



# Don Buck School

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Next review: Term 3 2026

## Attendance Procedures

Don Buck School is transitioning towards the new attendance model and attendance management plan required by the Ministry of Education. Changes will be made before term 1 2026.

Don Buck 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 deputy 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. Don Buck 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

Don Buck 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** [↗](#).

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### Related policies

- **Communicating with Parents and Whānau**
- **Missing Student Procedure**


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### Legislation

- Education and Training Act 2020
- Education (School Attendance) Regulations 2024

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### Resources

- Ministry of Education | Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga:
  - **Student attendance guide** [↗](#)
  - **Daily attendance reporting** [↗](#)
  - **Stepped attendance response – STAR** [↗](#)
  - **School Attendance: Quick Reference Guide** 

**Release history:** Term 1 2025, Term 2 2024, Term 2 2023

<b>Last review</b>	Term 4 2024
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