

Riverlands School- Attendance Procedures

Riverlands School has procedures to record and monitor attendance, and to identify and follow up concerns. We share attendance expectations with students and their parents/caregivers, and staff are responsible for reminding students of these expectations.

Recording attendance

We record attendance accurately to ensure all students are accounted for, including for emergency situations. The school provides attendance data to the Ministry of Education each day, as required by the Education and Training Act 2020 and Education (School Attendance) Regulations 2024. We monitor absence patterns using our student management system and notify parents/caregivers of any concerns using the Stepped Attendance Response (STAR)

Classroom teachers, learning support staff, and office staff work together to ensure attendance is recorded correctly. Relievers, itinerant teachers, and specialist teachers provide attendance information as necessary to the relevant teacher, or directly to the school office.

We record students as present or absent or late using Ministry of Education attendance codes. An absence may be justified (e.g. for medical reasons) or unjustified (e.g. for an unapproved holiday or other unsatisfactory reason), and we record this in our attendance register.

Monitoring attendance

The school office receives attendance information from classroom teachers and/or relievers, itinerant, or specialist teachers, and is responsible for checking and updating attendance information (e.g. due to students arriving late or going home early). Office staff follow up absences, by phone at 9.10am. Office staff monitor for changes or trends in student attendance, and coordinate with relevant staff as needed (classroom teachers and Tracy Null DP)

Staff are encouraged to report any attendance concerns to the Principal or Deputy Principal.

Student absences

Parents/Caregivers are expected to notify the school as soon as possible (before or during the school day) if their child will be absent. A reason for absence must be provided no later than the end of the school week. Riverlands School will contact parents/caregivers directly if no explanation is provided for student absence.

Under the Education and Training Act 2020 (s 45), the principal may allow a student to be absent from school for up to five days if there is a justified reason for absence (e.g. due to illness, a funeral or tangihanga, or other approved reason at the discretion of the school). For planned absences, requests must be made to the principal at least one week before the planned event.

The principal has discretion to approve or deny requests, based on criteria including:

- the benefit to education for the student (including qualifications and experience of course providers as relevant)
- the length of time away from regular school programmes that the activity will require.

If a student does not arrive at school or goes missing during the day (including from an EOTC event), we check there are no errors in how attendance information was recorded or updated (e.g. if a student has gone home due to illness). If necessary, we follow up with parents/guardians and/or emergency contacts. We may also follow our [Missing Student Procedure](#).

Following up unexplained absences

Riverlands School takes all reasonable steps to ensure students attend school while it is open, including following up unexplained absences.

Our follow-up actions may include:

- analysing attendance data for patterns of absence
- contacting parents/caregivers to outline attendance expectations
- meeting with students and their parents/caregivers to discuss strategies for improving attendance
- discussing school programmes with relevant staff to better meet the needs of students at risk of disengagement.

Under the Education and Training Act (s 48), the board may appoint an attendance officer who has authority to follow up absences with students and their parents/caregivers directly.

We may also refer students with extended or persistent absences to [Attendance services](#)

Riverlands School follows the STAR procedures: -

All teachers notify caregivers of their child's attendance rate for the term in the last week of each term.

This is posted as a Home/School Communication note to individual students whanau. The appropriate note from the following is selected from the list below.:

90-100% ATTENDANCE

Attendance update:

Your child's attendance information for Term ?, 202?

Goal 90% attendance

This term your child's attendance is ??% attendance

Your child's Ministry of Education STAR (Stepped Attendance Response) attendance rating is GOOD

Well done **student's name!**

FOR UP TO 10 DAYS ABSENCE - less than 80-90%

Attendance update:

Your child's attendance information for Term ?, 202?

Goal 90% attendance

This term your child's attendance is ??% attendance

Your child's Ministry of Education STAR (Stepped Attendance Response) attendance rating is WORRYING

FOR UP TO 15 DAYS ABSENCE 75-80%

Attendance update:

Your child's attendance information for Term ?, 202?

Goal 90% attendance

This term your child's attendance is ??% attendance

Your child's Ministry of Education STAR (Stepped Attendance Response) attendance rating is CONCERNING

FOR 15 DAYS OR MORE ABSENCE - less than 75%

Attendance update:

Your child's attendance information for Term ?, 202?

Goal 90% attendance

This term your child's attendance is ??% attendance

Your child's Ministry of Education STAR (Stepped Attendance Response) attendance rating is VERY CONCERNING

When a child has been absent from school for 5, 10, 15 or more than 15 days, the DP gets notified through HERO. The DP uses the prewritten letters on the SMS system HERO to send a letter to parents and records this action under the attendance management plan. From 10 days absent the teachers hold a meeting with whanau and refer the child to the Attendance Service when appropriate.

Our attendance goals for 2026 are as follows

Term 1 2026- 75% (Compared to Term 1 2025 rate of 71%)

Term 2 2026- 70% (Compared to Term 2 2025 rate of 61%)

Term 3 2026- 70% (Compared to Term 3 2025 rate of 64%)

Term 4 2026- 65% (Compared to Term 4 2025 rate of 57%)

Lateness

Children are deemed to be 'late to school' if they arrive after the bell has rung at 8.55am and the class roll on HERO has been completed.

If the child is not present in class at the time the roll is being completed the teacher records a ? on the system.

If a child arrives after the 8.55am their parent must sign them in at the front office. The office staff will then change their code on their clases HERO attendance roll from ? to L and record the time the child arrived.

Updated Feb 2026