ŌTAMARĀKAU SCHOOL

A Country School With A View To The Future.....

2026 Ōtamarākau School Attendance Management Plan

Purpose:

- To ensure that all students enrolled at Ōtamarākau School have the opportunity and support to attend school regularly, thereby improving learning outcomes, wellbeing, and equity.
- To align with the MOE's Attendance Management Plans in using the STAR framework in identifying, responding to, and reducing student absences.
- To clearly define roles, thresholds, interventions, communication processes, and supports for improving attendance.

Why Regular Attendance Matters:

Regular attendance is crucial for your child's learning, well-being, and long-term success. Consistent attendance ensures that tamariki have equitable access to the curriculum during their key developmental years (Years 1–8).

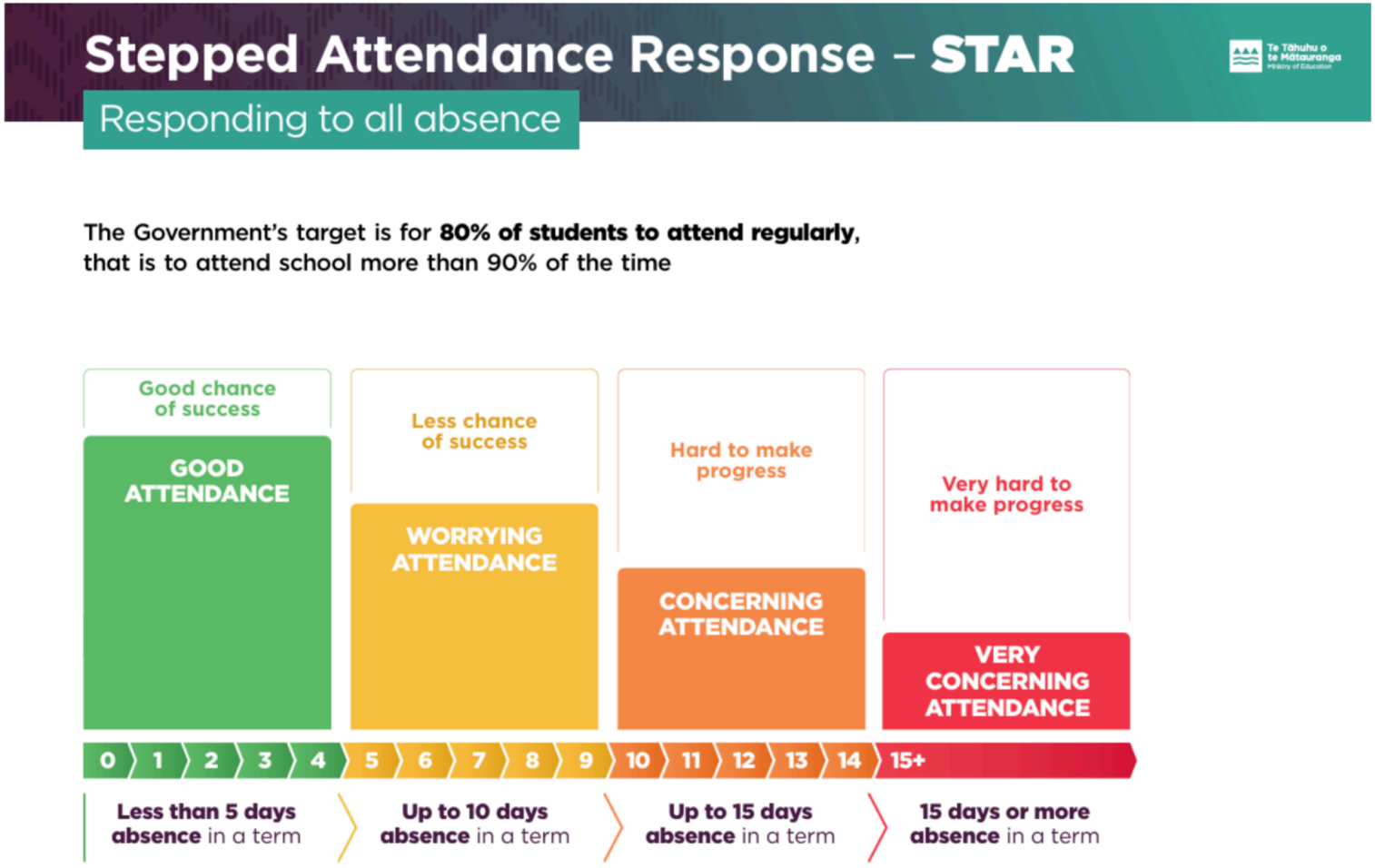
- There is a clear connection between going to school regularly and achieving well in the classroom.
- The plan supports your child's well-being, as attendance is a key indicator.
- Attendance is a shared commitment; parents are responsible for ensuring their child attends school every day.
- The school aims to promote a positive culture where every day matters.
- The Ministry of Education's national goal is for 80% of students to attend school 90% of the time by 2030.

Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) Framework

Ōtamarākau School follows the STAR framework, developed by the Ministry of Education in conjunction with schools.

The STAR helps all stakeholders to understand what should happen when students do not attend school.

Under the STAR framework, any student who reaches a clearly defined threshold of days absent will trigger an appropriate and proportionate response from the school or the MOE. Below is an overview of each tier, and following that, how each stakeholder is alerted and supported when students do not attend school:



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

Stepped Attendance Response - STAR

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

Ōtamarākau School Attendance Codes 2026

Present	**On-site**	**P** - Present	• In class and present
		L - Late	• Late to class and present
		N - Present but out of class	• Internal appointment • On-site school-based activity eg. cultural / sporting events • Temporary removal from class • Leader meeting • Time in sickbay
	Off Site	**D** - Approved external appointment	If a student cannot attend an appointment out of hours e.g. • Medical appointments (doctor, dentist) • Specialist appointments • Appointments with other professionals (e.g., counsellor, social worker). • Transition visits with other schools
		Q - Board approved offsite learning	• Tangihana • Cultural / Arts / Sports event arranged by school or with principal approval) • Performing / Playing / participating in a regional or national school event • “Overseas BUT committing to a learning program with principal approval • Attending an offsite programme for IEP / PIP
		A - Alternative provisions	Students present at • Health school
Absent	**Justified Absences**	**M -** Illness / Medical	• Absent due to illness - Parent has informed school
		J - Explained and approved	• Family emergencies (eg loved ones dying / very ill) • School closure due to no power or water • Teacher strike • Approval of students staying home due to health and safety eg lacking a Safe staff to student ratio (widespread illness etc)
		U - Stood down or suspended	• Stood down or suspended

	Unjustified Absences	**T** - Truant	• Student is absent without explanation
		E - Explained but not approved	Absent without justifiable reason eg, • Didn't come to school to get out of a sports day • Family having an 'extra long' weekend • Went to watch siblings school production
		G - Holiday During term time	• 'Holiday taken. The student and family will not commit to a learning Programme, or without principal approval of request.
		? - Unknow (temporary)	• This is a TEMPORARY code. This will be updated once the reason is specified.

* Q – Board Approved Offsite Learning

Families seeking a "Q" attendance code for Board Approved Offsite Learning on a term time holiday must write to the Principal at least one week before the intended trip. The written request should outline the learning that will take place during the trip.

While some learning may be holistic or experiential in nature, there is an expectation that students will also engage in daily reading and some formal learning activities. Examples include maintaining a travel diary, completing mathematics or literacy tasks, or working from a workbook or textbook (e.g., one purchased from Paper Plus).

Approval for the "Q" code will be at the Principal's discretion, based on whether the proposed learning meets the threshold for recognised educational value.

**Teachers are not expected to prepare work for students who are absent for family holidays or trips of personal choice. Their professional responsibility is to plan and deliver high-quality teaching and learning programmes for students who are present at school. Teachers will not be required, and should not be asked to create additional work, resources, or learning packs to accommodate family holidays. Any learning undertaken during the time away is the responsibility of the family.

⬇ Day to Day Operations and proactive steps for Atendance		
Activities included in the STAR	How we Implement at Ōtamarākau School	Who is responsible
● Lunchtime and interest clubs ● Survey students and parents to support effective teaching practice and engagement	● Created lunchtime clubs linked to student interests (e.g., art, sport, lego, ngahere, music). Student leaders assist. ● Prompt parents and students to share their thoughts on teaching practices and engagement during parent-teacher interviews	● SLT and Teachers
● Peer support / Tuakana-Teina	● Buddying senior ākonga with new entrants and transition students to build early belonging and condence	● Ruma Kiwi and Ruma Kererū
●Relationships First	● Kiwi Can and Mitey Programme framework, trauma-informed practice and restorative conversations underpin all attendance work.	● All staff
● Assess attendance history of new students and share attendance history when students move between schools.	● Contact previous school to request attendance records ● Identify any issues or trends in attendance history	● Administration officer
● Survey students and parents to support effective teaching practice and engagement.	● Prompt parents and students to share their thoughts on teaching practices and engagement during parent-teacher interviews.	● School leadership
● School Leadership and Boards actively minimise disruptions to the school day and week e.g. use callback days, parent teacher meetings held after school	● School boards and school leadership prioritise school-hours to be for learning.	● School leadership and School Board
● Support students to continue learning if unable to attend school every day, including using Ministry approved well-being or transitional plans, or health schools where appropriate.	● Set alternative activities (such as our online learning page on the school website) for students who cannot be at school on a short-term basis	● Teacher and outside providers if necessary

● Rich local curriculum	● Use authentic learning such as Ngahere Kura, Ngati Makino Moana, Awa, Maunga, Marae, Agricultural Days, EOTC trips, and class camps to make learning purposeful and exciting.	● Teachers & SLT
● Weekly attendance updates	● HERO posts comparing Ōtamarakau School attendance with national averages to build collective awareness.	● Principal
● Open dialogue	● Teachers contact parents after 3 days of absence (unless notified by parent prior) to check in and offer support.	● Teaching Staff
● Wellbeing focus	● Connect attendance with pastoral care through LSC and SENCO support; use Health School or transition plans for long term medical absences	● SLT & SENCO
● Professional learning	● Staff PD on attendance drivers, trauma informed practice, and communication with whānau	● SLT

⬇ For students with less than 5 days absence in a school term		
Activities included in the STAR	How we Implement at Ōtamarākau School	Who is responsible
● Clear communication to parents on attendance expectations on enrolment, at the start of school year, and each term ● Communicate to parents what steps the school will take in the event their child is absent from school ● Communicate good attendance habits to students and parents	● Use enrollment forms, newsletters, website or other communication methods to set expectations and provide guidance to parents	● School Leadership
● Monitor attendance ● Communicate to parents about every absence ● Maintain contact details of parents	● Have procedures in place (and use HERO) to quickly identify all student absences and communicate these to parents	● Administration officer
● Provide students with regular updates on their own attendance	● Provide regular reporting via HERO and classroom discussions	● Teachers

● Provide parent with regular updates on school wide attendance	● Provide regular reporting via HERO on school wide attendance vs nationwide	● Principal
● Report regularly to parents on attendance of their child	● Notify every absence, providing weekly, or term reports through HERO	● Teachers and Administration officer
● Support students getting to school	● Communicate to parents the supports available to assist them to get their children to school	● Principal
● Use school level approaches to promote good social and learning environment	● Continue to utilise trauma informed practices, Kiwican, Mighty, lunchtime clubs etc	● School Leadership and Teachers
Notice for community: Attendance Letter		

⬇ For students with up to 10 days absence in a school term		
Activities included in the STAR	How we Implement at Ōtamarākau School	Who is responsible
● Send formal notification and contact parent/guardian to discuss reasons for absence	● Utilise templates and resources provided by the Ministry of Education	● Teacher or Principal
● Support students to catch up missed learning where required	● Identify missed learning objectives and providing notes or activities to bring student back up to speed in class	● Teacher
● Use in-school resources as appropriate to remove barriers e.g. counselor, 2nd hand uniform, SENCO, NGO Services	● Make parents and students aware of additional resources and support to access them	● School Leadership
Notice for community: Attendance Letter		

⬇ For students with up to 15 days absence in a school term		
Activities included in the STAR	How we Implement at Ōtamarākau School	Who is responsible
● Send escalated formal notification to parents ● Hold meeting to analyse reasons for absence and to collaborate on a support plan ● Develop and implement a plan tailored to the reasons and circumstances around the child's absence	● Utilise templates and resources provided by the Ministry of Education	● Teacher and/or School leadership
● Use in-school resources as appropriate to remove barriers and request support from Ministry or other agencies as needed	● Engage with the Ministry of Education attendance services to find out about options for support	● Principal
● ASA referral (Attendance services)	● ENROL application	● Principal
Notice for community: Attendance Letter		

⬇ For students with up to 15 days or more absence in a school term		
Activities included in the STAR	How we Implement at Ōtamarākau School	Who is responsible
● Send warning notice and make contact to arrange meeting with parents	● Utilise templates and resources provided by the Ministry of Education	● School leadership
● ASA Referral (Attendance Services)	● ENROL Application	● School leadership
● Escalate to multi-agency response ● Participate in multi-agency response	● Refer to Ministry of Education attendance services or other agencies ● Support access to services and collaborating with specialist	● School leadership
● Implement and monitor improvement plan	● Hold everyone accountable for their part in the plan, and take action quickly where expectations aren't being met	● School leadership
● Refer to the Ministry to consider action, including prosecution, when supports are offered and not taken up	● Engage with Ministry of Education to discuss options available and required steps to take	● School leadership

● When criteria is met, follow prescribed processes to enroll the student	● Update ENROL as soon as school is made aware a student will not be returning and complete a non-enrolled notification Share information with other agencies	● School leadership and Admin
Notice for community: Attendance Letter		

Other Communication and Whole-School Strategies:

● HERO and Facebook Updates: Regular school-wide posts showing overall attendance data, including the % of students attending more than 90% of the time, celebrating positive trends and promoting attendance awareness.

● End-of-Term Attendance Analysis:
○ Carried out by the Deputy Principal.
○ Includes discussion of attendance patterns, trends, and concerns.
○ Shared with Team Leaders, then with Classroom Teachers to reflect on actions taken and further steps needed.
○ Every Day Matters Report shared with Team Leaders.

● Team Attendance Goals and Rewards:
○ As a staff set termly attendance goals. This could be an overall attendance OR absence rate analysis
○ Incentives and rewards are used to promote better attendance and foster a sense of collective responsibility.

● Weekly Review of HERO attendance alerts - all interventions recorded on the student's Pastoral Care notes on HERO. Ensure contact home is done.

● Regular updates are shared with classroom teachers.

● Staff Huii - discuss students of concern and what is being done.

Procedures/Supporting Documentation

Attendance Management Procedure (AMP) - Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) - See below.

The Ōtamarakau School policies and procedures for attendance can be accessed via SchoolDocs https://www.schooldocs.co.nz/

Username: 1872
Password: ota1872

Board of Trustees Attendance Responsibilities

Ōtamarākau School Board of Trustees (BoT) is responsible for taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the school's students attend the school when it is open for instruction.

The BoT 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 (STAR) 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 Attendance Responsibilities

- report attendance to the School Board once a term showing the analysis of data, trends and narratives
- adhere to the STAR thresholds
- review the plan termly after considering the Every Day Matters Report

Whānau Attendance 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

https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2020/38/en/latest/#LMS170676

Education and Training Amendment Act 2025

https://www.education.govt.nz/our-work/information-releases/issue-specific-information-releases/education-and-training-amendment-bill-no-2

Attendance Management Plan Regulations

https://www.education.govt.nz/education-professionals/schools-year-0-13/attendance/attendance-management-plans