



The Catlins Area School Attendance Management Plan (AMP) and Supporting STAR Procedures

This plan will be published on the school website and included in enrolment information by Term 1, 2026. It will be reviewed annually by the Principal and Board of Trustees (or equivalent).

Effective Date: 28th January 2026

Review Date: (annually) December 2026

1. Purpose

To ensure a consistent, transparent, and equitable approach to monitoring, recording, and improving ākongā attendance, in line with the Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) framework and the Ministry of Education's 2026 Attendance Management Plan requirements.

2. Strategic Priorities

Regular school attendance is important for students to achieve their educational potential. The government's target is that 80% of students will be regularly attending school by 2030. Our school currently has 48% regular attendance year to date and a target of lifting regular attendance to 65% by the end of 2026.

3. Scope

Applies to all ākongā enrolled at The Catlins Area School and all staff responsible for attendance, pastoral care, or leadership.

4. Legislative and Policy Context

- Education & Training Act 2020
- Education (School Attendance) Regulations 2024
- STAR Framework (Stepped Attendance Response) [STAR](#)
- Use of the Ministry-approved electronic Attendance Register (eAR) and official attendance codes.
- Compliance with any future Ministry updates to attendance regulations or STAR thresholds.

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

5 Attendance Expectations and Whānau Notification

- Ākongā/ākongā 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 that all ākongā/ākongā enrolled at The Catlins Area School attend school when it is open
- Ākongā/ākongā are expected to attend school every day unless a valid reason exists.
- Whānau should notify the school by 9 a.m. on the day of absence.



- Unexplained absences are followed up by 10 a.m. and coded as unexplained until verified. This follow-up is by email.
- Attendance expectations and support options are communicated at enrolment and at the start of each year.

We expect parents/guardians

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

6. Attendance Procedures

6.1 Daily Attendance Procedures

- Attendance is recorded accurately by teachers in the SMS by 9:15 am and 2:00 pm daily (Primary). Year 7 - 13 attendance is recorded accurately by teachers in the SMS every period. (Secondary)
- If a relief teacher takes attendance manually, this must be submitted to the school office, and the record is signed and retained.
- The school provides attendance data to the Ministry of Education each day as required by the Education and Training Act 2020
- We monitor absence patterns using our SMS and notify parents of any concerns
- We record ākongas as present or absent using the MOE Attendance Codes. An absence may be justified or unjustified.
- If we have had no notification or response from parents when an ākongas is absent, this is marked as Truant
- Teachers monitor patterns of absence and discuss with the Dean (Secondary or Primary) and Deputy Principal, well-being, and then the Principal
- If an ākongas does not arrive at school or goes missing during the day, we check that there are no errors in the recording of attendance and then follow the **Missing ākongas Procedure**

6.2 Weekly Attendance Procedures

- Identify ākongas approaching Amber or Red
- Contact whānau to discuss issues impacting attendance
- Make suggestions for external support if required, eg counsellor
- Make a notification to the Attendance Service for ākongas if attendance reaches the Orange threshold (70%)

6.3 Termly Attendance Procedures

- Full attendance review and STAR classification.
- Report to the Board.
- Adjust supports and interventions as needed.

7. Category Description

- Justified - Illness (with medical certificate where required), bereavement/tangi, exceptional family circumstances, school-approved activity
- The Principal may allow an ākongas to be absent from school for up to 5 days if there is a justified reason for absence
- Unjustified- Truancy, parent/guardian choice without valid reason, no contact, or failure to provide evidence when requested
- For planned absences, requests must be made to the Principal at least 1 week before the planned event
- [Attendance Code tree](#)
- All absences are coded in the eAR/SMS using Ministry attendance codes.



8. STAR Thresholds and Responses



9. Medical Certificate Requirements

- 3+ consecutive illness days: medical certificate requested at Principal's Discretion
- 3+ short illness absences in one term: certificate required for future illness absences.
- Chronic medical condition: one GP/specialist note per year.
- If no certificate is provided when required, absence may be coded as unjustified

10. Barrier Identification and Support

Schools must diagnose and address underlying causes of absence, including:

- Health or mental well-being concerns
- Transport or logistics issues
- Family/whānau circumstances
- Learning engagement or anxiety
- Financial hardship

Supports may include:

- Pastoral care meetings or home visits
- Resource or transport assistance
- Flexible learning arrangements
- External agency referrals
- Counselling, mentoring, or buddy systems



11. Roles and Responsibilities

- Principal Oversees AMP implementation,
- Deputy Principal, Wellbeing, Oversees AMP implementation, meets with Deans to understand trends, liaises with the MoE Attendance Service
- Deans (Primary or Secondary) monitor attendance trends via referrals from whānau teachers, initiate early interventions, and communicate with whānau
- Whānau teachers record daily attendance, monitor weekly attendance, refer to the dean if a pattern emerges, and communicate with whānau
- Office staff manage daily follow-ups, record certificates, and ensure documentation integrity
- Board receives termly reports, reviews AMP annually
- Whānau communicate absences promptly, participate in supports to improve attendance
- Ākonga attend regularly and engage in learning

12. Communication and Transparency

- Publish AMP and attendance expectations on the school website and enrolment materials.
- Share attendance expectations and STAR thresholds in newsletters
- Display visual reminders in classrooms and offices.
- Record attendance in mid-year and end-of-year reporting

13. Documentation, Data, and Reporting

- Maintain detailed records of attendance, reasons, medical certificates, and support plans.
- Keep attendance data in eAR/SMS
- Use the Attendance Monitoring Register to track STAR categories and actions. (SMS)
- The board receives termly attendance analysis.