



RSHS Attendance Management Plan

This Attendance Management Plan outlines how Rototuna Senior High School meets its obligations to monitor, record and respond to student attendance. It applies to all enrolled students and sets out the roles, responsibilities, procedures and stepped responses used to support regular student attendance.

Strategic Priorities

Regular school attendance is important for students to achieve their educational potential. High attendance at school correlates strongly with positive socialisation, engagement with learning, stronger academic achievement, and general wellbeing. The Ministry of Education guidelines considers a student to be 'regularly attending' if their attendance is above 90% or more. While 90% is regular, it still means a student misses an average of 1 in 10 days of school, which equates to almost 100 hours of lost learning time. The government target is that 80% of students will be regularly attending school (present for more than 90% of the term) by 2030.

Our Strategic Goal: To significantly lift regular attendance across our kura, supporting improved engagement, learning, and wellbeing for all students. Our current rate of regular attendance (students attending more than 90% of the time) sits at 40.6%. We have committed to lifting this to **50% by the end of 2026**. In addition, **30% of our students currently attend between 80–90% of the time**. We aim to increase this group to **35% by the end of 2026**, recognising this cohort as a key leverage point for improving overall regular attendance.

Roles and Responsibilities

Attendance is a shared responsibility between the School, learners, and whānau. We monitor daily attendance to ensure student safety, meet our legal obligations, and identify learners who may be experiencing barriers to engagement, achievement, or wellbeing. Whānau/caregivers have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school and are expected to notify the school of absences by 8.30am, arrange appointments outside of school hours where possible, and work in partnership with staff to address attendance concerns. Learners are expected to attend school every day they are able, arrive on time and ready to learn, engage positively with attendance support processes, and communicate honestly with whānau and staff about any barriers to attendance.

Whānau & Caregivers:

- **Notify:** Contact the school through the school app or by phone, text, or email by **8:30 am** if your child will be absent.
- **Explain:** Provide a reason for the absence as soon as possible upon receiving communications from school.
- **Plan:** Try to arrange medical or dental appointments outside of school hours or during holidays. Avoid, where possible, in term holidays.



- **Support:** Work with school staff to manage any attendance issues and overcome barriers to attending school.

Students:

- **Attend:** Be at school when required and arrive on time for all classes - *'Every Minute Matters'*
→ **Participate:** Engage fully in school life and off-site activities.
→ **Communicate:** Communicate honestly with whānau/caregivers and staff about barriers to attendance.

School Staff:

- **Record:** Accurately record attendance at the start of every class.
→ **Monitor:** Follow up on any unexplained absences and communicate any concerns to whānau/families early.

Procedures/supporting documentation

Reporting an absence:

If your young person is absent, please notify the school before 8:30am by:

☎ Calling (07) 854 0541, press 2 for Senior High absences

✉ Emailing seniorabsences@rhs.school.nz

Include your students' name, whānau class, reason for absence, and expected duration. Unexplained absences will be marked as 'T' for Truant. Please note that students are not permitted to report their own absence. This must come from a parent/caregiver.

When an absence is notified by a parent/caregiver, the school uses the Ministry of Education (MOE) Attendance Decision Tree to assign the correct attendance code and determine whether the absence is 'justified' or 'unjustified'.



Attendance Code Decision Tree



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

(S) Secondary schools only

Leaving During the School Day:

Yr 11 and 12 students may not leave the school during school hours except by special arrangement; for example, a whānau/caregiver request (verbal or written) for the student to attend a medical appointment. The student must get a Leave Pass from their Kaiarahi (Whānau Teacher) and then sign out at Kahui Rangatahi (Student Services). Yr 13 students (if they meet certain criteria) are able to apply for a leave pass, which means they can leave school grounds during break times. Students are not permitted in vehicles during this time.

My students needs to regularly leave school early or have regular time off:

Please complete this form if your student is requesting regular time off / early finish from school eg collecting a younger sibling from school [Exemption From School Application Form](#)

Extended Leave Application:

Whilst we acknowledge that some whānau/families plan their overseas travel / holidays during the school terms, as a school, we advise against it and to avoid this situation where at all possible as the Education Act does require children to attend school each day that it is open for tuition. Students will be experiencing teaching and learning as well as sitting various assessments throughout the duration of the year. An extended absence could have a detrimental impact on their learning and achievement. Parents wishing to take their child out of school for any non-school-related reason for more than three days must apply in writing to the Principal. This form must be signed and dated by the student's parent/caregiver. Student leave application forms are also available from the School Office.

[Leave of Absence Form \(Not to be used for daily absences\)](#)

If the school is not notified of the absence, then the student is marked as Truant for that time.



Student gives reason = Truant (and contact home to verify)

Parent gives reason = E or any other relevant code

[MOE Attendance Codes](#)

Targets and Goals

PAST ATTENDANCE		FUTURE TARGETS
2024	2025	2026 - Overall 50%
Term 1 - 46%	Term 1 - 54%	Term 1 - 62%
Term 2 - 39%	Term 2 - 38%	Term 2 - 46%
Term 3 - 24%	Term 3 - 30%	Term 3 - 38%
Term 4 - 20%	Term 4 - 30%	Term 4 - 38%

NB: RSHS students are on exam leave from Week 4 of Term 4. There are some students at school during this time, participating in exam prep sessions, finishing internal assessments or in 'intervention' workshops.

2027 - 58% (+8%)

2028 - 66% (+8%)

2029 - 77% (+8%)

2030 - 82% (+8%)

Monitoring

The schools ongoing practice:

- Daily attendance is monitored by the Attendance Liaison and Student Support team.
- Whānau are notified via text message by **10.30am** for any unexplained absences, with responses recorded in KAMAR.
- Weekly attendance report (KAMAR automated reports) is emailed to whānau and students from **Week 4, Term 1 2026**.
- Kaiārahi (Whānau teachers) track attendance and complete check-ins to identify patterns or emerging concerns.
- Attendance expectations and positive messaging are reinforced through regular school newsletter communications.
- Barriers to attendance are addressed proactively through pastoral support and engagement with external agencies where appropriate.



Our Stepped Response to Absence

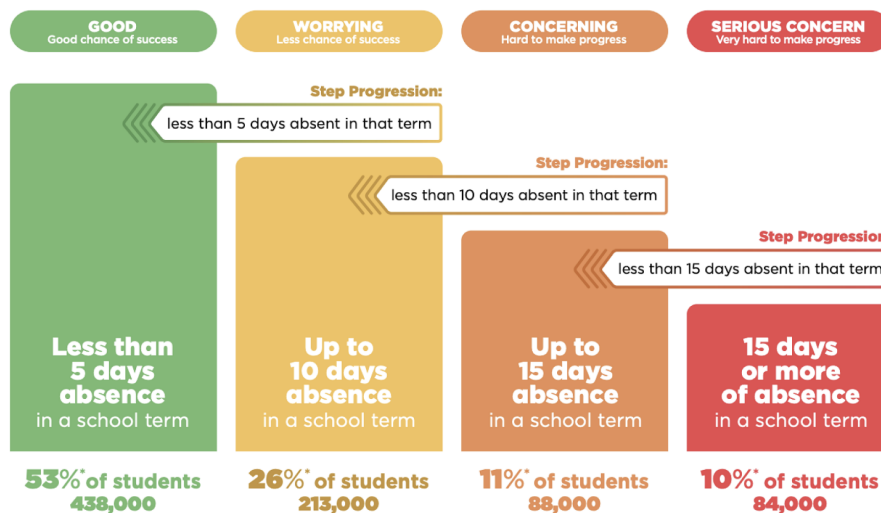
We have a stepped attendance response to ensure students are identified early and provided with appropriate support and intervention at key thresholds to support their return to regular attendance. Our approach is proactive and responsive; we do not wait for students to reach a specific absence threshold before offering support. Instead, the steps below guide our response to cumulative absences and enable timely, tailored interventions.

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.

'Good' Attendance: 0–4 Days Absence

Whānau:

- Ensure student attends every day they are able
- Reinforce good attendance habits
- Follow school attendance management plan and procedures

RSHS:

Goal: Ensure all absences are explained and correctly coded.

Action: Kaiarahi (Whānau teacher) monitors attendance weekly. Students with 100% attendance are acknowledged and celebrated in Iwi celebration assemblies.

'Worrying' Attendance: 5–9 Days Absence



Whānau:

- 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 school supports offer

RSHS:

Support: After understanding the underlying barriers, we work in partnership with the student and whānau to develop a plan. This may involve uniform support, help with a device, transport planning, counselling referrals, and support to re-engage with missed learning, alongside other appropriate interventions.

Action: NAMS 1 letter sent home to signal students attendance has dropped and is 'worrying'. The Kaiarahi will contact parents within two days of the attendance letter (email or phone) to discuss the reasons for absence and how the school might offer support to improve attendance.

'Concerning' Attendance: 10–14 Days Absence

Whānau:

- Return student to regular attendance
- Participate in meetings with school to look at reasons for absence and to collaborate on a support plan Implement strategies at home

RSHS:

Support: A tailored support plan will be developed. We may involve one of the team from Kahui Rangatahi (Student Services; counsellour, nurse, attendance officer) or one of our Pathways/Careers team.

Action: NAMS 2 letter home sent to signal that attendance has not improved and is 'concerning'. Escalation to the Kaihautu (Dean). We will hold a meeting with the parent/caregiver and student to understand the reasons for absence.

'Serious Concern' Attendance: 15+ Days Absence

Whānau:

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

RSHS:

Support: We may refer to external agencies, such as Attendance Services or Northern Health School, for specialised support. A formal reintegration plan will be created to return the student to regular attendance.

Action:



- NAMS 3 Letter home sent to signal that attendance has not improved and is now a 'serious concern'.
- Escalation to the Deputy Principal and/or Principal (Senior Leadership). Maintain implementation and monitoring support plan
- Possibly request a MOE led prosecution, when considered appropriate if supports are offered and not taken up
- Unenroll if student will not be returning to school

Attendance Support and Reintegration

We understand that absence can occur for a variety of reasons. By taking the time to understand each student's circumstances, we are better able to respond with appropriate support that helps students reconnect with school and attendance routines.

Strategies to Support Return and Reintegration

For students returning after an extended absence, or who are at risk of disengagement, we offer support which may include:

- Supportive conversation with the Kaiarahi, Kaihautu or Deputy Principal.
- Collaborative, formal, Individual Attendance Plans with the student and whanau/caregivers
- Referral to the Kahui Rangatahi (Student services) (e.g., counselling, external services).
- Use of a 'Yellow Card' / timeout card' to manage anxiety.
- Transition Back to School Plan to manage re-entry.
- Amended/modified timetable to ease the transition back to a full school day, in the short term
- Collaborative development of special attendance goals and targets with the student and whānau.
- Regular communication with parents/caregivers to keep them informed about the student's progress in reintegrating.
- Where appropriate, and after a hui with the student and whānau, a Section 53 exemption may be explored to enable a part-time timetable with work experience to support re-engagement and wellbeing.
- Application to MOE for Interim Response Funding (IRF) by Deputy Principal if application, to provide resources that might support a return to school/improved attendance.

Pathways and External Involvement

When required support is offered but not taken up, or if attendance does not improve, the following escalation pathways could be implemented:

- **Internal Escalation:** Kaihautu (Dean), Deputy Principal or Principal.
 - Where appropriate, our Attendance Liaison and Student Support person might undertake a home visit to build relationships, clarify expectations, and to better understand barriers and support re-engagement.



- **Agency Involvement:** The school participates in multi-agency response forums and escalates cases to external agencies as needed, including:
 - **Northern Health School** referral for significant health-related absence.
 - Referral to **Barnardos Attendance Services** for persistent, unexplained absences, as required under the Education and Training Act 2020.

Contact Us

If you have concerns about your students' attendance, please reach out early so we can help.

- **General Attendance Queries:** Contact your students Kairahi (Whanau Teacher)
- **Complex Issues:** If unsure, please discuss with the relevant Kaihautu (Dean) or Deputy Principal

Haumi Iwi

Kaihautu: Gemma McDonald (Term 1, 2026) gemmamcdonald@rhs.school.nz

Deputy Principal: Mark Mortenson (Term 1, 2026) markmortenson@rhs.school.nz

Karu Atua Iwi

Kaihautu: Lee Clark leeclark@rhs.school.nz

Deputy Principal: Stephanie Harford: stephanieharford@rhs.school.nz

Parata Iwi

Kaihautu: -

Deputy Principal: Meg Barry meganbarry@rhs.school.nz

Taurapa Iwi

Kaihautu: Laurel Silvester laurelsilvester@rhs.school.nz

Deputy Principal: Natalie Maurice nataliemaurence@rhs.school.nz

Review

Progress towards our attendance targets will be monitored using the Ministry of Education's termly Every Day Matters attendance reports. Alongside this, the wider pastoral care team of Kaihautu and Assistant Kaihautu, alongside the senior leadership team will regularly review internal attendance data to identify emerging patterns and inform timely, day-to-day responses.

In line with Ministry of Education expectations, the RSHS Board of Trustees will regularly review this Attendance Management Plan. These reviews will consider how effectively the plan is supporting improved attendance, track progress toward our strategic goals, and ensure the plan continues to meet all current legislative and regulatory requirements

