Ruawai College

Next review: Term 3 2026

Student Attendance

For information about enrolment, see **Enrolment**.

At Ruawai College, we recognise that **regular attendance** at school is crucial for student achievement. The board ensures we meet all legislative and regulatory requirements around student attendance, including recording and monitoring attendance and following up absences and attendance concerns. We expect students and their parents/guardians/caregivers to work with us to make sure students attend school regularly.

Students are required to attend school whenever the school is open (Education and Training Act, s 36), with some **exceptions**.

School responsibilities

As required by the Education and Training Act 2020, the board:

- takes all reasonable steps to ensure the attendance of students enrolled at our school
- has an attendance management plan that sets out a strategy and a process for the school to identify and respond to student absences
- has regard to any guidelines on the management of school attendance issued by the Secretary of Education when preparing our attendance management plan
- reviews our attendance management plan in accordance with regulations
- makes our attendance management plan publicly available online.

As required by the School Attendance Rules 2025 (published under section 237A of the Education and Training Act 2020) and the Education (School Attendance) Regulations 2024, the principal ensures that the school:

- keeps attendance records for each student enrolled at the school (either by half-day or period) for each half-day that it is open for instruction
- has an absence notification process to enable the accurate and timely collection of attendance records
- uses a Ministry-approved Electronic Attendance Register (eAR) unless **exempt**
- uses Ministry-approved attendance codes to record attendance or absence for each student for each half-day the school is open for instruction
- provides these attendance records to the Secretary of Education at the end of each school day.

Accurate recording of student attendance ensures all students are accounted for during school hours, EOTC activities, and emergency events, and provides information to help identify and respond to student attendance concerns.

- 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) and notify

parents/guardians/caregivers in a timely manner so they can respond. If there is reason for concern, we follow our **Missing Student Procedure**.

- We work with students, parents/guardians/caregivers, staff, and external agencies where needed to identify any barriers to attendance, develop a plan to support attendance and learning, and improve student attendance at our school.
- The principal reports to the board on attendance trends, barriers, and interventions, including by sharing the termly Every Day Matters report.

We ensure that all attendance-related procedures, documentation, and records comply with privacy requirements. We keep attendance records for the length of time required by the School Records Retention and Disposal Schedule.

Attendance management plan

Our attendance management plan outlines how we monitor student attendance and respond to student absences. Our plan has regard to Ministry of Education attendance guidelines, including the stepped attendance response (STAR), and is reviewed and updated in line with regulations. We seek feedback from the school community when developing and reviewing our plan. Also see **Attendance Management Plans** (Ministry of Education).

Our attendance management plan includes our:

- strategic priorities related to attendance (including our attendance targets and other key attendance objectives)
- processes to identify and respond to patterns, barriers, and underlying causes of student absences
- strategies, actions, or interventions at different attendance thresholds (based on numbers of days absent in a term)
- how we will monitor and measure progress in attendance, including any targets set by the board or the government and links to student achievement.

Our plan may also include other information relevant to our attendance management, such as:

- our expectations of students, parents/guardians/caregivers, and our school staff, including roles and responsibilities
- how we will communicate with students and parents/guardians/caregivers about attendance
- our use of Ministry-approved attendance codes, including the thresholds for discretion and any limitations of discretion (including timeframes) for justified absences
- how we will review and update our attendance management plan.

The board approves our attendance management plan before it is published online.

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver and student responsibilities

As attendance is a shared responsibility, our school communicates with parents/guardians/caregivers and students about attendance requirements and expectations. The school monitors attendance and updates students and parents regularly.

- Parents/Guardians are legally required to make sure their **enrolled student** attends school every day the school is open (Education and Training Act, s 244).
- We expect students and their parents/guardians/caregivers to communicate and work with the school to ensure regular attendance. We ask parents/guardians/caregivers to contact us as soon as possible to discuss anything that may be a barrier to student attendance and/or to make any requests for **exceptions**.
- Parents/Guardians/Caregivers are expected to notify the school as soon as possible (before or during the school day) if their child will be absent or late. A reason must be

provided no later than the end of the school week. The school will contact parents/guardians/caregivers directly if no explanation is provided.

- Students are not allowed to leave the school during school hours unless permission is requested by parents/guardians/caregivers and given by the school. The student must sign out at the office.

The principal assures the board that the school meets all legislative and regulatory requirements for attendance and is managing attendance effectively. See **Review Schedule and Board Assurances**.

Related policies

- **Board Responsibilities**
- **Principal Responsibilities**
- **Communicating with Parents and Whānau**
- **Enrolment**
- **Managing Injuries and Illness**
- **School Records Retention and Disposal**

Legislation

- Education and Training Act 2020
- Education (School Attendance) Regulations 2024
- School Attendance Rules 2025

Resources

- Ministry of Education | Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga (Education professionals): **Attendance**
- Ministry of Education | Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga (Parents/Caregivers):
  - **Attendance**
  - **When your child should be at school**
  - **Attendance plans if your child needs reduced hours at school**

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