include a phone call or meeting to discuss this further. *NOTE: Ensure the student's absence circumstances are understood before initiating any communication.*
- **Formal Meeting with Whānau & School Leadership (in some cases):**
 - ◆ A structured meeting involving whānau and a representative from SLT, to discuss any formal concerns regarding persistent absences. This meeting will explicitly reference the STAR framework's expectations and the impact of the absences on student's learning and wellbeing. An individual attendance plan (IAP) will be developed with specific actions and responsibilities (including whānau participation) and ways the school will support.
- **Consistent Follow-up:**
 - ◆ Regular and consistent follow-up by SLT to monitor progress against the IAP and provide ongoing support.
- **Multi-Agency Collaboration/Referral to Ministry (in some cases):**
 - ◆ Referrals to and collaboration with external agencies (e.g., health professionals, social services, community support organizations) with whānau consent.
 - ◆ **Formal notification to the Ministry of Education** regarding the student's absence threshold being met and the initiated IAP/supports.
- **Legal Considerations:**
 - ◆ In cases of severe and persistent non-attendance where all appropriate support has been offered and not taken up by whānau, the school, in consultation with the Ministry of Education, may escalate to legal requirements regarding truancy, which *can include the prosecution of parents for absences*. This will not apply to students absent due to chronic illness/disability-related health conditions or those genuinely engaging with support.
- **Recording:**
 - ◆ Create an electronic record of any response on HERO via RECORD RESPONSE ACTIVITY.

Monitoring and Data

- **Daily Roll Call:** Accurate recording of attendance and lateness, using codes consistent with Ministry requirements.
- **Absence Coding:** Consistent use of appropriate codes for absences (e.g., justified, unjustified, sick, appointment).
- **Threshold Monitoring:** Automated alerts or regular checks to identify students reaching the STAR absence thresholds.
- **Regular Reporting:**
 - Regular reports to school leadership on overall attendance rates and identified students of concern, specifically noting those approaching or reaching STAR thresholds.
 - Termly reports to the Board of Trustees and the Ministry of Education on attendance trends and progress towards the 80% for 90% by 2030 target.
- **Data Analysis:** Identify patterns (e.g., specific days, times, student groups, reasons for absence) to inform targeted interventions and Ministry reporting.

- **Whānau Communication:** Regular communication with whānau regarding their child's attendance record and the implications of the STAR framework.

Communication

- **Welcome Pack:** Include this Attendance Plan, emphasising STAR expectations, in the new student/whānau welcome information
- **School Website/Newsletter:** Publish the attendance policy and procedures, with clear references to the STAR framework and national attendance targets.
- **Direct Contact:** Utilise phone calls, emails, and meetings for personalised communication regarding attendance concerns, clearly outlining support offered and expectations for whānau participation.
- **Parent-Teacher Interviews:** Discuss attendance as part of holistic student progress, reinforcing its importance.

Late Students:

Takapuna Primary School keeps a daily record of all students who are late. The Deputy Principal checks the lists each week to observe patterns of lateness with our students.

If lateness continues:

- STEP 1: The office team will send a general email reminder (Master kept with office)
- STEP 2: The teacher will send a personalised email to parent
- STEP 3: Deputy Principal will send an email to the family
- STEP 4: A letter from the school will be sent on school letterhead (Master kept with office)
- STEP 5: A meeting will be held with the Principal