



Māruawai College Attendance Management Plan and supporting STAR procedures

Introduction

Regular attendance is essential for every student's learning, wellbeing, and long-term success. Daily attendance supports academic progress, social development, and a sense of belonging. Conversely, irregular attendance - through lateness or unexplained absences - disrupts learning and can lead to disengagement.

The Board of Trustees is committed to taking all reasonable steps to ensure students attend regularly. Improving attendance is a strategic priority for 2026, with two key objectives:

- Improving regular termly attendance rates
- Reducing the number of students who are chronically absent

Parents and caregivers play an important role in supporting attendance. This plan outlines our shared responsibilities and the processes we use to encourage regular, consistent attendance for all ākonga.

Current Attendance Rates

	2025				2026			
	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
Regular Attendance (Above 90%)	64%	55%	55%	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Irregular Attendance (80% - 90%)	20%	24%	24%	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Moderate Absence (70% - 80%)	8%	10%	13%	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Chronic Absence (Below 70%)	8%	11%	8%	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC

Student Attendance

These procedures ensure that all students are accounted for throughout the school day, during school activities, and in emergencies. Attendance data supports early identification of concerns and timely intervention.

In accordance with the Education and Training Act 2020 (Sections 35–36):

- Students aged 6–16 must be enrolled at a registered school and attend regularly unless exempt.
- The Board ensures reasonable steps are taken to support regular attendance.

Attendance information is shared with the Ministry of Education for national monitoring and funding purposes. Records are retained for seven years.

Parent, Guardian, and Student Responsibilities

Under the Education and Training Act 2020 (Section 244), parents and guardians have a legal obligation to ensure their children attend school regularly.

At Māruawai College, we expect parents, guardians, and caregivers to:

- Notify the school as soon as possible if their child will be late or absent, providing the reason for the absence.
- Arrange appointments, holidays, and trips **outside** of school hours or during school holidays wherever possible.
- Work collaboratively with the school to address and manage any attendance concerns should they arise.

Students are expected to be punctual, attend all timetabled classes, and follow school procedures when late or leaving early.

Recording Attendance

Attendance is recorded daily and accurately using Ministry-approved codes. Attendance data is sent to the Ministry of Education each day, as required.

Classroom teachers, itinerant staff, and relievers are responsible for ensuring accurate roll entry. The office team monitors absences, updates codes, and informs staff of concerns.

Absences are categorised as either:

- **Justified** – e.g., illness, medical appointments, tangihanga, bereavement
- **Unjustified** – e.g., unapproved holidays or unsatisfactory reason

Monitoring Attendance

The Deputy Principal and Deans review attendance weekly to identify patterns and intervene early. Hauora teachers also receive weekly updates to follow up with students and confirm changes such as late arrivals or early departures.

Office staff follow up unexplained absences daily and support early intervention for emerging concerns. All staff are encouraged to report concerns directly to the Deputy Principal.

The Ministry of Education uses school data to monitor national trends, including regular attendance rates and unexplained absences.

Student Absences

Parents and caregivers are expected to notify the school as early as possible (ideally before the start of the school day) if their child will be absent. This can be done by calling the school office on 03 208 9130, option 1 for the Senior Campus and option 2 for the Junior Campus, or through the Helix Parental App. A reason for the absence must be provided. If no explanation is received, Māruawai College will contact parents/caregivers directly to follow up.

Under the Education and Training Act 2020 (Section 45), the Principal may approve a student's absence from school for up to five days when there is a justified reason (for example, illness, injury, a funeral or tangihanga, or another reason deemed appropriate). For planned absences, parents/caregivers are asked to submit a request to the Principal at least one week in advance.

When considering planned absence requests, the Principal will take into account:

- The educational benefit of the activity or time away for the student, and
- The length of time the student will be absent from their regular school programme.

If a student is marked present but does not arrive at class, or if a student goes missing during the school day (including during EOTC activities), staff will first check for any internal recording errors (e.g., if the student has gone home sick). If necessary, the school will contact parents/caregivers or emergency contacts. We may also follow our [Missing Student Procedure](#).

Following Up Unexplained or Concerning Absences

Māruawai College takes all reasonable steps to support regular attendance and to follow up on unexplained or irregular absences.

Follow-up actions may include:

- Reviewing attendance data to identify patterns,
- Contacting parents/caregivers to clarify expectations and reasons for absence,
- Meeting with students and whānau to plan strategies that support improved attendance,
- Working with teachers and support staff to re-engage students in learning where needed.

Under the Education and Training Act 2020 (Section 48), the Board has appointed an Attendance Officer to follow up directly with students and families. Where ongoing or persistent absence continues, we may also refer students to Attendance Services or other external agencies for further support.

School Practice

Setting and Reinforcing Attendance Expectations

At Māruawai College, regular attendance is promoted as essential for student wellbeing, progress, and engagement. We set clear expectations with whānau and reinforce these consistently:

- At enrolment, attendance expectations and procedures are explained to parents/caregivers and students.
- Weekly emails to whānau showing their child's attendance to reinforce the importance of attendance and share reminders or guidance where needed.

Process for Recording Attendance

- Class teachers complete the morning roll on Helix in the first 10 minutes of every lesson. Students will either be marked with a P for present or a ? if they are not present. If a student arrives after the roll has been submitted, the teacher will reopen the roll and change the ? to a L and note the minutes late.
- A Teams message is sent to staff if any rolls are not completed in time.
- If the office staff member is away, the Deputy Principal will complete this follow-up.

Steps for Following Up Unexplained Absences

1. The office staff member checks Helix for any students marked Unknown (?) and cross-references these with phone calls, texts, app messages, and other notifications from whānau.
2. Any absences still unexplained are followed up by phone call, and the roll is updated accordingly by the office administrator on Helix.

3. If a reason provided may be unjustified or indicate truancy, this is referred to the Deputy Principal to determine the correct attendance code.
4. Ongoing illness may require a medical certificate where appropriate.
5. The Attendance Officer may undertake home visits where needed.
6. For repeated unjustified absences, letters are sent home, and follow-up meetings are held with whānau.
7. In cases of chronic absence, a referral is made to the Attendance Service.

Use of STAR Response

Māruawai College uses the Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) thresholds to identify when absence patterns require action or support.

- Responses are guided by the [STAR Attendance Policy](#)
- Communication with whānau is supported by Ministry of Education attendance template letters and guidance.
- Where appropriate, [Individual Attendance Plans](#) are developed with whānau.

Good chance of success	Less chance of success	Hard to make progress	Very hard to make progress
GOOD ATTENDANCE	WORRYING ATTENDANCE	CONCERNING ATTENDANCE	VERY CONCERNING ATTENDANCE
0 1 2 3 4	5 6 7 8 9	10 11 12 13 14	15+
If your child is regularly attending, you can expect	If your child has some absences, you can expect	If your child has many absences, you can expect	If your child has a lot of absences, you can expect
We will stay in regular contact with you about your child's attendance. We will follow up to find out the reason when they aren't at school.	We will work with you to identify any barriers to attendance. We may provide support to help them catch up and stay on track.	We will work with you to develop a plan to support their attendance and learning. We may seek support of the Attendance Service or other agencies to remove barriers to attendance.	We will continue to work with you to implement the plan to support their attendance and learning. We will seek support of the Attendance Service or other agencies to support their return to school.

Actions for Attendance by Threshold Level

Up to 5 days absence per term

- Monitor attendance daily and log on HELIX.

- Notify parents of every absence via SMS and weekly reports.
- Hauora Teachers discuss absences with students and whānau if unexplained.
- Provide regular attendance feedback to students and parents.

5 to 10 days absence per term

- Send formal notification letter to whānau and request contact to discuss reasons.
- Deans and SLT link review case and inform Attendance Officer.
- Support students to catch up on missed learning and remove barriers (e.g., counselling, uniform, loan laptop).

10 to 15 days absence per term

- Send escalated formal notification and hold whānau meeting to analyse reasons.
- Develop and implement an Individualised Attendance Plan.
- Engage in-school resources and request Ministry or agency support if needed.

Over 15 days absence per term

- Send third letter (warning or potential prosecution) and insist on whānau meeting.
- Escalate to ROCK ON (multi-agency response) and refer to MoE Attendance Services.
- Implement and monitor improvement plan; consider prosecution or unenrolment if supports fail.

Supporting Students Returning to School

When students return to school after a period of absence, Māruawai College takes steps to ensure they are welcomed back positively and supported to re-engage in learning and friendships.

- **Differentiation of Learning:** Classroom teachers will adjust and scaffold learning to help students catch up and re-establish progress without unnecessary pressure if required.
- **Positive Classroom Culture:** Teachers will actively foster an inclusive and supportive classroom environment so returning students feel valued, settled, and connected with peers.
- **Ongoing Monitoring:** The level and duration of absence will determine the degree of follow-up. Hauora Teachers and Deans will monitor wellbeing, engagement, and learning progress to identify any emerging concerns early.

- Whānau Communication: Deans will maintain regular communication with parents and whānau to share reintegration progress and discuss any supports, adjustments, or next steps needed.

Monitoring and Measuring Progress

- The Principal holds overall responsibility for leading and overseeing attendance improvement across the school.
- The Deputy Principal and Office Administrator work together to ensure attendance coding is accurate and consistent, discussing coding decisions in a timely manner as they arise.
- Attendance data is monitored regularly, with the Principal providing a termly attendance summary to the Board of Trustees.
- The Guidance Team will review attendance patterns and progress at fortnightly meetings. These reviews will inform next steps, targeted support, and any required adjustments for the following term.
- A comprehensive attendance report will be provided to the Board of Trustees each term. This report will include analysis of data, trends, patterns, and relevant contextual narratives.

Approval Date	Effective Date	Review Date
	26 th January 2026	14 th November 2026