

St John's Girls' School

Te Kura Kōtiro o Hato Hoani

Attendance Management Plan 2026–2027

Approval and Review

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Purpose

To ensure all tamariki at St John's Girls' School attend school regularly, supporting their right to access education and reach their full potential. Our goal aligns with the New Zealand Government's national target: **80% of students attend more than 90% of the time.**

This plan outlines proactive and responsive strategies to improve and sustain student attendance.

1. Clear Expectations for Attendance

Girls are expected to attend school **every day they are able.**

Attendance expectations will be communicated:

- At enrolment
- On declaration forms [start of the year]
- At the beginning of each year
- At the beginning of each term
- Via newsletters, social media and website updates [as needed]
- Through individual conversations when necessary

2. Role and Responsibilities

Parents/Caregivers/Whānau

- Ensure their daughter attends school daily unless sick or otherwise excused.
- Reinforce positive attendance habits.
- Maintain communication with the school regarding any absence.
- Engage in school attendance processes and support when attendance issues arise.

School

- Communicate clearly and regularly about attendance expectations and processes.
- Monitor and record attendance daily.
- Notify parents of all absences promptly [via a phone call from the office manager].
- Provide attendance updates to parents regularly [via term reports and on the Portal].
- Support tamariki to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Report attendance patterns to the Board as part of the Principal's Board report.
- Use a tiered response system aligned with the STAR framework.

Ministry of Education

- Monitor attendance data and school compliance with attendance policies.
- Support schools with tools, data analysis, and attendance services.
- Facilitate multi-agency responses for chronic attendance issues.
- Provide direct support for complex cases, including legal action if necessary.

3. Stepped Attendance Response [STAR] - Unjustified Absence

Step 1: Good Attendance [Less than 5 days absence per term]

- Monitor attendance as part of normal practice.
- Communicate with whānau about the importance of attendance.

Step 2: Worrying Attendance [Up to 10 days absence per term]

- Contact parents to discuss reasons for absence.
- Support students to catch up on missed work [in case of medical only].
- Offer in-school resources to help address barriers.
- Formal notification if concerning patterns emerge.
- Record interventions and monitor attendance closely.

Step 3: Concerning Attendance [Up to 15 days absence per term]

- Escalated formal notification to parents.
- Hold face-to-face meetings to discuss reasons for absences.
- Collaboratively develop a plan tailored to the student and whānau situation.
- Engage external agencies as appropriate [Attendance Service, Oranga Tamariki, Public Health Nurse].
- Review and monitor progress regularly [e.g fortnightly check-ins].

Step 4: Serious Concern [15+ days absence per term]

- Formal warning letter and urgent parent meeting.
- Initiate multi-agency response.
- Implement and monitor an Intensive Attendance Plan.
- Consider Ministry-led support or legal action if all interventions are unsuccessful and support is refused.
- Unenrol only if all options have been exhausted and following the Ministry of Education guidelines.

4. Procedures to Support Attendance

At St John's Girls' School, we follow the procedures below to support and manage student attendance. These have been developed in response to:

- Our attendance data over the last two years
- Ministry of Education: *Every Day Matters* reporting
- Stepped Attendance Response [STAR] guidance
- Schoolwide attendance self-review using the Ministry of Education Reference Guide

Recording Attendance

Every day a child is away, parents/caregivers are expected to notify the school and provide a clear reason for absence. Notifying the school can be done by:

- Phoning or emailing the school office
- Using the absence form on Skool Loop or the school website
- Using the absence form on the school Portal

Every day, classroom rolls are marked on Kamar. Non-school staff use paper rolls and contact the office. The office then records this on Kamar.

The school monitors daily attendance by checking on any students whose absence is unknown. Using parent/caregiver notification, the correct attendance code is then given.

Planned Absences [Holidays]: While we acknowledge travel and family time can provide valuable experiences, these absences are unjustified under Board policy and law. Parents/caregivers are expected to notify the school of term-time holidays. They will then be issued a letter stating the unjustified absence and the attendance code given.

Planned Absences [Recurring Appointments]

The School Board and Principal recognise that certain medical or specialist requirements may necessitate a regular, weekly absence; however, all students are legally required to attend school whenever it is open.

Parents and caregivers must seek prior written permission from the Principal for any recurring weekly appointment. This request should be submitted at least one week before the arrangement is intended to start. In accordance with national attendance guidelines, the Principal will consider the following when reviewing a request:

- **Necessity & Timing:** Whether the appointment is for a specialist service that cannot be scheduled outside of school hours [8:40 am – 3:00 pm] or during school holidays.
- **Documentation:** Evidence of the appointment's recurring nature [e.g. a letter from a DHB, therapist, or medical practitioner] must be provided.

Once written permission is granted, parents must still follow standard health and safety protocols by signing the student in/out at the school office for every occurrence. The Principal reserves the right to review this permission at the end of each term based on the student's academic progress and overall attendance data. The absence reason will be recorded and shared with the Ministry of Education.

5. Justified Absence

Five-Day Rule: For any continuous illness or injury resulting in five or more consecutive days of absence, a medical certificate from a registered health professional must be provided to the school office.

Termly Threshold: A medical certificate will be required for any additional medical leave once a student has accumulated a total of five days of medical absence within a single school term, even if those days were not consecutive.

Where justified absence from school is more than 10 intermittent days over two terms, the school will notify the parent/caregiver and request a conversation about how best to support well-being and attendance.

The school monitors daily attendance by checking on any students whose absence is unknown. Using parent/caregiver notification, the correct attendance code is then given.

6. Attendance Code and Explanations

We record student attendance using specific codes. Absences can be either justified [e.g. for medical reasons] or unjustified [e.g. for an unapproved holiday or other reasons]. These are noted in our attendance on Kamar.

PRESENT CODES

Present [P]	Late to class [L]	Present but not in class [N]	Board Approved Off-Site Learning [Q]	Approved External Appointment [D]
The student is present in class	The student has arrived at school after 8:40am and is in class.	Student is present but is out of class due to an on-site activity [sporting or cultural activity], internal appointment or temporary removal from class.	<p>The student is off-site on Board-approved activities:</p> <p>School organised field trips, including camps</p> <p>Tutoring when a specialist tutor has been gained for diagnosed barriers to learning [e.g. SPELD diagnosis]. Prior permission from the Principal must be sought, and the diagnosis must be from a reputable nationwide source.</p> <p>Activities organised through MOE support</p> <p><i>When students do not return from activities, parents/caregivers should inform the school of the reason why, or a T code will be used.</i></p>	<p>The student is off site at a short-term appointment:</p> <p>Medical appointment [doctor, dentist, physio]</p> <p>Appointment with a social worker, counsellor or psychologist</p> <p>Meeting with Government agencies</p> <p>Court proceedings</p> <p>Principal-approved learning specialists</p> <p><i>When students do not return from activities, parents/caregivers should inform the school of the reason why, or a T code will be used.</i></p>

JUSTIFIED ABSENCE CODES

Explained and approved [J]	Illness/Medical Absence [M]	Stood Down or Suspended [U]
<p>Explained family emergencies</p> <p>Bereavement</p> <p>Extreme weather conditions/road closures</p> <p>Competing in non-school events at a regional or national level [not Board approved] requires prior leave to be sought from the Principal.</p> <p>Important cultural events, such as citizenship ceremonies, require prior</p>	<p>Short illness or injury or medical event, the student is unable to self-regulate or co-regulate.</p>	<p>The student is absent due to a formal stand-down or suspension.</p>

leave to be sought from the Principal.

UNJUSTIFIED ABSENCE CODES

Explained but not approved [E]	Holiday during Term Time [G]	Unknown [?]	Truant [T]
<p>An explanation has been provided for the student's absence, but it does not meet the school's attendance policy.</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <p>Personal grooming</p> <p>Visiting family or friends</p> <p>Student is avoidably tired [e.g. after holidays, late nights, events]</p> <p>The student is avoiding school-arranged events, such as sports days or special days</p> <p>Birthday celebrations</p> <p>The parent/caregiver is sick</p> <p>Parent is working away from home</p> <p>Persistent and unaddressed school refusal</p> <p>Attending private coaching, lessons or outside of school activities [e.g. dance or swimming lessons]</p>	<p>The student is on holiday [domestically or internationally].</p>	<p>The temporary code is used when a student's absence is unexplained. This is replaced by the appropriate code or T after attempts by the school to reach the parent/caregiver have failed.</p>	<p>The parent or caregiver supplies no reason or 'child is not at school today'.</p>

7. Attendance Policy and Communications

Additional Attendance Procedure information can be found in our school policies and procedures: [Attendance Policy - St John's Girls' School](#)

8. Additional Attendance Resources [Ministry of Education]

Stepped Attendance Response – STAR



Responding to all absence

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





Individual Student Attendance activities

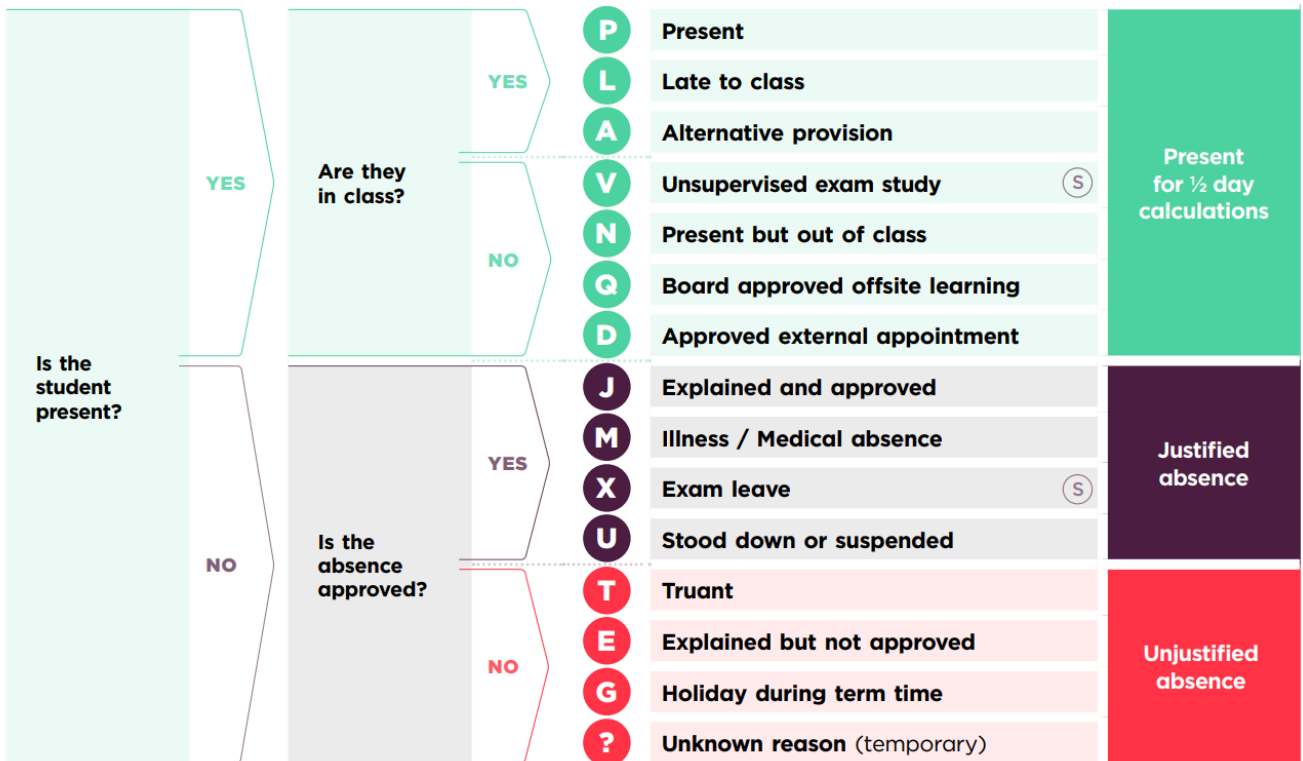
Individualised student responses to absence thresholds

Less than 5 days absence in a school term	Up to 10 days absence in a school term	Up to 15 days absence in a school term	15 days or more of absence in a school term
<p>Parents/Guardians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 <p>Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate with parents about every absence Maintain contact details of parents Provide student with regular updates on their own attendance Report regularly to parents on attendance of their child Support student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> attending school to continue learning if unable to attend school every day, including using Ministry approved well-being or transitional plans, or health schools where appropriate to access other education pathways where appropriate 	<p>Parents/Guardians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return student to regular attendance Contact school to discuss reasons for absence and impact on learning Support student to catch up on missed learning Engage in supports offered <p>Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact parents to discuss reasons for absence and impact on learning Support student to catch up missed learning where required Use in-school resources as appropriate to remove barriers e.g. counsellor, alternative timetables, PB4L 	<p>Parents/Guardians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return student to regular attendance Participate in meeting with school to analyse reasons for absence and to collaborate on a support plan Implement strategies at home <p>Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact parents to escalate concerns Hold meeting to analyse reasons for absence and to collaborate on a support plan Develop and implement a support 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 Attendance Service or other agencies as needed 	<p>Parents/Guardians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return student to regular attendance Engage in support plan Participate in regular meetings <p>Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact parents to inform of escalated response Request support from Attendance Service or other agencies as needed Participate in multi-agency response Maintain implementation and monitoring of support plan Undertake school-led prosecution, or request Ministry-led prosecution, when considered appropriate if supports are offered and not taken up Unenroll if student will not be returning to school
<p>Ministry of Education</p> <p>Attendance Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with chronically absent and non-enrolled students and their families to identify and address barriers to attendance. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> agreeing changes to be made, addressing some unmet basic needs impacting on attendance, and referring students to other services as necessary Collaborate with schools so that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> they remain engaged as plans are developed and implemented, and they can continue to provide support as the student increases their attendance at school, and the additional Attendance Service support is withdrawn <p>Regional and National teams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate involvement of other agencies Support schools to access other education pathways for a student where appropriate Consider system-wide initiatives for high-risk attendance Reprioritise regional support resources to where most needed/effective Undertake Ministry-led prosecution when considered appropriate if supports are offered and not taken up, when requested by schools 			

Stepped Attendance Response - STAR: Responding to all absence

Version 2: July 2025

Attendance Code Decision Tree



For more information visit: education.govt.nz/attendance-register

(S) Secondary schools only

Present for ½ 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 S

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 S

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.