

DRAFT

Attendance Management Plan and supporting STAR procedures

NB: The Strategic Priorities will be updated for each team and our termly attendance will be measured against the previous year's attendance for the same term.

Strategic Priorities

Regular school attendance is important for students to achieve their educational potential. The government target is that 90% of students will be regularly attending school by 2030.

Our school currently has 79% regular attendance and a **target of lifting regular attendance to 85%** by the end of 2026.

ATTENDANCE

85%

Regular attendance by the end of Term 1 2026



79%

Regular attendance Term 1 2025

LATENESS

80%

Arriving to class on time by the end of Term 1 2026



71%

Arriving to class on time Term 1 2025

Term 1 2025 Statistics:

Lowest day of attendance: Tuesdays

Students on holidays in school time: 22%

Board responsibilities

The board is responsible for taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the school's students attend the school when it is open for instruction.

The board 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 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 responsibilities

The principal is responsible for:

- developing and implementing a stepped attendance response aligned with the thresholds to support student attendance

- ensure that student absence is investigated, responded too and actions taken recorded aligned with the thresholds
- ensure all students, whanau and staff understand the processes and procedures that support student attendance
- Report to the board on any trends, barriers to attendance and interventions being used to support student attendance.

Procedures/supporting documentation

Attendance management Procedure - Stepped Attendance Response (STAR)- see below

Monitoring

The principal / deputy principal will maintain reporting of daily attendance data. The board will receive termly attendance reporting- including information provided by the Every Day matters report. Included in this reporting will be any emerging trends, barriers to attendance, and areas of concern for the board's consideration

Legislative compliance/ Legislation

[Education and Training Act 2020](#)

[Education Attendance rules](#)

[Education Attendance Management Plan regulations \(yet to be passed\)](#)

Attendance Management Procedure- Stepped Attendance Response

We recognise the importance of regular attendance to help our students achieve their educational potential.

Our attendance procedures ensure students are accounted for during schools' hours. This allows school staff to identify and respond to student attendance concerns.

We have a stepped attendance response to ensure we are able to identify students and offer appropriate interventions at the thresholds to support students to return to regular attendance.

We have annual targets for student attendance and work with students, parents and caregivers, and external agencies, where necessary to improve our levels of student attendance.

Parent/Whānau responsibilities

- ensure students attend every day they are able
- reinforce good attendance habits
- open communication with the school
- follow the school's attendance management plan and associated attendance policies and procedures.

School responsibilities

- clear communication to parents and students on attendance expectations on enrolment, at the start of the year and each term
- communicate to parents what steps the school will take if the student is absent from school
- monitor student attendance
- provide students with regular updates on their own attendance
- report regularly to parents on attendance of their child.

School Procedures

At George Street Normal School, we follow the procedures below to support and manage student attendance. These have been developed in response to:

- Our attendance data over the past two years
- Ministry of Education: *Every Day Matters* reporting
- Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) guidance
- Schoolwide attendance self-review using the Ministry of Education Reference Guide

The principal will appoint staff and delegate duties, so as to manage the recording of the electronic student attendance register and the follow-up procedures for non-attending students.

Non-teaching staff with duties associated with our attendance system will support teachers to maintain accurate up-to-date attendance information.

Classroom/relief teachers are responsible for recording student attendance to their class each period/half day basis.

Class teachers are responsible for maintaining accurate and up-to-date records and supporting the attendance systems. They will also monitor and follow-up on lateness and other attendance issues.

Classroom teachers are responsible for monitoring student attendance ensuring that parents are informed of attendance concerns. Senior leadership will be kept informed of serious student absence situations.

Parents will receive student attendance data via weekly emails/ parent portal/ termly updates as appropriate.

Outside agencies will be used as appropriate to support attendance.

Students will be identified at the thresholds. Follow-up response actions will be tailored to the reasons for absence.

Patterns of attendance and specific interventions being used will be evaluated by the pastoral team/SLT termly to review outcomes and effectiveness of these interventions

Below is the Stepped Attendance Response Activities for our school. Any action taken can be considered at any threshold. All actions taken to respond to absences will be recorded in Hero. The leadership team meets fortnightly. If you have any questions about our Stepped Attendance Response or procedures, please contact Robyn Wood, Principal

School Stepped Attendance Response Activities

Below is our stepped attendance response for responding to individual student absence. Actions can be taken at any stage and there is no requirement to wait for a student to be identified at a threshold to take action to address non attendance.

Day-to-day operations			
Activities	Practice	Responsible Person	Notes & Actions
Communicate with parents	<p>Set expectations, procedures and follow-up steps the school will take when a student is absent.</p> <p>Use enrolment forms, newsletters, website or other communication methods to set expectations and provide guidance to parents</p>	<p>Class teacher</p> <p>Principal</p> <p>School board</p>	<p>Termly attendance features including updates on data in newsletters.</p> <p>Expectations and guidance for parents published on our school website.</p> <p>Expectations for student attendance and steps that will be taken to address attendance included in enrolment forms.</p> <p>Work with parents and students, where appropriate.</p>
Following up absences daily	<p>Use procedures in place (and supporting software) to quickly identify all student absences and communicate these to parents</p> <p>Follow-up daily with parents any unexplained absences</p> <p>Non-school staff use paper rolls (that are obtained from the office when they sign in) and send these to the office. The office then records the paper roll on <i>Hero</i>. The paper roll is signed by the teacher and held by the office team for the term. If a student is away, the teacher uses the appropriate attendance code using the MOE Attendance Code</p>	Administration team	Text based reminder to be sent from 10 am for all unexplained absences.

	Decision Tree. If the office team is advised of the absence by the parent/caregiver, they enter the appropriate code in lieu of the teacher.		
	<p>Every day a child is away, by 9:10 am, parents are expected to notify the school and provide a clear reason for absence. Saying a child is “not at school today” will not be accepted as an explanation and will be recorded as truant. Notifying the school can be done by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recording an absence on <i>Hero</i> • Ringing the school office • Emailing the school office / class teacher / principal 		
	Every day, classroom roles are marked on <i>Hero</i> by 9:10 am and 2:00 pm.		
Minimise disruptions to the school day and week	School boards and school leadership prioritise school hours to be for learning	School leadership team	
Assess history of new students	When enrolling, identify issues or trends in attendance history.	Deputy Principal	
<p>Escalate attendance issues as needed</p> <p>Develop support plans</p> <p>Involve other services, consider referral to Attendance Services</p>	Seek more support as needed	All staff as appropriate.	Staff are encouraged to escalate issues according to these procedures. If you are unsure, please discuss with Deputy Principal / Principal

Easy Reference

Less than 5 days unjustified absence			
Who is responsible: Senior leadership	Format: Hero notification	Purpose: Ensure parents are aware of their child's attendance rate	Audience: Parent / Caregiver
NB: Between 0-4 days absence all absences need to be followed up to ensure the correct code is recorded against the absence. Any students, already on the attendance list from a previous term will be identified by the deputy principal			
5 Days Unjustified Absence in a term (This is sent as soon as 5+ days are reached)			
Who is responsible: Classroom teacher please cc Leanne and Robyn in.	Format: Email	Purpose: Ensure parents are aware of their child's attendance rate Prompt/request a conversation about constructively working towards improved attendance	Audience: Parent / Caregiver
Message # 5 Information	Tēna koe [parent's name] I'm reaching out to talk about [student's name] attendance this term, they've been absent for [number of days absent] days this term, which means their attendance rate is currently below [80]% . We know that regular attendance plays a big part in helping students feel connected and succeed in their learning. I'd really value the opportunity to talk with you about how things are going and see how we can work together to support [student's name]'s attend more regularly. Please let me know if [date] works or send me an [email/message] to arrange a time. Ngā mihi, [Staff member's name and role]		
NB: if the reason for the unjustified absence if 5 days or more is due to a holiday, then upon return, Senior leadership will send a formal notification to the parents/caregiver and request that the child does not have any more unjustified absences for the year			

5 - 9 Days Unjustified Absence in a term				
Who is responsible: Classroom teacher please cc Leanne and Robyn in.		Format: Email	Purpose: Ensure parents are aware of their child's attendance rate Prompt/request a conversation about constructively working towards improved attendance Use in-school resources as appropriate to reduce barriers e.g. counsellor, public health nurse	Audience: Parent / Caregiver
Message # 5 Information		Tēna koe [parent's name] I'm reaching out to talk about [student's name] attendance this term, they've been absent for [number of days absent] days this term, which means their attendance rate is currently below [80] %. We know that regular attendance plays a big part in helping students feel connected and succeed in their learning. I'd really value the opportunity to talk with you about how things are going and see how we can work together to support [student's name]'s attend more regularly. Please let me know if [date] works or send me an [email/message] to arrange a time. Ngā mihi, [Staff member's name and role]		
10+ Days Unjustified Absence in a term				
Who is responsible: Deputy Principal		Format: Email formal notification	Purpose: Ensure parents are aware of their child's continued low attendance rate and, request a meeting to discuss barriers to attendance and develop an attendance plan	Audience: Parents / Caregiver CC class teacher
Message # 6		[Student's full name] – Continued low attendance Tēna koe [parent's name] I'm getting in touch to talk about [student's name] attendance. We've noticed they've been absent for [number of days absent] days this term, and their attendance hasn't improved as much as we'd hoped since our last kōrero on [date] . We know that regular attendance helps students feel connected, confident, and successful in their learning. We also understand that there		

	can be challenges, and we're here to work with you to find solutions that support [student's name] to be at school more consistently. Let's meet to create a plan that helps [student's name] get back on track with their learning. I will give you a call [or, Please get in touch with me on [contact details]] so we can arrange a time to develop this plan. Ngā mihi, [Principal's or deputy/associate principal's name]		
15+ Days Unjustified Absence in term			
Who is responsible: Deputy Principal / Principal	Format: Warning notice - via email, letter of other formal message directly to parents	Purpose: Ensure parents are aware of their child's continued low attendance Advise parents of the consequences if their child's attendance does not improve (or a reason for absences isn't provided) Offer to discuss the situation	Audience: Parents / Caregiver CC class teacher
Message #7	Referral / Consideration of Legal action: Tēnā koe [parent's name] This is to inform you that [student's name] has not had regular attendance at [school name] . [give brief details as to absences] . This letter is to inform you of your legal obligation to ensure that [student's name] attends school whenever it is open and request that [student's name] returns to regular school attendance immediately. School staff have engaged with you on the occasions listed below, to discuss these ongoing absences and attempt to get [student's name] attendance back on track. • [email/letter, date • email/letter, date • details of meeting, date • details of meeting, date] . The school has also involved [external agencies involved] to support [student's name] to return to regular attendance. This has not resulted in the improvement of [student's name] attendance at school. Section 36 of the Education and Training Act requires a student to attend the registered school at which they are enrolled whenever it is open, while section 244 provides that a parent of that student commits an offence if they do not attend as required by section 36. If there are insufficient improvements by [date] , the board will consider the appropriate next steps available, which may include a referral to the Ministry of Education to consider prosecution for irregular attendance under section 244 of the Education and Training Act 2020. Please contact [school leader name] as soon as possible with any questions you may have. Yours sincerely/ Nāku iti nei, nā, [sender name and role title]		

Justified Absences

Where justified absence is longer than 5 consecutive days for illness, the school will request a doctor's certificate.

Where justified absence from school is more than 10 intermittent days over two terms, the school will notify the parent/caregiver and request a conversation about how best to support wellbeing and attendance.

Attendance Policy and Communications

Once a term, parents and caregivers are reported in writing about their child's attendance for the year so far, using the *Hero* attendance data.

Reporting to the Board: The "Everyday Matters" report is made available to the board each term, and each month, an attendance update is noted in the principal's report to the board.

Leadership team: Intervention actions are decided upon receipt of *Hero* notifications. Intervention actions are initiated to support chronic absence if required. Clear attendance expectations are made for students involved in school-level interventions.

Attendance policy: Parents and caregivers have ongoing access to the school-wide attendance policies on *School Docs*. They are invited to provide feedback about these policies as part of the Board review process.

Parent/caregiver communications Information about school wide expectations, procedures, data and reminders about attendance is frequently communicated to parents/caregivers/whānau through:

- The school newsletter
- The George Street Normal School enrolment information pack
- Whānau wānaka interviews
- This attendance management plan is posted on our website.

[Knowing if your child is well enough to go to school](#), information is provided to all whānau.

Lateness

Children are regularly monitored for lateness. This is done by:

- Analysing our monthly attendance records
- Teachers raising concerns about children regularly being late to class
- Observations made by the Principal through standing at the gate to welcome students each morning
- Observations made by the leadership and office teams as children sign in late using *Vistab*

George Street Normal School attends to lateness by:

- Addressing the concern with the student and determining *why* they are late
- Problem solving with the student around ways they might get to school on time
- Addressing the issue with the parent in a face to face meeting
- Sending a notification home advising the parent of our concerns and requesting an appointment with them to help find ways the school can support.
 - Lateness will be reviewed weekly by the Deputy Principal. Notifications will be sent home when 5x late arrivals within the 5 week period occur.
 - If continual lateness occurs after the notification has been given, collaboration with parents and external agencies may follow.

If the issue becomes problematic, the school will:

- Engage the services of the Public Health Nurse if appropriate
- Engage the services of Otago Youth Wellness if appropriate
- Engage Oranga Tamariki if appropriate

Approval	Date School Board	Published on	School Website
Effective Dates	Date	Review Date	

Supporting Documents (for easy reference)

Attendance Code Decision Tree



For more information visit: education.govt.nz/attendance-register

 Secondary schools only

Attendance Code Descriptions



Te Tāhuhu o
te Mātauranga
Ministry of Education

Present for ½ day calculations

P Present

Student is present in class. This includes supervised dual tuition with Te Kura.

L Late to class

Student is late to class. Schools set the threshold for lateness (e.g. 10 minutes) in their school policy.

A Alternative provision

Student is present in a Ministry-approved alternative provision, such as a teen parent unit, alternative education, secondary-tertiary program, health school or activity centre.

V Unsupervised exam study S

Student is present in an examination or unsupervised study where the student is on-site.

N Present but out of class

Student is present but out of class due to an on-site school activity (cultural or sporting event), internal appointment, temporary removal from class, or time in the sickbay.

Q Board approved offsite learning

Student is present in Board-approved off-site learning, including courses, school-organised activities, and work experience.

D Approved external appointment

Student is present but has a medical appointment which is unable to be scheduled outside of school hours (e.g. doctor or dentist and includes travel time) or is participating in court proceedings.

Justified absence

J Explained and approved

Student is absent due to explained and approved reasons (e.g. family emergencies, bereavement, representing in national / cultural events, approved exemptions, or accompanying parents on overseas diplomatic / military postings).

M Illness / Medical absence

Student is absent due to illness or medical reasons, including mental health-related absences (e.g. anxiety).

X Exam leave S

Student is absent studying offsite preparing for exams. NOTE: Time allocated to this code is not included in Ministry attendance calculations.

U Stood down or suspended

Student is absent due to formal stand down or suspension. This code applies to the period of the stand-down or suspension, excluding the day it was imposed.

Unjustified absence

T Truant

Student is absent without explanation or permission from a parent / caregiver (e.g. skipping class)

E Explained but not approved

Student is absent and the reason provided does not meet the school's policy for a justifiable absence (e.g. a parent states their child didn't want to attend sports day).

G Holiday during term time

Student is absent due to a holiday taken.

? Unknown (temporary)

Temporary code used when the reason for a student's absence is initially unknown. This will be updated once the reason is confirmed.

S Secondary schools only