

DUNSANDEL SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE PLAN

2026



Dunsandel School Attendance Management Plan

1. Introduction

This document outlines the Attendance Management Plan for Dunsandel School. This plan is designed to be a living document, reflecting our commitment to ensuring every student attend 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.

2. Strategic Priority

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 goal aligns with the government's national target: 80% of students attend more than 90% of the time. This plan outlines responsive strategies to improve and sustain student attendance.

MOE data showed in 2025 the following for Dunsandel School

How many students attended school regularly in 2025 (Regular Attendance is defined by the MOE as 90% attendance per term which is the equivalent to missing fewer than 5 days across the term.

T1 71% had regular attendance

T2 72% had regular attendance

T3 40% had regular attendance

T4 76% had regular attendance

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Dunsandel School Board <i>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.</i>	The board will comply with the provisions in the legislation in relation to student attendance by: • Overseeing the implementation of the Dunsandel School Attendance Plan and periodically reviewing the plan. • Ensuring the plan is published on the school's website as per Ministry of Education requirements. • Setting an annual attendance target for the school.

	• Recording all absences, and responding accordingly • having processes and procedures in place to support a Stepped Attendance Response to student absence that uses data-based thresholds to identify students • Having an effective method in place for identifying and monitoring student absence, including identifying patterns and barriers to student attendance
Principal / Senior Leadership	The Principal and/or Deputy Principal is responsible for: • Leading the implementation of the plan • Monitoring school-wide attendance data and trends. • Acting as the primary contact for moderate and chronic absence cases. • Liaising with the Ministry of Education Attendance Service and other support agencies. • Ensuring that student absence is investigated, responded too and actions taken recorded aligned with the thresholds • Ensuring all students, whanau and staff understand the processes and procedures that support student attendance. • Reporting to the board on any trends, barriers to attendance and interventions being used to support student attendance.
Teachers	• Record attendance accurately at the start of each morning and afternoon session through Edge SMS. • Build strong relationships with students and whānau. • Act as the first point of contact for students with irregular absences.
Administration Staff	• Record and update absence notifications daily. • Contact parents/caregivers when there is no absence explanation. • Maintain accurate contact details for all students.

Whānau/Caregivers	• Ensure their child attends school every day, unless they are unwell. • Notify the school promptly of any absence. • Work in partnership with the school to address any attendance concerns.
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4. Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) Framework

We use a tiered approach to identify and respond to student absences.

Attendance Category	Definition	School Response
Regular Attendance	90% or more (absent less than 5 days a term)	<u>Tier 1 – Universal Support:</u> • Acknowledged and celebrated through class and school-wide recognition. • Teachers maintain positive communication with whānau.
Irregular Attendance	80%-89% (absent 5-9.5 days a term)	<u>Tier 2 – Targeted Support:</u> • The teacher contacts whānau to understand the reasons for absence. • The school offers support to address any emerging barriers (e.g., transport, uniform). • Attendance is monitored closely for improvement.
Moderate Absence	70%-79% (absent 10-14.5 days a term)	<u>Tier 3 – Intensive Support:</u> • Principal/Senior Leader meets with whānau and students to develop a supportive plan. • The plan may involve connecting the family with community resources. • A formal attendance improvement plan is created, with clear goals and check-ins.

Chronic Absence	Less than 70% (absent 15 or more days a term)	<u>Tier 4 – Referral:</u> - All previous steps have been documented and a formal referral is made to the Ministry of Education Attendance Service. - The school continues to work closely with the Attendance Service and whānau.
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5. Procedures for Absence Notification and Follow-up

5.1 Daily Attendance Recording

- Teachers will mark the electronic attendance register for all students by 9:15 am each morning and 1:40 pm each afternoon.
- Attendance will be submitted daily to the Ministry of Education.
- The school is using the refreshed set of attendance codes as required by the Ministry.

5.2 First-Day Absence Follow-up

- If a student is marked absent without a prior explanation, the administration staff will contact the student's primary caregiver via phone call or text message by 10:00 am.
- If the caregiver cannot be reached, alternative contacts may be tried.
- Unexplained absences that remain unresolved by the end of the school day will be coded as 'E' (Explained and unjustified) or 'T' (Truancy), based on the situation and prior communication. We will avoid leaving any '?' codes on the register.

5.3 Absence Notification by Whānau

- Parents/Caregivers are expected to notify the school of an absence by 9:00am on the day of the absence.
- This can be done via the school app or phone call to the school office at 03 32540679

5.4 Justified vs. Unjustified Absences

- Justified: Medical for prolonged illness, bereavement, or religious observances are considered justified. The code 'M' or 'J' will be used.
- Unjustified: Planned holidays during term time or extended family visits are considered unjustified. The code 'E' will be used.

6. Addressing Barriers to Attendance

We will recognising the unique challenges of a semi-rural community based on each individual case. We will proactively address common barriers or trends that are identified.

7. Addressing 'Late' Students

- Students and or caregivers must come through the school office and let the School Secretary know the reason for being late.
- Lateness is reviewed weekly by the Principal and Senior Management Team to identify students with frequent lateness.
- The teacher contacts whānau to understand the reasons for absence.
- The school offers support to address any emerging barriers.

8. Data Monitoring and Plan Review

- Attendance data is reviewed fortnightly by the Principal to identify students in the Irregular and Moderate absence categories.
- The Board will receive a termly attendance report- including information provided by the Every Day matters report.

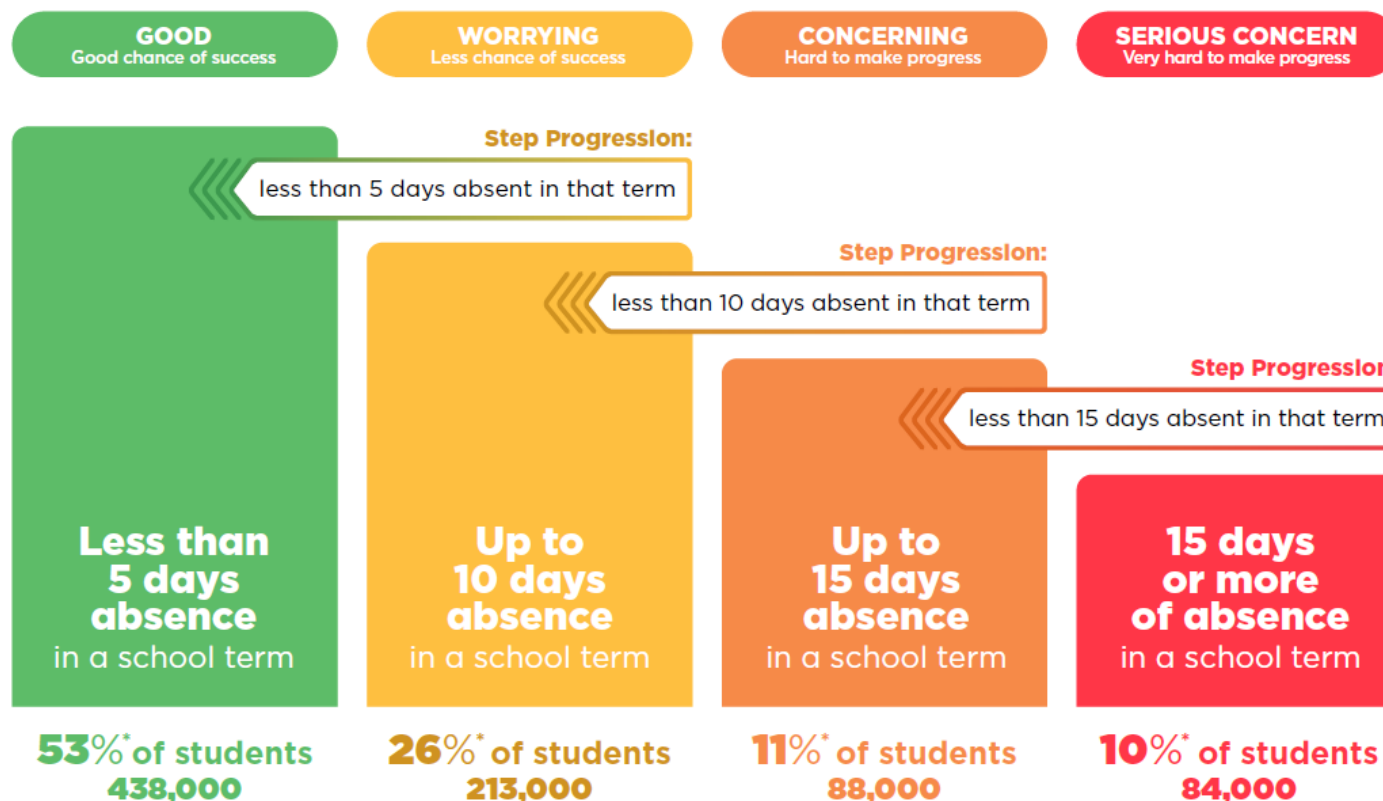
9. Ministry of Education Guidance:

- The [Ministry of Education NZ](#) provides a guide for schools and kura on managing student attendance.
- The [Ministry of Education NZ](#) refreshed attendance codes

Stepped Attendance Response – STAR

Responding to all absences

The Government's target is for **80%** of students to attend regularly,
that is to attend school more than **90%** of the time.



* These approximate numbers of students are based on the numbers of students in the regular attendance categories in Term 2 2024.

Stepped Attendance Response – STAR

Responding to all absences

The Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) sets expectations for school, student, parent/guardian, Ministry of Education and broader system responses to student absence.

It provides a series of activities that should be considered when students meet absence thresholds. The actions taken will be tailored to the reasons for absence, for example a student with a chronic illness will require tailored supports for their education.

The activities include considering prosecution for absences if appropriate support is offered and not taken up.

Day-to-day operations

Schools:

- Assess attendance history of new students and share attendance history when students move between schools.
- Survey students and parents to support effective teaching practice and engagement
- School Leadership and Boards actively minimise disruptions to the school day and week e.g. use callback days, parent teacher meetings held after school
- 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.

Ministry of Education:

- Convene termly meetings for leaders from local schools and relevant agencies to discuss students with serious attendance concerns where a multi-agency response is required
- Prepares templated materials for schools to adapt and use to promote or respond to attendance
- Provide attendance data reports for individual schools and Kāhui Ako
- Provide schools with a regularly updated list of agencies that schools can work with to support students
- Contract supports and services that are effective at returning students to regular attendance (e.g. Attendance Service)

Less than 5 days absence in a school term

PARENTS/GUARDIANS

- Ensure student attends every day they are able
- Reinforce good attendance habits
- Support other parents to reinforce good attendance habits
- Open communication with school
- Follow school attendance management plan and associated policies and processes

SCHOOLS

- Clear communication to parents on attendance expectations on enrolment, at the start of school year, and each term
- Communicate to parents what steps the school will take in the event their child is absent from school
- Communicate good attendance habits to students and parents
- Monitor attendance
- Communicate to parents about every absence
- Maintain contact details of parents
- Provide students with regular updates on their own attendance
- Report regularly to parents on attendance of their child
- Support students getting to school
- Use school level approaches to promote good social and learning environment

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

- Monitor that schools have their attendance policy and attendance management plan on website and it is reviewed as required
- Monitor aggregate data and attendance patterns to identify challenges and opportunities at regional and national levels
- Maintain regular contact with schools and support policy development and interventions/supports
- Support schools to be inclusive and safe

53% of students. 438,000

Up to 10 days absence in a school term

PARENTS/GUARDIANS

- Return student to regular attendance
- Contact school to discuss reasons for absence
- Support student to catch up on missed learning
- Engage in supports offered

SCHOOLS

- Send formal notification and contact parent/guardian to discuss reasons for absence
- Support students to catch up missed learning where required
- Use in-school resources as appropriate to remove barriers e.g. counselor, 2nd hand uniform shop, PB4L

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

- Support school with formal notification where required

Plus
previous
responses



26% of students. 213,000

Stepped Attendance Response – STAR

Responding to all absences

Up to 15 days absence in a school term

PARENTS/GUARDIANS

- Return student to regular attendance
- Attend meeting at the school to analyse reasons for absence and to collaborate on a support plan
- Implement strategies at home

SCHOOLS

- Send escalated formal notification to parents
- 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

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

- Identify schools with a significant proportion of students at amber level and offer additional support
- Facilitate multi-agency response and support school to implement and monitor improvement plan
- Promote resources and services to support schools to return students to regular attendance
- Identify and respond to localised barriers
- Monitor regional interventions
- Facilitate involvement of other agencies.
- Reprioritise regional support resources to where most needed/effective
- Develop new initiatives/policies if needed
- Support parent/guardian and school to resolve conflict if needed

Plus
previous
responses



11% of students. 88,000

15 days or more absence in a school term

PARENTS/GUARDIANS

- Return student to regular attendance
- Engage in improvement plan
- Participate in regular meetings

SCHOOLS

- Send warning notice and make contact to arrange meeting with parents
- Escalate to multi-agency response
- 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

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

- Identify schools with a significant proportion of students at red level and offer additional support
- Facilitate multi-agency response and support school to implement and monitor improvement plan
- Provide direct support to parents where required
- Coordinate regional response where required
- Consider system-wide initiatives for high-risk attendance
- Undertake Ministry-led prosecution when considered appropriate if supports are offered and not taken up, when requested by schools
- Work with the Attendance Service to re-enrol students who are not enrolled

Plus
previous
responses



10% of students. 84,000

