



Waitaki Girls' High School

Attendance Management Plan (AMP) 2026

Status: 29 January 2026 Board Approved | Implementation: Term 1, 2026

I. Purpose and Strategic Priorities

Waitaki Girls' High School is committed to removing barriers to education for young women in North Otago. Community consultation in April 2025 identified medical illness and school connection as the primary drivers of absence. In 2026 we will work to:

- **Strengthen Connection:** Increase the percentage of students who feel “connected and very connected” to school through targeted pastoral care and engaging curriculum.
- **Clarify Health Processes:** Distinguish justified medical absence from explained, unjustified absence by partnering with whānau and public health services.
- **Partner with Whānau:** Move from informing to partnering, solving barriers together.

The Waitaki Way Values in Attendance:

- **Respectful:** Mana-enhancing hui, clear and kind communication, privacy-safe data practice.
- **Responsible:** Accurate rolls every period, same-day follow-up, student ownership of plans.
- **Resilient:** Recognise improvement, remove barriers, and support steady return to learning and co-curricular involvement.

2. Targets and Measurement

Government Goal (2030): 80% of students regularly attending.

Baseline Data (Term 3, 2025):

- All students regular ($\geq 90\%$): 48%
- Māori: 39% | Pasifika: 53%
- Chronic ($< 70\%$): 12% overall (Year 9 spike: 15%)

2026 Interim Targets:

- All students regular ($\geq 90\%$): 60% (Aspirational)
- Māori: 50%
- Pasifika: 65%
- Chronic ($< 70\%$): Reduce to $< 8\%$ overall.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Attendance is a shared responsibility between the school, the Board, whānau, and the student.

Board of Trustees

The Board is responsible for taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the school's students attend the school when it is open for instruction.

- **Recording & Response:** The Board ensures that all student absences are investigated and responded to in line with this plan, and that all actions taken are recorded in the student management system (KAMAR).
- **Resourcing:** The Board allocates resources (staffing time, pastoral support) to enable the effective operation of this plan.

Principal

The Principal is responsible for:

- Developing and implementing the Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) aligned with Ministry thresholds.
- Ensuring that student absence is investigated and that actions are recorded in KAMAR to provide an audit trail.
- Ensuring all students, whānau, and staff understand the processes and procedures for attendance.
- Reporting monthly to the Board on attendance data, trends, and the effectiveness of STAR interventions.

School Responsibilities (Pastoral & Teaching Staff)

Waitaki Girls' High School is responsible for:

- Creating a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment that supports regular attendance.
- **Subject Teachers:** Taking accurate rolls within the first 10 minutes of every period.
- **Whānau Teachers:** Acting as the first point of contact for checking in with students returning from absence.
- **Deans/Pastoral Team:** Managing interventions at Tier 3 and 4, including Individual Attendance Plans.
- Identifying and removing barriers to attendance (e.g., curriculum adaptation, learning support).

Parent/Whānau Responsibilities

Parents/Caregivers are responsible for:

- Ensuring their child attends school whenever it is open.
- **Notification:** Notifying the school of absence reasons via the SchoolBridge App, Portal, or phone before 9:00 AM.
- **Engagement:** Engaging with the school early to identify barriers if attendance becomes difficult.
- **Medical Evidence:** Providing medical certificates for absences exceeding 3 consecutive days or where "Medical" coding is frequent.

4. Operational Procedures: Stepped Attendance Response (STAR)

We utilise the Ministry of Education's STAR framework. Our response is triggered by the number of days absent per term, regardless of the reason, ensuring no student slips through the cracks.

Tier 1: Prevention and Early Notification (0 – 4 Days Absence)

Focus: Connection, accurate data, and immediate safety.

- **Role Check:** Subject teachers take rolls via KAMAR within the first 10 minutes of every period.
- **Notification:** Automated text messages are sent to caregivers at 9:30 AM for any unexplained absence.

- Positive Reinforcement: Whānau Teachers explicitly acknowledge students returning after short absences ("Great to see you back").

Tier 2: Concern and Inquiry (5 – 9 Days Absence)

Focus: "Is everything okay?" – Identifying emerging barriers.

- Trigger: Student reaches 5 days of absence in a term (approx. 10% of learning time).
- Action (Whānau Teacher):
 - Ideally a phone call, or a personalised email to the caregiver.
 - *Script:* "I've noticed [Student] has missed a week's worth of school this term. Is there anything happening at home or school we can support with?"
- Medical Check: If absences are coded 'M' (Medical), Whānau Teacher checks if a pattern is forming. If no medical certificate is on file, the Public Health Nurse may be consulted for advice.
- Data Recording: Action recorded in KAMAR Pastoral Notes as "STAR Step 2 Contact", automatic letter sent.

Tier 3: Intervention and Planning (10 – 14 Days Absence)

Focus: Formalising support and removing barriers.

- Trigger: Student reaches 10 days of absence (hitting the threshold for 'Chronic Absence' risk).
- Action (Dean / Pastoral Team):
 - Letter 2 Sent: A formal email from the Dean outlining the attendance percentage and impact on NCEA/learning. This is automatic from Kamar.
 - Meeting: Whānau Hui requested to discuss barriers.
 - Plan: An Individual Attendance Plan is co-constructed. This might include internal learning support, timetable adjustment, or referral to School Counsellors.
- Medical Requirement: For further illness-related absence, a medical certificate is required. Without it, codes may be changed to 'E' (Explained but Unjustified).

Tier 4: Serious Concern and Referral (15+ Days Absence)

Focus: Multi-agency support and statutory obligation.

- Trigger: Student reaches 15 days of absence (missing 3+ weeks of a term).
- Action (Senior Leadership / Deputy Principal):
 - Letter 3 Sent: Formal letter from the Deputy Principal indicating serious concern (automatic from Kamar).
 - Escalation: If the Individual Attendance Plan has failed or engagement ceases, the school will refer to the Attendance Service (ASA) for external support.
 - Reintegration Support: For students returning after chronic absence, a "Return to School" plan will be developed (e.g., graduated timetable, nominated "safe person" for morning check-ins).
 - Board Reporting: These students are identified in the monthly Principal's Report (anonymised).
 - Enrolment Review: In extreme cases of non-engagement (20 consecutive days absent), the ENROL process for removal may be initiated.

5. Teaching and Learning Catch-up

To ensure absence does not result in academic failure, the school commits to the following:

- Subject Information: Each subject publishes short catch-up information by Week 2, Term 1, showing where to find missed notes (e.g., Google Classroom), how to submit late work, and a contact person.
- Assessment Support: 'Assessment-at-risk' students are identified weekly and may be supported with short, targeted blocks during whānau time or study periods, if required. .
- Adjustments: Teachers record extensions or curriculum adjustments in KAMAR notes to ensure all staff are aware of the support plan. Follow NZQA expectations.

6. Communications

- Website: AMP page live in Week 1 describing STAR steps, absence reporting, and why attendance matters.
- Newsletter: Term 1 series on routines, on-time starts, and links to SchoolBridge. Social media information.
- Transparency: Attendance data, including actions taken (letters sent, meetings held), is visible to parents via the SchoolBridge/KAMAR Portal to ensure shared responsibility. SLT only.

7. Monitoring and Assurance

- Operational (Daily/Weekly):
 - Daily roll accuracy checks by Whānau Teachers and Attendance Officer.
 - Weekly review by Deans and DP of the Tier 3–4 list (at weekly Pastoral meeting).
- Strategic (Board Reporting):
 - Week 4 of the following term: Principal reports the Big Number (regular % vs target), equity gaps (Māori and Pasifika), chronic %, and outcomes of interventions.

8. Legislative Compliance

- Education and Training Act 2020: The Board takes all reasonable steps to ensure attendance.
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015: Student whereabouts and safety are a PCBU responsibility during school hours.
- Privacy Act 2020: We protect attendance data and sensitive medical information, sharing only as necessary for student support (e.g., with Attendance Service).

Appendix: Ministry Definitions

- Regular Attendance: Attending more than 90% of half-days.
- Irregular Absence: Attending 80-90% of half-days.
- Moderate Absence: Attending 70-80% of half-days.
- Chronic Absence: Attending less than 70% of half-days.

References:

[Stepped attendance response – STAR - Ministry of Education](#)

KAMAR