



Attendance Management Plan for Ōtūmoetai Intermediate School 2026

Effective from: Term 1, 2026

Review cycle: Annual or upon regulatory updates (to be reviewed annually in October by the School Board).

Published on: <https://www.otuinter.school.nz/>

1. Purpose

This Attendance Management Plan sets out Ōtūmoetai Intermediate School's approach to identifying and responding to student absences. Regular attendance is crucial for student learning, wellbeing, and long-term success. In intermediate school (Years 7–8), consistent attendance ensures tamariki have equitable access to the curriculum during their key developmental years. The plan supports improved engagement, equity, and wellbeing for all students, and aligns with the Ministry of Education's Stepped Attendance Response (STAR).

An attendance plan helps the school meet its legal obligations under the Education and Training Act 2020 and supports the Ministry of Education's national goal of improving attendance and engagement. It enables the school to:

- Monitor attendance patterns and respond early to concerns
- Identify and address barriers affecting students and whānau
- Strengthen relationships through clear expectations and communication
- Support wellbeing by recognising attendance as a key indicator
- Promote a positive school culture where every day matters

A clear, proactive plan fosters a shared commitment to regular attendance, helping every learner thrive. Our school target as shown in our Attendance Plan Summary is to reach 90% regular attendance by the end of 2026.

2. Identifying Barriers to Attendance

At Ōtūmoetai Intermediate School, our attendance data shows a trend of medical and holidays in term time being barriers to achieving this target. To address these barriers we will:

- Regularly share information with families about recognising when a child is sick enough to stay home from school. May request a medical certificate after 3 continuous days absence due to illness, if a child's absences are causing concern. We will use the following email response for continued absence due to medical reasons:

“Regular attendance at school is important to your child's success and there is a clear connection between going to school regularly and doing well in the classroom. Making sure students and

engage in learning is a shared responsibility. As a parent, you are responsible for making sure your child attends school every day."

We acknowledge that there are genuine reasons students may be occasionally absent. However, without regular attendance your child will struggle to make progress. If your child is absent regularly, or for extended periods we will reach out to you to discuss the situation.

- Regularly communicate with families about the impact of holidays during term time on education. Send the following set message to email families who indicate they are planning to take a holiday during term time outlining the potential impacts of this leave
"You may be aware that Government policy regarding students going on holiday during term time has been closely monitored. Should you take (Pupil name) out of school for this purpose, he/she will be coded as "G" (Student on holiday - Unjustified absence) and recorded as such on the Ministry of Education database. We will leave it up to you to decide whether you take her/him on holiday during this term or not".
- Continue to remind whānau about the importance of regular attendance. If attendance is dropping, then send the following communication or similar to whānau as a reminder:

"We are having a lot of absentees during these winter months due to illness or other factors. Please ensure you let the school know if your child is going to be away from school and for how long they will be away. You can either phone 07-576 5101 - push 1 for absentees and leave a message, stating child's full name, room number and reason for absence. You can also text through a message on 027 291 4986 or email absentees@otuinter.school.nz - again giving all the information. Skoolloop is also an option. We are experiencing a high number of 'unexplained absences' at the moment. If we don't hear back from the text message sent out (you can reply to that text), or the follow-up phone call as to why your child is away, they will be marked Truant at the end of the day as per MOE guidelines.

3. Attendance Monitoring Process

Daily Monitoring (AM & PM):

- Teachers mark attendance in eTAP by 9:00am and again in the afternoon by 1:30pm.
- Late arrivals sign in via Vistab (auto-synced to eTAP). A subgroup in eTAP automatically populates from Vistab with students who have signed in late. Caregivers of these students receive a text notification about their child's late arrival
- Attendance Officer checks 'Status Today' and unexplained absences.
- Text sent to caregivers for any unexplained absences:
- "Notification that ~PUPIL NAME is absent from school and the absentee is unexplained. Please contact the school as soon as possible with an explanation. Regards, Ōtūmoetai Intermediate School"
- Follow-up phone call if no response within a reasonable time, if no response try the second contact.
- All communications and codes are recorded in eTAP.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Caregivers Notify school of absences via phone, app, txt or email

Attendance Officer (Mrs Angeline Gower) monitors eTAP daily, follow up on unexplained absences, communicates with caregivers, maintains accurate records, liaises with teaching staff, and coordinates referrals to MOE, if necessary, in consultation with the Principal (or Deputy Principal) and Classroom Teachers. Accurately mark rolls on eTAP (by 9:00AM and 1:30PM), report concerns, keep caregiver notes, responds to attendance queries.

Principal (Mr Henk Popping) approves extended leave, manages serious attendance concerns, oversees referrals to MOE initiated by the Attendance Officer.

Senior Team Leader (Mrs Lisa Chappell) monitors low attendance and sends any students we are concerned about formal letters requesting a meeting to plan how to improve attendance going forward. She also arranges to reward students with over 95% attendance per term with a badge.

Behaviour Support Staff (Mrs Katrina Taikato & Mr Aoturoa Seeling) assist with truancy and repeating unexplained absence, by visiting whānau to try and determine reasons for absence & assist where possible

5. Stepped Response to Absence (STAR-Aligned) Action Plan

- Tier 1** **0–4 days absent per term:** Monitor; no action if justified. Note - every absence which is not notified, Attendance Officer sends a txt message and later phones for an explanation
- Tier 2** **5–9 days absent:** Teacher checks in with student; Attendance Officer emails caregiver
- Tier 3** **10–14 days absent:** Attendance summary shared with teacher & DP, phone call to caregiver
- Tier 4** **15+ days absent:** Formal letter sent to caregiver, support meeting with whānau to be arranged by teacher and SLT representative. Individualised attendance plan; external support agencies engaged. If they agree necessary, referral to ASA.

6. Responding to Specific Absence Types

P – Present

L – Late to class

A – Northern Health School

Q – School approved off site learning or school sports event

D – Approved external appointment

J – Justified, Explained and approved

M – Illness / Medical absence

U – Stood down or suspended

T – Truant

E – Explained but not approved

G – Holiday during term time

? – Unknown reason (temporary)

After 3 days of sickness, a medical certificate or further explanation may be requested.

7. Communication with Whānau

- Whānau can notify the school via:
 - School app or website form: <https://otuinterschool.nz/forms/1-report-a-student-absence/submission/new>
 - Phone (voice mail)
 - Txt message
 - Email: absentees@otuinterschool.nz
- Caregivers are contacted via:
 - Text (automated via eTAP)
 - Follow-up call
 - Email (if no response)
- Lateness Follow-Up:
 - When a student is late six or more times in a term, the school will send a formal email to caregivers outlining the pattern of lateness, its impact on learning, and expectations for improvement.

8. Review and Publication

- This plan will be reviewed annually by SLT and the School Board, or earlier if required by changes to Ministry regulations.
- The plan will be published on the school website by Term 1, 2026

Review

Our Attendance Management Plan will be reviewed in November 2026, once we have had a year of implementing these actions. Targets will be reviewed at this point.

Plan approved:

_____ Presiding Board Member	_____ Signature	_____ Date
_____ Principal	_____ Signature	_____ Date

Appendixes:

- Summary of Attendance Plan
- STAR Actions Sheet, version 2 – revised July 2025