



Merivale School Matuatia Te Ako
Te Kura o Tūtarawānanga Learning First

Merivale School

Te Kura o

Tūtarawānanga

Attendance Handbook

Our Vision

To create pathways through our Localised Curriculum that engage tamariki and inspire them to fulfill their potential.

Our Values

- **Tuakiri** - identity, Pride, Whakapapa, Uniqueness
- **Manaaki**- Respectful, Responsible, Helpful and Kind
- **Matatoa**-Explore, Problem Solver, Perseverance, courageous.
- **Hono**- Belonging, Collaboration, relationships, connection.

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Rationale

Consistent attendance is a critical factor in student achievement and wellbeing. Data continues to show a strong correlation between low attendance and low academic outcomes—students who are regularly present in class are more likely to engage in learning and achieve success.

Under New Zealand law, all students aged 6 to 16 are required to attend school every day. Ensuring this happens is a shared responsibility across our school community. When students attend regularly, they are more likely to feel connected to their peers, teachers, and learning environment—key elements that support both academic and personal growth.

There are many reasons why students may not attend school, and improving attendance requires a proactive, coordinated approach. This handbook outlines the roles and responsibilities of all staff, as well as the targeted strategies we will implement as part of our commitment to the Stepped Attendance Response Plan. Our collective goal is to raise overall attendance to at least 80%, with a focus on early identification, timely intervention, and strong relationships with whānau.

Accurate attendance marking is not only a professional expectation—it is a legal requirement. Attendance data is used for a range of purposes, including legal matters such as custody arrangements, and is now automatically uploaded daily to the Ministry of Education. This makes accuracy and timeliness more important than ever.

By working together and following the steps outlined in this plan, we can ensure that every student at Merivale School Te Kura o Tūtarawānanga has the opportunity to succeed through regular, meaningful engagement in learning.

2026 Term-by-Term Attendance Goals

Term	Regular (90%+)	Irregular (80–90%)	Moderate (70–80%)	Chronic (<70%)
Term 1	50%	25%	15%	10%
Term 2	55%	27%	11%	7%
Term 3	60%	28%	8%	4%
Term 4	65%	29%	4%	2%

Roles and Responsibilities

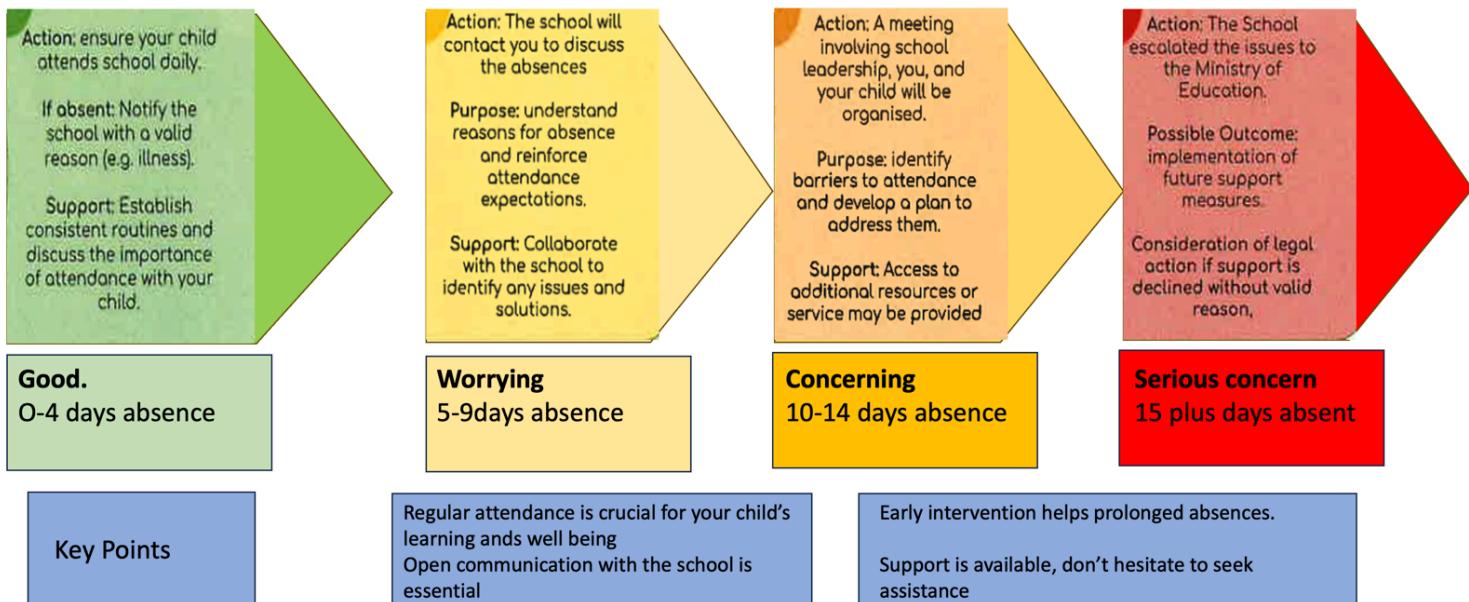
Students	Expected to attend every day, arrive on time, and remain on-site during the school day.
Whānau and Caregivers	Ensure student attendance and inform the school of absences on the day.
Kaiako/teachers	Mark attendance accurately at the beginning of the lesson. Engage students in fulfilling purposeful learning. Provide opportunities for students to make up for missed work. Acknowledge good attendance. Identify concerning patterns of absence. Discuss concerns at weekly attendance hui.
Office Manager	Check rolls are marked twice daily, send SMS messages out to whānau who have not made contact with the kura. Record phone and text messages on Hero.
Kaiawhina (teacher assistants)	Communicate with students about their attendance, observe patterns and report to the Deputy Principal responsible for attendance.
Tumuaki Tuarua /Deputy Principal responsible for attendance	Monitor weekly attendance data, support mentors, and intervene when attendance patterns emerge. Celebrate good attendance at Friday Hui's Track daily data, contact whānau, and coordinate with external agencies as needed. Provide attendance data at Kaiako hui twice termly. Contact parents daily for absent students. Record contact on Hero
SLT	Lead the attendance strategy, support interventions, and have an awareness of referrals to external agencies.

Attendance Procedures

Office Manager	<p>Daily.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support roll compliance.• If known, record reasons for non attendance.• Send SMS message to whanau whose tamaiti has been marked Truant or absence is unexplained <p>WHEN NECESSARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• On the direction of the Principal, refer students to the Attendance Service after 20+ days of absence.
Kaiako	<p>DAILY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accurately mark the roll twice daily• Read the comments that have been entered regarding absences.• Use correct codes. <p>WEEKLY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitor attendance patterns and refer concerns to the Deputy Principal in charge of attendance.• Celebrate consistent attendance in class. <p>REGULARLY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicate with students about attendance patterns, both good and concerning.
Tumuaki Tuarua/ Deputy Principal	<p>DAILY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitor flagged students and intervene immediately.• Track student attendance and flag concerning trends.• Contact whānau for unexplained absences. <p>WEEKLY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review attendance data for all classes.• Contact whānau for students <80%.• Identify students with good attendance for celebratory assemblies.

	<p>REGULARLY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide Weekly hui with the attendance data generated by Hero. • Regular communication via phone calls, letters and meetings with whanau of students in the irregular, concerning or very concerning categories • Conduct home visits and escalate concerns to external services. • Report attendance trends and patterns to the BOT • Review attendance targets • Write attendance updates for the newsletter • Introduce programmes that encourages attendance to chronic attenders
SLT	<p>REGULARLY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with the Deputy Principal about interventions and referrals. • Support responses to chronic absence.

Star Attendance flow chart for parents and Caregivers. Stepped attendance response (STAR)



Attendance Codes

Code Group	Sub-Group	Code	Examples
Present	On-site	P – Present	In class and present
		L – Late to class	Late to class and present
		V – Unsupervised exam study	Unsupervised exam study (ON-SITE)
		N – Present but out of class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal appointment On-site school-based activity e.g. cultural / sporting event like Sports Day. Temporary removal from class Prefect meeting Time in sickbay
	Off-site	D – Approved external appointment	<p>If a student cannot attend an appointment out of hours e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medical appointments (doctor, dentist), specialist appointments appointments with other professionals (e.g., counsellor, social worker, play therapist,).
		Q – Board approved offsite learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tangihanga Cultural / Arts/ Sports event Performing / Playing / participating in a regional or national school event Overseas BUT committing to a learning programme Wellbeing plan or flexible learning plan, = Q on days off Attending an offsite program for IEP

Code Group	Sub-Group	Code	Examples
		A – Alternative provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students present at <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternative Education Health school
Absent	Justified Absences	M – Illness / Medical absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absent due to illness (includes health-related e.g. anxiety)
		J – Explained and approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family arrangement Overseas holiday (no work or commitment to [work])
		U – Stood down or suspended	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stood down or suspended
	Exam Leave	X – Exam Leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study leave off-site (not included in MOE attendance calculations)
	Unjustified Absences	T – Truant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student is absent without explanation
		E – Explained but not approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absent without justifiable reason e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Didn't come to school because of sports day Went to watch siblings school production Birthday
		G – Holiday during term time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holiday taken. Student refuses to commit to study or learning program.
		? – Unknown reason (temporary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a TEMPORARY code. This will be updated once the reason is specified.

