



Attendance Management Plan

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Overview

Strategic Priorities

Regular school attendance is important for students to achieve their educational potential. The government target is that 80% of students will be regularly attending school by 2030. Our school currently has 75% regular attendance and a target of lifting regular attendance to 80% by the end of 2026.

Introduction and Purpose

This document outlines the Attendance Management Plan for Southland Adventist Christian School. This plan is designed to be a living document, reflecting our commitment to ensuring every student attends school regularly and engages in their learning. It aligns with the Ministry of Education's requirements for mandatory Attendance Management Plans and the Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) framework. The purpose is to ensure all students are present, engaged, and supported to attend school regularly, meeting the Ministry of Education expectation of 90%+ attendance. Through this plan we aim to improve student engagement, reduce unjustified absence and provide clear procedures for recording, monitoring, intervening and escalating attendance concerns.

Addressing Barriers to Attendance

Recognising the challenges of our community, we will proactively address common barriers:

- Transport: Work with whānau to identify transport issues and support them where possible.
- Community Links: Maintain strong connections with local church and community groups. This network provides a valuable resource for supporting families facing complex challenges.
- Cultural Approach: Adopt a culturally responsive approach, ensuring all interactions with whānau are empathetic and upholding their family values.

Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibilities of School Board

- Approve and review the Attendance Management Plan triennially or as required.
- Ensure the plan is published on the school's website.
- Set an annual attendance target for the school.

Responsibilities of Principal/Senior Leadership

- Operational lead for attendance compliance and escalation.
- Report to the Board each meeting on any trends, barriers to attendance and interventions being used to support student attendance.
- Monitor school-wide attendance data and trends.
- Act as the primary contact for moderate and chronic absence cases.
- Liaise with the Ministry of Education Attendance Service and other support agencies.
- Ensure all students, whanau and staff understand the processes and procedures that support student attendance

Responsibilities of Teaching Staff

- Record attendance accurately at the start of each morning (before 9:15am) and afternoon session.
- Teachers are required to question mark ALL absences on EDGE. The school Office Administrator will then follow these up.
- Build strong relationships with students and whānau.
- Act as the first point of contact for students with irregular absences.

Responsibilities of Administration Staff

- Record and update absence notifications daily
- Check the rolls every morning and contact parents/caregivers if reason for absentee is unexplained/question-mark by 9:30am
- Maintain accurate contact details for all students.
- Use the Ministry-approved attendance codes as required by the Attendance Rules 2024 and the Ministry guidance PDF. Ensure electronic attendance registers (eAR) are configured to use those codes.

Responsibilities of Parents/Caregivers

- Ensure their child attends school every day, unless they are unwell.
- Notify the school of absences before 9:00am.
- Notify the school every day their child is absent, even if they were absent previous days.
- Work in partnership with the school to address any attendance concerns.

Procedures & Processes

Daily Attendance

- Teachers will mark the electronic attendance register for all students by 9:15 am each morning.
- If a student is marked absent without a prior explanation, administration staff will contact the student's primary caregiver via phone call by 9:30am.

- If the caregiver cannot be reached, an email, text message or alternative communication method will be sent.
- Unexplained absences that remain unresolved by the end of the school day will be coded as 'T' (Truancy). We will avoid leaving any '?' codes on the register.

Lateness

- Reporting Late Arrival: When a student arrives late to school, it is a requirement for their parent/caregiver to accompany them to the school office and inform the office administrator of the late arrival.
- Documenting Late Arrival: The parent/caregiver should record the student's name, date and time of arrival, classroom number, and reason for lateness in the designated late book. This information is essential for maintaining accurate records, monitoring student punctuality, and identifying any recurring issues.
- Classroom Entry: Once they have been signed-in, the late student must proceed directly to their classroom or the next scheduled activity. The student must inform the teacher that they have arrived.
- Tracking and Follow-Up: The school administration maintains a record of late arrivals, noting patterns or frequent lateness. If a student demonstrates a consistent pattern of lateness this will be followed up with the student's parents/caregivers.

Attendance Levels & Actions

Regular Attendance (*Less than 5 days absence in a school term*)

School will:

- Communicate with parents about every absence
- Maintain contact details of parents
- Students will be acknowledged and celebrated through class and school-wide recognition
- Teachers maintain positive communication with whānau
- Provide students with regular updates on their own attendance
- At the end of each term, provide an attendance report for each child
- 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

Irregular Attendance (*Up to 10 days absence in a school term*)

School will:

- Offer support to address any emerging barriers
- Classrooms teachers will contact parents to discuss reasons for absence and impact on learning
- Support student to catch up missed learning where required
- Ensure attendance is monitored closely for improvement

Concerning Attendance (*10-15 days absence in a school term*)

School will:

- Contact parents to escalate concerns

- Use in-school resources as appropriate to remove barriers and request support from Attendance Service or other agencies as needed

When "Concerning Attendance" continues for two terms, the orange formal notification letter will be sent. The school will then:

- 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

Chronic Absence (*More than 15 days absence in a school term*)

School will:

- Ensure all previous steps have been documented and a formal referral is made to the Ministry of Education Attendance Service
- Send the red formal notification letter when "Chronic or Concerning Attendance" continues for two terms
- Continue to work closely with the Attendance Service and whānau
- Unenroll if student will not be returning to school