



Awahou School

Ngā kaitiaki o tō tātou wāhi - Guardians of our place

Updated: Feb 2026

Attendance Management Plan

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Overarching attendance objectives and strategic priorities

RATIONALE: We prioritise attendance because it is crucial for success in various aspects of life, including academics, social development, and building essential life skills. Regular attendance fosters better academic performance, social-emotional well-being, and the development of crucial life skills.

Here's why attendance is so important:

1. Academic Success:

- **Improved Learning:** Consistent attendance ensures students don't miss vital lessons and opportunities to learn, leading to better understanding and retention of information.
- **Better Grades and Test Scores:** Studies show a strong correlation between regular attendance and higher academic achievement, including grades and standardized test scores.
- **Reduced Learning Gaps:** Missing school can create gaps in knowledge, potentially impacting a student's overall academic progress and leading to difficulties in future learning.
- **Building a Strong Foundation:** Early consistent attendance sets a positive pattern for academic success in later years, including secondary school and beyond.

2. Social and Emotional Development:

- **Developing Social Skills:** Regular attendance provides opportunities to interact with peers, build friendships, and participate in group activities, fostering essential social skills.
- **Building Confidence and Belonging:** Attending school regularly helps students feel more connected to their school community, boosting their confidence and sense of belonging.
- **Emotional Well-being:** Regular attendance provides routine and stability, which contributes to emotional well-being and a sense of security.
- **Lifelong Social Skills:** Developing social skills through regular attendance prepares students for future social interactions in various settings, such as workplaces and social events.

3. Building Essential Life Skills:

- **Discipline and Responsibility:** Regular attendance instills discipline, punctuality, and a sense of responsibility, which are crucial for success in any field.
- **Time Management:** Attending school regularly helps students develop time management skills, learning to prioritize tasks and manage their time effectively.
- **Commitment and Accountability:** Consistent attendance demonstrates a commitment to education and responsibility, qualities that are valued in both academic and professional settings.
- **Preparation for the Future:** The habits developed through regular attendance, such as punctuality and responsibility, prepare students for the expectations and structure of the workplace.

In conclusion, attendance is not just about being physically present in a classroom; it's about maximizing learning opportunities, fostering social and emotional growth, and developing essential life skills that contribute to overall success and well-being.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: We aim for all our students to achieve success and target all students working below expectations to move them to at or above expectations. To do this they must be at school.

CURRENT ATTENDANCE DATA: Currently our attendance data has ranged from 85% regular attendance to 63% this year.

ATTENDANCE TARGET: To maintain attendance above 80% consistently for the remainder of the year.

Attendance Policy

Student Attendance

At Awahou 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 Awahou School attend school when it is open (Education and Training Act, s 36).

Awahou 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

Awahou 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 in Hero. 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 principal.

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. Awahou 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

Awahou 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](#).

Also refer to the Stepped Attendance Response

https://web-assets.education.govt.nz/s3fs-public/2025-01/FINAL%20STAR_30Jan25.pdf?VersionId=hHHyUuvPnxdYdOcbQb5i3ATWbvdIGtoZ

Monitoring and measuring progress

The Everyday Matters termly report will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees every term. Improvements in attendance trends will be highlighted and celebrated community wide via newsletters and social media.