Taradale High School

Be determined. Aim high. *Piki ake. Kia maia.*

Attendance Management Plan

Attendance Objectives and Strategic Priorities

Our tamariki need to be attending school as much as possible to receive a full education. We want our tamariki to become confident, capable and resilient adults, and consistent attendance at kura each day plays a vital role in making that possible. Each day they are away makes this more challenging. For their learning and wellbeing, we work to maximise attendance.

Our strategic goals are achieving excellence, building identity and maximising engagement. Under the goal of achieving excellence, creating an attendance strategy is a key action for this year. Our measure is that regular termly attendance will improve and chronic absence each term will reduce.

Our current attendance data shows:

Term 3 2025

- 44% Regular attendance (90% of the time)
- 34% Irregular absence (80-89% of the time)
- 12% Moderate absence (70-79% of the time)
- 10% Chronic absence (less than 69% of the time)

Our target is that regular attendance will show improvement each term by 5 percentage points and chronic absence each term will reduce by 3 percentage points.

Attendance Policy

Student Attendance

Taradale High School is transitioning towards the new attendance model and attendance management plan required by the Ministry of Education. This policy will be updated to meet the new requirements before term 1 2026.

At Taradale High school, our attendance procedures ensure students are accounted for during school hours and activities as well as emergency events. This allows school staff to identify and respond to student attendance concerns. We recognise the importance of regular attendance to support student welfare and help students achieve their educational potential.

As required by the Education and Training Act 2020 (s 35), 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 the Ministry of Education. The board takes all reasonable steps to ensure all students enrolled at Taradale High School School attend school when it is open (Education and Training Act, s 36).

Taradale High School records and monitors attendance using set attendance procedures. We have annual targets for student attendance, and work with students, parents and caregivers, staff, and external agencies where necessary to improve our levels of student attendance. We share our attendance information with the Ministry of Education, which ensures we receive correct funding and staffing entitlements. We keep our attendance registers for seven years from the date of last entry.

Parent/Guardian and student responsibilities

Parents and guardians have legal obligations to ensure their children attend school (Education and Training Act, s 244). We expect parents/guardians to:

- notify the school as soon as possible if their child is going to be late or absent
- arrange appointments and trips outside school hours or during school holidays where possible
- work with the school to manage attendance concerns.

We share attendance expectations with students and their parents/guardians and caregivers and require students to be present and attend classes on time.

Parents/Guardians may ask for their child to be excused from certain areas of the curriculum for religious or cultural reasons. The principal reviews these requests and considers the preferences of the student. The school provides supervision for any students who do not participate in certain areas of the curriculum.

Attendance Procedures

Taradale High School is transitioning towards the new attendance model and attendance management plan required by the Ministry of Education. Changes will be made before term 1 2026.

Taradale High School has procedures to record and monitor attendance, and to identify and follow up concerns. We share attendance expectations with students and their parents/caregivers, and staff are responsible for reminding students of these expectations.

Recording attendance

We record attendance accurately to ensure all students are accounted for, including for emergency situations. The school provides attendance data to the Ministry of Education each day, as required by the Education and Training Act 2020 and Education (School Attendance) Regulations 2024. We monitor absence patterns using our student management system and notify parents/caregivers of any concerns.

Classroom teachers, learning support staff, and office staff work together to ensure attendance is recorded correctly. Relievers, itinerant teachers, and specialist teachers provide attendance information as necessary to the relevant teacher, or directly to the school office.

We record students as present or absent using Ministry of Education attendance codes. An absence may be justified (e.g. for medical reasons) or unjustified (e.g. for an unapproved holiday or other unsatisfactory reason), and we record this in our attendance register.

Monitoring attendance

The school office receives attendance information from classroom teachers and/or relievers, itinerant, or specialist teachers, and is responsible for checking and updating attendance information (e.g. due to students arriving late or going home early). Office staff follow up absences, monitor for changes or trends in student attendance, and coordinate with relevant staff as needed.

Staff are encouraged to report any attendance concerns to the school administrator.

The Ministry of Education collects attendance data from the school, including:

- the proportion of students who **attend regularly**

- students with five or more full days of unjustified absence in a term
- absences remaining unexplained at the end of each week.

Student absences

Parents/Caregivers are expected to notify the school as soon as possible (before or during the school day) if their child will be absent. A reason for absence must be provided no later than the end of the school week. Taradale High School will contact parents/caregivers directly if no explanation is provided for student absence.

Under the Education and Training Act 2020 (s 45), the principal may allow a student to be absent from school for up to five days if there is a justified reason for absence (e.g. due to illness, a funeral or tangihanga, or other approved reason at the discretion of the school). For planned absences, requests must be made to the principal at least one week before the planned event.

The principal has discretion to approve or deny requests, based on criteria including:

- the benefit to education for the student (including qualifications and experience of course providers as relevant)
- the length of time away from regular school programmes that the activity will require.

If a student does not arrive at school or goes missing during the day (including from an EOTC event), we check there are no errors in how attendance information was recorded or updated (e.g. if a student has gone home due to illness). If necessary, we follow up with parents/guardians and/or emergency contacts. We may also follow our **Missing Student Procedure**.

Following up unexplained absences

Taradale High School takes all reasonable steps to ensure students attend school while it is open, including following up unexplained absences.

Our follow-up actions may include:

- analysing attendance data for patterns of absence
- contacting parents/caregivers to outline attendance expectations
- meeting with students and their parents/caregivers to discuss strategies for improving attendance
- discussing school programmes with relevant staff to better meet the needs of students at risk of disengagement.

Under the Education and Training Act (s 48), the board may appoint an attendance officer who has authority to follow up absences with students and their parents/caregivers directly.

We may also refer students with extended or persistent absences to **Attendance services**.

School Practice

How we set and reinforce attendance expectations with families and students.

- At enrolment time, expectations and procedures for attendance are explained to caregivers and students.
- During assemblies students who have high attendance are celebrated and there are prizes and awards for attendance.
- Fortnightly pānui to whānau reinforce the importance of attendance.

Process for recording attendance

- Teachers complete the school roll between 9am and 9.30am.
- If rolls aren't completed by 9.30am our office person reminds the teacher that it needs to be completed.

- If the office person is away, another administrative staff member fills this function.

Steps for following up on unexplained absences

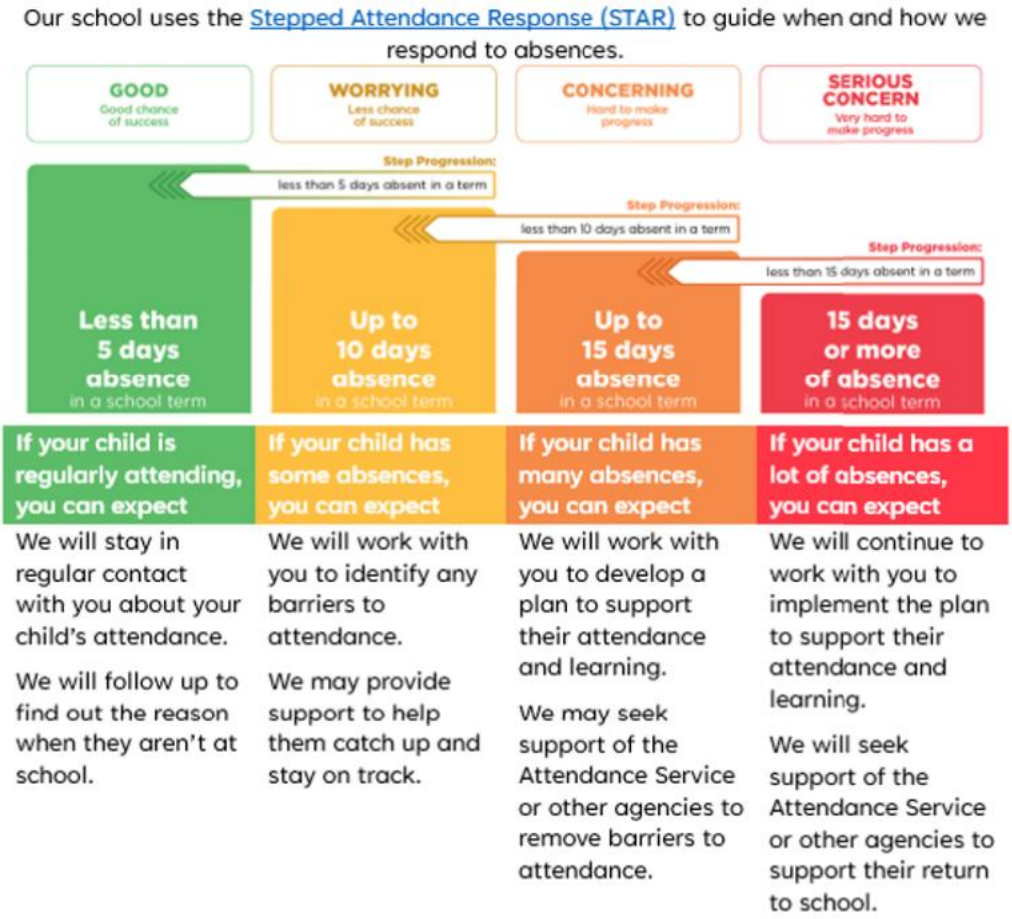
- Office person looks at the student who have been marked unknown and reconcile those with messages from whānau.
- Those who are not explained are contacted by the office person and the school roll marked accordingly
- When reasons given might be unjustified or truant these are referred to the Tumuaki to make the coding decision.
- Ongoing sickness may require medical certificates.
- Whānau connect person will be casually employed for home visits.
- Ongoing absences that are unjustified are sent letters.
- In cases of chronic absence, the attendance service (Te Whanganui a Ōrotū) is engaged.

Monitoring practices

- Twice termly the Tumuaki leads discussion with staff to identify attendance patterns and barriers.
- Where possible barriers are minimised and problem-solved with whānau.

Use of Thresholds

- We use the Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) thresholds for the number of days a student is absent in a term to identify concerning absence or patterns of absence that require a response.
- Our response is guided by the STAR booklet: Stepped Attendance Response - STAR
- We use the communication templates provided by the Ministry of Education to guide our communications at different thresholds.
- This is the link to those templates: Communicating with whānau
- At times when individual attendance plans are required to support ākonga, we use the Ministry of Education template. Individual Attendance Plans



Supporting Students Returning to School

- To mitigate loss of learning classroom teachers will differentiate practice.
- Kaiako will operate a positive and inclusive classroom culture to welcome students back to school and re-establish friendships.
- Depending on the level of absence, ongoing monitoring by the school will enable early response to emerging learning or wellbeing issues.
- As part of good practice, kaiako will ensure that whānau and parents of returning students are kept informed of reintegration progress.

Monitoring and Measuring Progress

- The principal is the senior leader who is responsible for attendance improvement in the school.
- Principal and office administrator have timely discussions about coding decisions as they arise.
- The principal will report attendance data twice termly to the Board of Trustees.
- The Team will review progress and results each term. This will form the basis of next steps for the following term.
- The principal will provide a termly attendance report to the Board of Trustees based on the analysis of data, trends, and narratives.
- The office administrator and tumuaki follow up with kaiako about interactions with whanau of absent tamariki.