



Te Tāhuhu o
te Mātauranga
Ministry of Education

Individual Attendance Plans

Information for School Leaders

Summary

This document helps schools initiate planning conversations with students and their parents, guardians or caregivers when there are concerns about the student's attendance. Your plans will look different depending on the age and stage of students, and your community context.

If students have other plans such as an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP), this attendance content can be added to those already in place.

Background

Where learners have 10 or more absences in a term, the STAR prompts you to hold a meeting to discuss reasons for absence. This meeting is used to collaborate with the student and their parents, guardians or caregivers on a support plan tailored to the reasons and circumstances around the child's absence.

You or the Ministry of Education attendance services might lead the development of the plan. These prompts can help establish how everyone will work together to address attendance barriers and how improvements will be reviewed.

Ensure everyone who plays a part has access to a copy of the plan, and that you follow up if the expectations set out in the plan are not being met.

Recommended sections

The following sections are the types of information you should include in your plans. How the sections are framed and the amount of detail you include can be tailored to suit your school.

For each section you should consider how to communicate and capture information in a way that students and their family can understand and engage with.

My current attendance —>>> **Learner's current attendance**

Describe the student's current attendance rate – this could be a percentage or number of days missed. Note details about the reasons you have received for the absences, and any trends or patterns of absence (e.g. common days or subjects absent). This will help to identify the scale of the problem, and if there's any common features of absences.

Things at school that make it harder for me to attend —>>> **In-school barriers**

Discuss with the student to identify any real or perceived in-school barriers. This could include social and/or peer challenges, biased disciplinary practices, lack of meaningful relationships with school staff, or a lack of academic and behavioural support. Consider the safety of students where they may not feel comfortable raising concerns which may relate to specific staff, and ensure their views and perspectives are respected.

Things outside school that make it harder for me to attend —>>> **External barriers**

Discuss with the student and their whānau to identify any barriers outside of school. This could include unreliable transportation, family priorities, housing instability, lack of medical care, or lack of mental health supports. Consider the safety of students where they may not feel comfortable discussing whānau issues, especially with their parents, guardians or caregivers present.

My goal attendance —>>> **Learner's goal attendance**

Discuss with the student and set a realistic improvement target. This could be a maximum number of days absent in the remainder of the term or future term, or a percentage target. Consider making a SMART goal – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.

What I'll do —>>> **Learner actions**

Identify any steps the student will need to take. This may include how they'll let their teachers know if they are falling behind, any catch-up learning they will need to do, participation in any supports, or changes to their routines. Make sure any actions set are agreed by everyone and that the student understands how they will be supported. For younger students this might be accompanied by visuals, like a Social Story.

What my whānau will do —>>> **Whānau actions**

Identify any steps the student's whānau will need to take. This may include ensuring the student is ready to attend school each day, arranging backups if transport support is unavailable, or rescheduling extracurricular activities outside school hours. Make sure everyone agrees to these actions and understands how they'll be supported.

What my school will do —>>> **School actions**

Identify the actions you will take within the school to support attendance, or supports you may need to seek to address the barriers the student is facing. This may include offering access to supports within the school, referrals to other agencies, changes to your processes or timetables, or PLD and training for your staff. Ensure that everyone in the school who has a role is aware of their responsibilities.

Review date —>>> **Prompt for review**

Establishing a clear timeline for review ensures everyone has a target to work toward. This might be a date, or it may be triggered by specific attendance levels – where attendance has increased this is a chance to celebrate the achievement, if attendance has declined, it will be time to review and set a new plan.

Additional sections

The following sections are other suggestions you could choose to include depending on the age and stage of students, and your community context.

Attendance is important to me because —>>> **Drivers of attendance**

Discuss with the student why attendance is important and identify the things that may motivate them to attend. This may be friends, achievement, or future prospects. For younger students this might be accompanied by visuals – e.g. including pictures of the student with their friends at school.

Who I can talk to at school if I need support —>>> **Support person at school**

It is important the student and whānau have someone at school who can facilitate support if issues or new barriers arise. This might not be their teacher and could even be a student support network at secondary school. Consider having a back-up plan for if the support person is away or unwell.

Context —>>> **Strengths**

You could consider how you capture the wider context of students, which may include strengths-based framing through Te Whare Tapa Whā. It can be valuable to identify strengths, as these can be used to build successful interventions. This may already be captured in other plans the student already has (e.g. IEP, IBP).

Celebrating Success

Identify how you'll celebrate success together if progress is made or when the goal is met. There might be a reward or benefit you could offer to help motivate the student.

Signatures

Getting everyone to physically sign up to their role in the plan can help to get everyone on board and strengthen the accountability of everyone to play their part. This may be more relevant for older students who have greater autonomy or independence.



My every day attendance plan

My name: _____

Date of plan: _____

My **CURRENT** attendance: _____ My **GOAL** attendance: _____

Date of review: _____

Things **AT SCHOOL** that make it **harder** for me to attend:

Things **OUTSIDE SCHOOL** that make it **harder** for me to attend:

Attendance is **IMPORTANT** to me because:

WHO I can talk to at school if I need support:

What **I'LL** do:

WHEN:

SIGNED:

What my **WHĀNAU** will do:

What my **SCHOOL** will do:



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