



St. Joseph's
Cathedral School

Attendance Management Plan

Approval:	<i>Date</i> <i>School board signature</i>	Published on:	https://www.stjoescath.school.nz/
Effective date:	<i>January 2026</i>	Review date:	<i>January 2027</i>

Overarching attendance objectives and strategic priorities

- Ensure all students have their attendance accurately recorded using Ministry of Education codes.
- Improve regular attendance from 2025 data in line with the government's target of 80% of students regularly attending school by 2030
- Our school target for regular attendance is 75% at the end of 2026

Data from Everyday Matters show that during 2025 attendance rates were:

Term One - 86%

Term Two – 65%

Term Three - 66%

Term Four - 83%

Attendance policy

Our **Attendance Policy** sets out

- Why attendance is a priority for our school
- Legal requirements about attendance
- Our expectations of students, parents and our school staff

At School, our attendance procedures ensure students are accounted for during school hours and activities as well as emergency events. This allows school staff to identify and respond to student attendance concerns. We recognise the importance of regular attendance to support student welfare and help students achieve their educational potential.

As required by the Education and Training Act 2020 (s 35), students between six and sixteen years old must be enrolled at school. Once enrolled, it is compulsory to attend school regularly, unless a specific exemption has been approved by the school and the Ministry of Education. The board takes all reasonable steps to ensure all students enrolled at St Joseph's Cathedral School attend school when it is open (Education and Training Act, s 36).

St Joseph's Cathedral School records and monitors attendance using set attendance procedures. We have annual targets for student attendance, and work with students, parents and caregivers, staff, and external agencies where necessary to improve our levels of student attendance. We share our attendance information with the Ministry of Education, which ensures we receive correct funding and staffing entitlements. We keep our attendance registers for seven years from the date of last entry.

Regular attendance it's directly linked to academic achievement, wellbeing, and long-term life outcomes, with regular presence in school fostering confidence and essential life skills. Consistent attendance helps students stay on track with their learning, build strong social connections, and develop crucial habits of responsibility and a strong work ethic. The Ministry of Education mandates attendance for students aged 6 to 16, with a national target to increase regular attendance to 80% of students being present for more than 90% of the term by 2030.

Students at St Joseph's Cathedral School are required to attend school when they are fit for learning. Attendance is discussed at enrolment and regularly in newsletters. 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. The Principal analyses attendance data and reports to the Board, this is shared with the community each term.

Parent/Guardian and student responsibilities

Parents and guardians have legal obligations to ensure their children attend school (Education and Training Act, s 244). We expect parents/guardians to:

- notify the school as soon as possible if their child is going to be late or absent
- arrange appointments and trips outside school hours or during school holidays where possible
- work with the school to manage attendance concerns.

We share attendance expectations with students and their parents/guardians and caregivers, and require students to be present and attend classes on time. Parents/Guardians may ask for their child to be excused from certain areas of the curriculum for religious or cultural reasons. The principal reviews these requests and considers the preferences of the student. The school provides supervision for any students who do not participate in certain areas of the curriculum.

Attendance management procedures

Our **Attendance Procedures** set out

- How we manage attendance in our school
- How we identify concerning attendance
- How we respond to absences
- How we give the Board assurance that the school is managing attendance effectively

St Joseph's Cathedral 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.

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 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, monitor for changes or trends in student attendance, and coordinate with relevant staff as needed.

Staff are encouraged to report any attendance concerns to the principal.

The Ministry of Education collects attendance data from the school, including:

- the proportion of students who attend regularly
- students with five or more full days of unjustified absence in a term
- absences remaining unexplained at the end of each week.
- 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. St Joseph's Cathedral 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

St Joseph's Cathedral 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

Monitoring and measuring progress

Attendance procedures are reviewed annually to ensure that they are still meeting the needs of our community. Our policy and procedures are part of our annual school review schedule.

The Principal reports to the Board on attendance and makes an assurance in Term 3 on the adherence to attendance procedures.