



St Michael's Catholic School



St Michael's Catholic School – Attendance Management Plan (2026)

This plan outlines how St Michael's Catholic School manages, monitors, and improves student attendance through proactive systems and partnerships, in alignment with the Education and Training Act 2020 and the Ministry of Education's Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) framework.

1. Overarching Attendance Objectives and Strategic Priorities

Rationale

Regular attendance is critical for student achievement, wellbeing, and social connectedness. St Michael's Catholic School recognises that consistent engagement at school strengthens both learning outcomes and a child's sense of belonging within our faith-based community.

Strategic Goals

- Ensure at least 75% of students attend school regularly (attending more than 90% of the time).
- Reduce the number of students with concerning (up to 15 days) and very concerning (15+ days) absences per term.
- Strengthen whānau partnerships to address barriers to attendance.
- Implement the Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) to ensure early identification and timely intervention.
- Include 2025 data for term 4

Definition of Success

- Improved termly attendance data across all cohorts.
- Increased early engagement with whānau around attendance barriers.
- Zero unexplained absences across the school.

2. Attendance Policy

Legal Obligations

Under the Education and Training Act 2020:

Boards must take all reasonable steps to ensure enrolled students attend school.

Parents/guardians are legally required to ensure their child attends school every day unless there is a

justified reason for absence.

Students must attend punctually and regularly.

School Expectations

Parents notify the office by 9am on the day of absence.

All absences must be explained within five days.

Students are expected to arrive by 8:45am ready for the school day.

Regular attendance is celebrated and communicated positively to students and families.

3. Attendance Management Procedures

Recording Attendance

Attendance is recorded twice daily in ETap (morning and after lunch).

Records are monitored weekly by the Principal and Office Administrator.

Data is stored securely and reported termly to the Board.

Early Action and Follow-Up

- Office Administrator: Follow up unexplained absences by 9:30 a.m. daily via phone call or ETap message to parents/caregivers. Checks daily rolls and notifies the Classroom Teacher and Principal of any unexplained absences remaining by midday.
- Classroom Teachers: Follow up with whānau if absences remain unexplained for two consecutive days, documents all contact attempts, and updates ETap.
- Principal: Escalates ongoing or repeated unexplained absences to Attendance Services once supportive measures have been exhausted.

STAR Alerts in ETap

- The Principal will work with ETap to enable automatic alerts when students reach each STAR level threshold.
- These alerts will generate a list of names for intervention, ensuring timely contact and follow-up.
- Intervention plans will be reviewed at weekly leadership meetings.

Supporting Students Returning to School

- Gradual reintegration plan if necessary.
- Catch-up learning sessions with teacher aides.
- Peer and pastoral mentoring to rebuild relationships.
- Regular progress updates shared with parents.

4. Monitoring and Measuring Progress

Review and Evaluation

- Attendance data is analysed each term to identify patterns by year level, ethnicity, and gender.
- Leadership reports will include actions taken, outcomes achieved, and next steps.

Monitoring Effectiveness

- Monthly tracking of attendance trends through Etap analytics.
- Staff meetings will include review of attendance interventions.
- Termly Board reports summarise trends and response outcomes.

Use of Attendance Data

- The Every Day Matters Report and ETap analytics are used by the Principal to report attendance trends and STAR level data to the Board each term.
- Data analysis informs targeted actions for students at risk and guides schoolwide attendance initiatives.

5. Whānau and Community Engagement

- Regular communication through newsletters, email, and Etap.
- Parents are alerted to attendance at the end of every week through Etap.
- Attendance celebrated through assemblies and certificates.
- Culturally responsive approaches used to address barriers — working alongside Māori whānau, parish, and community agencies.
- Partnership with local social services to address wellbeing and attendance needs.

Community and Stakeholder Consultation

- An attendance question will be included annually in the Community Consultation Survey (for whānau, staff, and students) to gather feedback on barriers, attitudes, and strategies for improvement.
- Feedback will be summarised for the Board and used to update this plan annually.

Managing Overseas Whānau Trips

- The Board will consider overseas travel requests on a case-by-case basis.
- For trips exceeding 20 school days, families will be informed that this may affect enrolment status.
- To support continuity of learning, teachers will provide a hard copy pack for learning to continue.
- Families will be encouraged to have students record daily learning reflections in a diary to support re-engagement upon return.

- Absences during overseas travel will be coded Q – Learning in another place where appropriate documentation is provided.

6. Alignment with the Stepped Attendance Response (STAR)

This plan aligns with the Ministry's STAR expectations to set attendance targets, monitor data, act early, escalate support at key thresholds, and collaborate with whānau and services to ensure every student attends regularly.

7. Appendix

Response to Absences Using the STAR Framework

Absence Threshold (per term)	Level of Concern	School Actions
Less than 5 days	Good Attendance	Maintain communication, celebrate attendance, and reinforce positive habits.
Up to 10 days	Worrying Attendance	Teacher contacts whānau to discuss reasons and support strategies. Provide catch-up learning if needed.
Up to 15 days	Concerning Attendance	Principal or DP meets with parents to analyse reasons for absence and develop a support plan. May involve RTLB, counsellor, or pastoral team.
15+ days	Very Concerning Attendance	Attendance Service referral initiated. Multi-agency approach activated. Regular monitoring and follow-up until re-engagement is achieved.

Escalation Pathways

Teachers → Deputy Principal → Principal → Attendance Service → Interagency forum (if required).

For chronic absence (15+ days), the school may consider Ministry-led prosecution only after all supportive interventions have been exhausted.

Roles & Responsibilities Matrix

Role	Daily	Weekly	At 5–10 Days	10–15 Days	15+ Days
Student	Attend daily, on time	Communicate issues to teacher	—	—	—
Whānau	Notify absence before 9am	Provide medical notes if required	Engage with teacher contact	Attend meeting with DP/Principal	Attend support & agency meetings
Teacher	Mark roll twice daily in Etap	Monitor % and patterns	Contact whānau, record actions	Refer to principal/DP support plan	Continue updates & pastoral support
Office Manager	Enter absence notifications, follow up unexplained	Weekly data report to principal/DP	Flag repeated unexplained absences	Support contact recordkeeping	Support Attendance Service referral
Deputy Principal	Monitor class data	Meet with teachers (at-risk)	Meet whānau, support plan created	Monitor plan, involve agencies	Prepare Attendance Service referral
Principal	Oversees whole-school attendance	Term reporting to Board	Escalates high-risk cases	Approves external referrals	Signs formal Attendance Service request
Board of Trustees	Receives term data & actions	Ensures legal compliance	Monitors trends	Reviews effectiveness	Supports strategic response

Teacher Quick-Reference Guide

Situation	Teacher Action	Record Where
Student absent, no call from whānau	Mark as “unjustified”, office follows up	Etap + office
Student absent 3+ times in same week	Monitor pattern, check in with whanau (welfare check)	Class tab
Student reaches 5 days	Phone whānau, log action	Class tab
Student reaches 10 days	Refer to DP, stop managing alone	Class tab + DP log
Student reaches 15+ days	DP & Principal take over	DP file + Attendance Service

Attendance Codes (Etap / MoE)

- **J** justified
- **U** unjustified
- **M** medical
- **T** truant
- **E** explained but unjustified

Justified vs Unjustified Examples

Justified	Unjustified
Illness	Shopping trip
Tangihanga	Holiday during term
Medical appointment	“Too tired”

Court appearance	Late sleep-in
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Approved by

Principal: Rachael McLanachan

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Board Chair:

Signature: _____ Date: _____