



Timaru Christian School Attendance Management Plan and Stepped Attendance Response

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. Timaru Christian Schools supports that target.

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
- communicate to parents the importance of regular attendance
- ensure that student absence is investigated, responded to 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

Attendance Register

Follow this process to record attendance:

Responsibility:	Action
Classroom teachers	<p>By 9:15 am, record and save attendance information in SMS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Record children who arrive between 9:05 - 9:15 am as L (for late). Year 9 and 10 students will be marked late if they arrive after 8:45am.Late students must report to the Office Administrator upon their arrival.Record children who are absent for an unknown reason with a question mark (?). The Office Administrator will change this later if the reason is established.Record children who are absent for a known reason with the appropriate code as per the Attendance Code Decision Tree and Descriptions (see above).
Office Administrator	<p>At 9:15 am, check absences room by room, and change codes after following up any children who are un-notified absent. Ring or text provided contact numbers listed for the student. If contact is not made, the calls are logged and the process is complete.</p> <p>By 9:15am, record all class absences in the emergency evacuation folder. Keep this in the office.</p>
Classroom teachers	<p>At the beginning of the afternoon teaching session, record and save attendance information in SMS as described below.</p>

Justified	Unjustified
<ul style="list-style-type: none">SicknessDoctor's appointmentDentist appointmentSpecialist appointmentFuneralSporting representativeCultural representativeExtreme weather eventsAlternative Education eg health school, correspondence schoolJustice/Court proceedingsExamsRepresentative sports and cultural events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Family holiday within New ZealandVisiting families who are based overseas.Family holiday overseasBirthday celebrationsRecovering from weekend activitiesLack of transportHaircutsSpending time with visiting family and friendsDoes not want to be at schoolHaving a 'family' day

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Attendance Code Decision Tree



Attendance Code Descriptions

Present for 1/2 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

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

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.

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Illness

- Classroom teachers must speak with Senior Management about any students who may need to go home sick. If Senior Management advises they go home, teachers or the Office Administrator calls the parents and the absence is recorded onto the Student Management System (SMS).

Sending Students Home/Early Release

No student may leave the school during school hours except by special arrangement, for example, a parent request (verbal or written) for the student to attend a medical appointment.

If a student becomes ill at school, follow the procedure for sending sick students home.

All teachers must comply with the standard timetable. Students should be in a class supervision situation until they are formally released at the bell time.

Monitoring

- The Ministry of Education will be receiving daily attendance reports.
- At the end of each week, the Office Administrator will identify students who have been absent for more than 5 days in a term or who have been consistently late (arriving after 9:15am more than 2 or more times per week).
- The Board will receive attendance data through the Principal's Report and information provided through the Every Day Matters Report.
- The Guiding Coalition will review attendance data and determine if there are connections with achievement data, and if any patterns are arising that may need further attention or action.

Stepped Response

Less than 5 days absence in a school term

Parents/Guardians	Ensure student attends on time everyday they are able Reinforce good attendance habits Open communication with school Follow school procedures around reporting absences Ensure contact details are up-to-date
School	Clear communication about the importance of attendance and being on time Monitor attendance: Office Administrator tracks absences and lateness and alerts the classroom teacher if there have been 5 or more absences or an average of 2 or more lateness events per week in the past term Maintain contact details of parents Report to parents the number of days present through written / verbal reporting each term Ensure the school is a welcoming and safe place so students want to attend

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Up to 10 days absence in a school term	
Parents/Guardians	Return student to regular attendance, on time Contact school to discuss reasons for absence Support student to catch up on missed learning Engage in supports offered
School	Teacher makes contact with the parent to notify them of their child's attendance and/or lateness rate and to discuss reasons for absences (phone call or face-to-face) Support students to catch up missed learning where required. Use in-school resources to assist if required eg funding, transport, etc

Up to 15 days absence in a school term	
Parents/Guardians	Return student to regular attendance, on time Attend meeting at the school to analyse reasons for absence and to collaborate on a support plan Implement strategies at home
School	Formal notification sent by Team Leader Hold meeting to analyse reasons for absence and to collaborate on a support plan Develop and implement a plan tailored to the reasons and circumstances around the child's absence Use in-school resources as appropriate to remove barriers and request support from Ministry or other agencies as needed

More than 15 days absence in a school term	
Parents/Guardians	Return student to regular attendance Engage in improvement plan Participate in regular meetings
School	Send warning notice (from Principal) and make contact to arrange meeting with parents Escalate to multi-agency response including Truancy Officer Participate in multi-agency response Implement and monitor improvement plan Undertake school-led prosecution, or request Ministry-led prosecution, when considered appropriate if supports are offered and not taken up Unenrol students who will not be returning to school



- External agencies can include, but are not limited to, the Public Health Nurse, Arowhenua Whānau Services, South Canterbury Principals' Panel.

Legislative compliance/ Legislation

[Education and Training Act 2020](#)

[Education Attendance rules](#)

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