



Rangitaiki School

ATTENDANCE HANDBOOK

He Iwitahi e mahi ana - Working together as one

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Legal Obligation

Students of registered schools required to attend whenever schools are open

- (1) Except as provided in this Act, a student is required to attend a registered school whenever it is open if the student—
 - (a) is required to be enrolled at a registered school;
 - (b) is aged 5 years and is enrolled at a registered school.
- (2) A board or sponsor must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school's students attend the school when it is open.
- (3) For the purposes of this section, a student attends a school on any day if, on the day,
 - (a) it has been open for instruction for 4 hours or more; and
 - (b) the student has been present for 4 hours or more when it was open for instruction

Rationale

Consistent attendance is a critical factor in student achievement and wellbeing. Data continues to show a strong correlation between low attendance and low academic outcomes—students who are regularly present in class are more likely to engage in learning and achieve success.

Under New Zealand law, all students aged 6 to 16 are required to attend school every day. Ensuring this happens is a shared responsibility across our school community. When students attend regularly, they are more likely to feel connected to their peers, teachers, and learning environment—key elements that support both academic and personal growth.

There are many reasons why students may not attend school, and improving attendance requires a proactive, coordinated approach. This handbook outlines the roles and responsibilities of all staff, as well as the targeted strategies we will implement as part of our commitment to the Stepped Attendance Response Plan. Our collective goal is to raise overall attendance to at least 80%, with a focus on early identification, timely intervention, and strong relationships with whānau.

Accurate attendance marking is not only a professional expectation—it is a legal requirement. Attendance data is used for a range of purposes, including legal matters such as custody arrangements, and is now automatically uploaded daily to the Ministry of Education. This makes accuracy and timeliness more important than ever.

By working together and following the steps outlined in this plan, we can ensure that every student at Mihi School has the opportunity to succeed through regular, meaningful engagement in learning.

Roles and Responsibilities

Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Expected to attend every day, arrive on time, and remain on-site during the school day.</i>
Whānau and Caregivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Ensure regular student attendance.</i>• <i>Inform the school of absences on the day.</i>
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Mark attendance accurately at the beginning of the day and after lunchtime.</i>• <i>Use correct codes to mark attendance.</i>• <i>Engage students in fulfilling purposeful learning.</i>• <i>Provide opportunities for students to make up for missed work. Identify concerning patterns of absence.</i>• <i>Raise attendance concerns with the Principal.</i>• <i>Send absence texts via facebook messenger in the morning.</i>
Office Admin	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Send letters home if requested by the principal.</i>
Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Monitor attendance data.</i>• <i>Contact whānau when concerns are present (via letter/phone call).</i>• <i>Lead the attendance strategy, support interventions, and oversee referrals to external agencies.</i>• <i>Coordinate with external agencies as needed.</i>• <i>Provide data to the School Board in the Principal's report each meeting.</i>

Attendance Procedures

Teaching staff	DAILY <ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Accurately (using correct codes) mark the roll twice daily - in the morning and after lunch.</i> WEEKLY <ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Monitor attendance patterns and refer concerns to the Principal.</i> REGULARLY <ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Support catch-up learning for returning students.</i>
Teaching Staff	DAILY <ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Support roll compliance.</i>● <i>Contact whānau for unexplained absences - via text on School messenger system and then a phone call in the afternoon if no explanation has been received.</i>● <i>Review of attendance codes used - no (?) in the afternoon</i> WEEKLY <ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Review attendance - highlight to the Principal any concerns.</i>
Principal	DAILY <ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Track student attendance and flag concerning trends.</i> REGULARLY <ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Communicate with whānau about attendance patterns, both good and concerning.</i>● <i>Lead responses to chronic absence - including letters home at 5, 10 and 15 days absent in a term as these benchmarks are reached.</i>● <i>Refer students to the Attendance Service and contact the Ministry of Education after 15+ days of absence.</i>

Attendance Thresholds and Responses

Green Zone ($\geq 90\%$)	Yellow Zone (80–89%) 5+ days	Orange Zone (70–79%) 10+ days	Red Zone ($< 70\%$) 15+ days
<p><i>Teacher and Principal affirms attendance, minimal intervention required.</i></p>	<p><i>Principal contacts whānau.</i></p> <p><i>A meeting is offered to discuss factors for absences.</i></p> <p><i>May introduce an attendance plan.</i></p>	<p><i>Principal contacts whānau and a meeting is requested.</i></p> <p><i>Attendance plan created.</i></p> <p><i>Attendance agencies may be contacted.</i></p>	<p><i>Principal contacts whānau and a meeting is required.</i></p> <p><i>Attendance agencies and MOE contacted.</i></p> <p><i>Attendance plan created.</i></p>

KEY:
 T - Teacher
 OA - Office Admin
 P - Principal

ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT PLAN: FLOW DIAGRAM

	GREEN: 90% attendance (up to 5 days absent per term)	YELLOW: 80% attendance (5+ days absent per term)	ORANGE: 70% attendance (10+ days absent per term)	RED: Less than 70% attendance (15+ days absent per term)
Step 1	DAILY: T marks roll - am/pm			
Step 2	DAILY (am): OA/Principal sends text to unnotified absences			
Step 3	DAILY (pm): T/ Pchecks register - codes used			
Step 4	DAILY (pm): OA/Principal phones unnotified absences.Record in pastoral			
Step 5	WEEKLY: OA review attendance - highlight any concerns to the Principal.			
Step 6		DAILY: P Track attendance		
Step 7		THE FOLLOWING AT 5 DAYS ABSENT: P Whānau contact via letter		
Step 8		P Meeting with whānau offered		
Step 9		P Attendance plan may be developed		
Step 10			DAILY: P Track attendance	
Step 11			THE FOLLOWING AT 10 DAYS ABSENT: P Whānau contact via letter	
Step 12			P Meeting requested	
Step 13			P Attendance plan developed	
Step 14			P Attendance agencies may be contacted	
Step 15				DAILY: P Track attendance
Step 16				THE FOLLOWING AT 15 DAYS ABSENT: P Whānau contact via letter
Step 17				P Meeting required
Step 18				P Attendance plan developed
Step 19				P Attendance agencies and MOE contacted

Code Group	Sub-Group	Code	Examples
Present	On-site	P – Present	In class and present
		L – Late to class	Late to class and present
		V – Unsupervised exam study	Unsupervised exam study (ON-SITE)
		N – Present but out of class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Internal appointment ● On-site school-based activity e.g. cultural / sporting events like Sports Day. ● Temporary removal from class ● Prefect meeting ● Time in sickbay
	Off-site	D – Approved external appointment	<p>If a student cannot attend an appointment out of hours e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Medical appointments (doctor, dentist), ● specialist appointments ● appointments with other professionals (e.g., counsellor, social worker).
		Q – Board approved offsite learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tangihanga ● Cultural / Arts/ Sports event ● Performing / Playing / participating in a regional or national school event ● Overseas BUT committing to a learning program. ● Driving licence test ● Wellbeing plan or flexible learning plan = Q on days off ● Attending an offsite program for IEP ● Attending work placement or Gateway placement ● Rostering home for group or year levels. NOTE: work needs to be available

Code Group	Sub-Group	Code	Examples
		A – Alternative provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students present at <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Alternative Education ○ Teen parent unit ○ STP program (Trades) ○ Health school
Absent	Justified Absences	M – Illness / Medical absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Absent due to illness (includes health-related e.g. anxiety)
		J – Explained and approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Family arrangement ● Overseas holiday (no work or commitment to [work])
		U – Stood down or suspended	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stood down or suspended
	Exam Leave	X – Exam Leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Study leave off-site (not included in MOE attendance calculations)
	Unjustified Absences	T – Truant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student is absent without explanation
		E – Explained but not approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Absent without justifiable reason e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Didn't come to school because of sports day ○ Went to watch siblings school production
		G – Holiday during term time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Holiday taken. Student refuses to commit to study or learning program.
		? – Unknown reason (temporary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This is a TEMPORARY code. This will be updated once the reason is specified.



Rangitaiki School

Attendance Management Plan

Communication – Monitoring -- Support – Reporting – Teaching and Modelling

For students with less than 5 days absence in a school term - 90% + attendance

Goal - To maintain and reinforce regular attendance patterns

Activities	What do we do?	How do we do it?	Who is responsible?
<u>Communication</u>	<p><i>Clear communication to parents on attendance expectations on enrolment, at the start of school year, and each term</i></p> <p><i>Communicate to parents what steps the school will take in the event their child is absent from school</i></p>	<p><i>Include STAR in enrolment packs - include attendance codes</i></p> <p><i>Attendance reminders included in the newsletter at the start of each term</i></p> <p><i>Display STAR and attendance codes on noticeboard and on website</i></p>	<p><i>Principal</i></p> <p><i>Office Admin</i></p>
<u>Monitoring</u>	<p><i>Monitor attendance</i></p>	<p><i>Roll is marked by the teacher in the morning and again after lunch - using correct codes</i></p> <p><i>Codes used are checked</i></p> <p><i>am - Text sent to unnotified absences</i></p> <p><i>pm - Phone call to whānau to follow up unnotified</i></p>	<p><i>Teacher</i></p> <p><i>Office Admin</i></p>

	<p><i>Communicate to parents about every absence</i></p> <p><i>Maintain contact details of parents</i></p>	<p><i>absences</i></p> <p><i>Reminder in the newsletter at beginning and middle of year to keep contact details up to date</i></p>	<p><i>Office Admin</i></p> <p><i>Office Admin</i></p> <p><i>Principal</i></p>
<u>Reporting</u>	<p><i>Report regularly to parents on attendance of their child</i></p> <p><i>Report Attendance levels to School Board</i></p>	<p><i>Mid and end of Year reports communicate attendance levels</i></p> <p><i>Included in Principal's Report for each meeting</i></p>	<p><i>Teacher</i></p> <p><i>Principal</i></p>
<u>Support</u>	<p><i>Support students to catch up missed learning where required</i></p>	<p><i>Ensure that time is spent with students to catch up</i></p>	<p><i>Teacher</i></p>
<u>Teaching and modelling</u>	<p><i>Use school values to promote positive social and learning environments</i></p>	<p><i>Recognising and celebrating successes with wider community</i></p>	<p><i>Teacher</i></p> <p><i>Principal</i></p>



Rangitaiki School

Attendance Management Plan

Communication – Monitoring -- Support – Reporting – Teaching and Modelling

For students with 5+ days absence in a school term - 80% attendance

Goal -To restore student's attendance to above 90%

Activities	What do we do?	How do we do it?	Who is responsible?
<p><u>Communication</u></p>	<p><i>Send formal notification and contact parent/ guardian to discuss reasons for absences</i></p> <p><i>Communicate to parents what steps the school will take in the event their child continues to have regular absences from school</i></p>	<p><i>Letter home - include STAR information</i></p> <p><i>Offer meeting to discuss factors that are contributing to absences</i></p> <p><i>Develop attendance plan if needed</i></p>	<p><i>Principal</i></p>
<p><u>Monitoring</u></p>	<p><i>Monitor attendance</i></p>	<p><i>Roll is marked by the teacher in the morning and again after lunch - using correct codes</i></p> <p><i>SMS system - email sent to Principal on 5th unjustified absence in a term.</i></p> <p><i>Codes used are checked</i></p>	<p><i>Teacher</i></p> <p><i>Principal</i></p>

	<p><i>Communicate to parents about every absence</i></p> <p><i>Maintain contact details of parents</i></p>	<p><i>am - Text sent to unnotified absences</i> <i>pm - Phone call to whānau to follow up unnotified absences</i> <i>Reminder in the newsletter at beginning and middle of year to keep contact details up to date</i></p>	<p><i>T/Office Admin</i></p> <p><i>Office Admin</i></p> <p><i>Office Admin</i> <i>Principal</i></p>
<u>Reporting</u>	<p><i>Report regularly to parents on attendance of their child</i></p> <p><i>Report Attendance levels to School Board</i></p>	<p><i>Mid and end of Year reports communicate attendance levels</i></p> <p><i>Included in Principal's Report for each meeting</i></p>	<p><i>Teacher</i></p> <p><i>Principal</i></p>
<u>Support</u>	<p><i>Support students to catch up missed learning where required</i></p> <p><i>Support whānau to get students to school</i></p>	<p><i>Ensure that time is spent with students to catch up</i></p> <p><i>Meeting offered</i> <i>Attendance Plan may be developed</i></p>	<p><i>Teacher</i></p> <p><i>Principal</i></p>
<u>Teaching and modelling</u>	<p><i>Use school values to promote positive social and learning environments</i></p>	<p><i>Recognising and celebrating successes with wider community</i></p>	<p><i>Teacher</i> <i>Principal</i></p>



Rangitaiki School

Attendance Management Plan

Communication – Monitoring -- Support – Reporting – Teaching and Modelling

For students with 10+ absence in a school term - 70% attendance

Goal - to re-engage students and increase attendance.

Activities	What do we do?	How do we do it?	Who is responsible?
<u>Communication</u>	<p><i>Send escalated formal notification and contact parent/ guardian to discuss reasons for absences</i></p> <p><i>Communicate to parents what steps the school will take in the event their child continues to have regular absences from school</i></p>	<p><i>Letter home - include STAR information</i></p> <p><i>Request meeting to discuss factors that are contributing to absences</i></p> <p><i>Develop attendance plan</i></p> <p><i>Contact attendance agencies if required</i></p>	<p><i>Principal</i></p>
<u>Monitoring</u>	<p><i>Monitor attendance</i></p>	<p><i>Roll is marked by the teacher in the morning and again after lunch - using correct codes</i></p> <p><i>SMS system - email sent to Principal on 10th unjustified absence in a term.</i></p> <p><i>Codes used are checked</i></p> <p><i>am - Text sent to unnotified absences</i></p> <p><i>pm - Phone call to whānau to follow up unnotified absences</i></p> <p><i>Reminder in the newsletter at beginning and</i></p>	<p><i>Teacher</i></p> <p><i>Principal</i></p> <p><i>Office Admin</i></p>

	<p><i>Communicate to parents about every absence</i></p> <p><i>Maintain contact details of parents</i></p>	<p><i>middle of year to keep contact details up to date</i></p>	<p><i>Office Admin</i></p> <p><i>Office Admin Principal</i></p>
<u>Reporting</u>	<p><i>Report regularly to parents on attendance of their child</i></p> <p><i>Report Attendance levels to School Board</i></p>	<p><i>Mid and end of Year reports communicate attendance levels</i></p> <p><i>Included in Principal's Report for each meeting</i></p>	<p><i>Teacher</i></p> <p><i>Principal</i></p>
<u>Support</u>	<p><i>Support students to catch up missed learning where required</i></p> <p><i>Support whānau to get students to school</i></p> <p><i>Engage with outside agencies</i></p>	<p><i>Ensure that time is spent with students to catch up</i></p> <p><i>Meeting requested</i></p> <p><i>Attendance Plan developed</i></p> <p><i>Contact attendance agencies for support</i></p>	<p><i>Teacher</i></p> <p><i>Principal</i></p> <p><i>Principal</i></p>
<u>Teaching and modelling</u>	<p><i>Use school values to promote positive social and learning environments</i></p>	<p><i>Recognising and celebrating successes with wider community</i></p>	<p><i>Teacher</i></p> <p><i>Principal</i></p>



Rangitaiki School

Attendance Management Plan

Communication – Monitoring -- Support – Reporting – Teaching and Modelling

For students with 15+ days absence in a school term - LESS THAN 70% attendance

Goal- Intensive intervention to overcome complex barriers.

Activities	What do we do?	How do we do it?	Who is responsible?
<u>Communication</u>	<p><i>Send escalated formal notification and contact parent/ guardian to discuss reasons for absences</i></p> <p><i>Communicate to parents what steps the school will take in the event their child continues to have regular absences from school</i></p>	<p><i>Letter home - include STAR information</i></p> <p><i>Require meeting to discuss factors that are contributing to absences</i></p> <p><i>Develop attendance plan</i></p> <p><i>Contact attendance agencies</i></p>	<p><i>Principal</i></p>
<u>Monitoring</u>	<p><i>Monitor attendance</i></p>	<p><i>Roll is marked by the teacher in the morning and again after lunch - using correct codes</i></p> <p><i>SMS system - email sent to Principal on 15th unjustified absence in a term.</i></p> <p><i>Codes used are checked</i></p> <p><i>am - Text sent to unnotified absences</i></p> <p><i>pm - Phone call to whānau to follow up</i></p>	<p><i>Teacher</i></p> <p><i>Principal</i></p> <p><i>Office Admin</i></p>

	<p><i>Communicate to parents about every absence</i></p> <p><i>Maintain contact details of parents</i></p>	<p><i>unnotified absences</i> <i>Reminder in the newsletter at beginning and middle of year to keep contact details up to date</i></p>	<p><i>Office Admin</i></p> <p><i>Office Admin</i> <i>Principal</i></p>
<u>Reporting</u>	<p><i>Report regularly to parents on attendance of their child</i></p> <p><i>Report Attendance levels to School Board</i></p> <p><i>Report chronic absence to attendance agencies/MOE</i></p>	<p><i>Mid and end of Year reports communicate attendance levels</i></p> <p><i>Included in Principal's Report for each meeting</i></p> <p><i>Send email/call with interventions completed so far</i></p>	<p><i>Teacher</i></p> <p><i>Principal</i></p> <p><i>Principal</i></p>
<u>Support</u>	<p><i>Support students to catch up missed learning where required</i></p> <p><i>Support whānau to get students to school</i></p> <p><i>Engage with outside agencies - including attendance agencies and MOE</i></p>	<p><i>Ensure that time is spent with students to catch up</i></p> <p><i>Meeting required</i> <i>Attendance Plan developed</i></p> <p><i>Attendance agencies and MOE contacted</i></p>	<p><i>Teacher</i></p> <p><i>Principal</i></p> <p><i>Principal</i></p>

APPENDIX: Include links here to all other relevant documentation:

- [Strategic Plan](#)
- [Annual Implementation Plan](#)
- [Attendance Policy](#)

