

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

PURPOSE:

1. Regular and punctual attendance at school is essential for learning and progress.
2. The Board of Trustees are responsible for monitoring all children's attendance.
3. To inform parents when attendance is irregular or unexplained.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Teachers mark the Attendance Register twice daily; first thing in the morning and immediately after lunch.
2. Parents will notify the school on the first day of their child's absence as early as possible before 8.40am.
3. The teachers will notify the office of unexplained absences by 9.00am.
4. The office staff will contact parents when the daily return causes concern.
5. When necessary a formal letter will be posted home to parents where irregular attendance is causing concern - from the Principal and co-signed by the Board of Trustees Chairperson.
6. Consistently high attendance will be acknowledged by teachers and Principal.
7. Reports will contain attendance data.
8. Children who are sick are not expected to attend school.
9. Parents carry responsibility to enrol their eligible children in a registered school, (SS 20 and 24 Education Act 1989) and to ensure they attend.
10. There are procedures under S.29 of the Act for unjustified irregular attendances.
11. Attendance Registers will be checked regularly and concerns noted.
12. Protocol of Procedures Appendix 1 to Policy will be followed.

OTUMOETAI INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE SUMMARY FOR PUPIL
CREATING A CONCERN

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

TEACHER: _____

W k	Term 1					Term 2					Term 3					Term 4				
	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
1.																				
2.																				
3.																				
4.																				
5.																				
6.																				
7.																				
8.																				
9.																				
10																				
.																				

Attendance for Term:

Notes and comments:

PROTOCOL (Appendix 1)

1 BEING POSITIVE ABOUT CHILDREN ATTENDING SCHOOL**i) Parents Role:**

Parents are **EXPECTED** to notify the school whenever their child/ren will be absent. This can be done by:

- a) a phone call
- b) a note delivered by a sibling or another child
- c) call at the school personally

ii) The School's Role:

Teachers note on a daily absence schedule the names of children who are not present during the roll call.

Children who are **LATE** for school and thus miss the roll call **DO NOT** go directly to their class. The latecomers **MUST** report directly to the administration office.

The absence schedule completed by teachers is collected on a daily basis by one of the office staff. The office staff write explanatory notes beside the names of the children who reported late to the office. By 9.20am office staff are telephoning the **TRUANCY SERVICE** to assist in locating **ALL** children who have not offered reasons for absence.

iii) Truancy Service Role:

- a) respond to the school requests
- b) visit homes to check on unaccounted children.
If child **IS** home..remind parents of their responsibility to advise school. (School is concerned for safety of child).
If child **NOT** home, leave a card with note.
- c) report back to school's office via a phone call

2 EACH SCHOOL WILL HAVE THEIR OWN ATTENDANCE POLICY.**3 THE TRUANCY SERVICE IS the school's authorised agents as Attendance Officers.**

Relevant sections of Education Act 1989:

24. Penalty for failure to enrol:

- (1) Where a parent of a person required by this Act to be enrolled at a registered school fails or refuses to ensure that the person is enrolled at a registered school, the parent commits an offence, and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding \$1,000.
- (2) The payment of a fine in respect of a conviction for an offence against subsection (1) of this section is not a bar to proceedings for a further such offence. CF 1964, No 135, s 116.

29. Penalty for irregular attendance:
- (1) Every parent of a person who:
 - (a) While enrolled at a registered school, does not attend as provided in section 24 of this Act; or
 - (b) While enrolled at a correspondence school, does not do the work of the course in which the student is enrolled - commits an offence, and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding an amount calculated at the rate of \$15 for every school day for which the offence has occurred.
 - (2) Notwithstanding subsection (1) of this section, a fine imposed for an offence against that subsection shall not exceed \$150 for a first offence against the subsection (or section 120 (1) of the Education Act 1964), or \$400 for a second or subsequent offence.
 - (3) The imposition of a penalty under this section does not affect or restrict the operation of any provision of the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1989. Cf 1964, No 135, ss 119(2), 120.
31. Ensuring attendance of students:
- (1) Any board may appoint any person to be an attendance officer for the schools or institutions it administers.
 - (2) A person may be appointed an attendance officer by 2 or more Boards.
 - (3) Every Board shall, by any means it thinks appropriate, take all reasonable steps to ensure the attendance of students enrolled at its school or schools (or institution or institutions).
 - (4) An attendance officer, on producing a distinctive badge or other evidence of appointment, or a member of the Police may at any time detain any person who appears to have turned 6 and not to have turned (16) and who is not then at school, and question the person as to the person's name and address, the school (if any) at which the person is enrolled and its address, and the reason for the person's absence from school.
 - (5) If not satisfied by the person's answers that the person has a good reason for not being at school, the attendance officer or member of the Police -
 - (a) May take the person to the person's home, or to the school at which the officer thinks the person is enrolled:
 - (b) Repealed by s7 Education Amendment Act (no 4) 1991 (1991 No 136).
 - (6) A person who, after an attendance officer has produced evidence of appointment, obstructs or interferes with the officer in the exercise of powers under this section, commits an offence, and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding \$1,000.
 - (7) Any attendance officer, a principal, or any person appointed by a Board for the purpose may lay informations, conduct prosecutions, and take any other proceedings, under this part of this Act..
 - (8) A certificate sealed by a Board showing that a person named in it is appointed for any purpose under this section is sufficient evidence of the matters specified in

the certificate; and the authenticity of, an validity of the affixing of, a Board's seal shall not in any proceedings under this part of this Act be inquired into or disputed. Cf 1964, No 135, s 123.

Subsection (4) has been amended, as from 1/1/93, by s 5(2) Education Amendment Act (No 4) 1991 (1991 No 136) by substituting the expression "16" for the expression "15". It would appear that the expression "5" (indicated in italics) should have been amended to read "6" although there has been no formal amendment to the effect.

4 STEPS TO BE TAKEN BEFORE REFERRAL

- 1) Attendance Register marked by teacher.
- 2) Absences documented and returned to school office.
- 3) Office contacts families or emergency contact.
- 4) If no explanation or contact made the Truancy Service is engaged to make home contact.
- 5) Truancy Service report back to school on outcome of visit.

If parents have made no contact and irregular attendance still occurs the following steps may be taken by the school:

- (1) Letter home (School Secretary)
- (2) Second letter home with computer printout of absences - (DP/Principal).
Parents invited to an interview at school.
- (3) Third letter from Principal.
- (4) Final warning - **urgency stage** - (BOT Chair) - delivered by a Truancy Officer.
- (5) School gives Police authority to prosecute parents of pupil absent.

OTUMOETAI INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

**ABSENCE
FROM SCHOOL**

**1
REMINDER
STAGE**

To the parents/guardians of: _____

Dear Parents,

This is a friendly reminder that we would like you to provide reason for your child's absence on the following dates:

Please write the reason for absence in this space and return this note to school. Thanks for your help.

This request is necessary because we did not receive a note from you and we were not able to contact you by telephone.

Thank you for your help in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Henk Popping

PRINCIPAL

Date _____

OTUMOETAI INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL	
ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL	2 HOME VISIT STAGE
<p>To the parents/guardians of: _____</p> <p>Dear Parents,</p> <p>We are concerned at the amount of absence your child has had from school, so we have provided for you a summary of the attendance record. This summary is attached to this note and will be explained to you.</p> <p>Please discuss this matter with our school visitor, _____ as we may be able to help you.</p> <p>Yours sincerely</p> <p>Henk Popping PRINCIPAL</p> <p>Date _____</p>	

OTUMOETAI INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL	
ABSENCE From SCHOOL	3 URGENCY STAGE
<p>To the parents/guardians of: _____</p> <p>Dear Parents</p> <p>Unexplained absences are still a major concern. This is now a most serious matter. You will recall a previous letter and especially a subsequent interview at the school. Since then there have been further unexplained absences on the following dates ...</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>(A copy of the computer's complete attendance record is attached.)</p> <p>Please contact me immediately so we can discuss this issue again. Failure to do so could possibly mean that the Board of Trustees will have no alternative other than to begin prosecution procedures as provided for under the Education Act.</p> <p>PRINCIPAL _____ Date: _____</p>	

OTUMOETAI INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL		
ABSENCE From SCHOOL		4 LEGAL ACTION STAGE
<p>To the parents/guardians of: _____</p> <p>Dear Parents</p> <p>Despite many attempts by the school to have you cooperate regarding the problem of absence by _____ there has been no <i>significant</i> attendance improvement reported by our school principal.</p> <p>I have attached a computer record which shows all attendance since the date of the school's third letter to you and clearly supports our claim.</p> <p>I regret to advise you that the matter of non-attendance will now be handed over to the appropriate authorities for legal action.</p> <p>We are willing, even at this late stage, to provide you with yet another opportunity to discuss the matter.</p> <p>Yours faithfully</p> <p style="text-align: right;">_____ Date: _____</p> <p>BOARD OF TRUSTEES CHAIRPERSON</p>		

SCHOOL ENROLMENT RECORDS

The school will follow the rules for maintaining student enrolment records as required by the Secretary of Education under the Education Act. These are as follows:

Rule 1

The Principal of every school must ensure that an Enrolment Record as specified by the Secretary of Education is maintained for every student enrolled at the school, whatever their age.

a) The Enrolment Record is distinct from the school's own enrolment form. The school will have its own enrolment form signed by the parent(s) and/or student, and will retain its own enrolment form as in Rule 3.

Form E19/22A can be obtained at no cost from Learning Media Limited.

Principals must continue to maintain school Admission and Withdrawal Registers and Attendance Registers as previously required.

Rule 2

The specified Enrolment Record is the front only of Form E19/22A, the standard "Record of Schools Attended", from here on referred to as the Enrolment Record.

a) If the number of schools a student has attended exceeds the spaces available on the student's Enrolment Record, an extra "Schools Attended" section from another E19/22A can be stapled to the old one.

The back of form E19/22A is not part of the Enrolment Record and does not have to be completed for this purpose. **Rule 3**

For seven years after students have left a school, every principal must ensure the school retains:

a) for every student, the school's own enrolment form signed by the parent(s) and/or student.

b) for students who have gone to another school, a photocopy of their Enrolment Record.

c) any student Enrolment Records that have not been requested by another school; and

d) the Enrolment Records of students who are known to have left the school as the result of an exemption, or to go overseas, or to enter tertiary education or work, or who are over 16 and are simply leaving school.

These documents are to be held, together with other enrolment and attendance information, for audit purposes.

Rule 4

When enrolling a student, principals must inform parents and students that:

- a) In the case of students who have never been enrolled before, an Enrolment Record will be begun for the student, and in the case of other students their Enrolment Record will be requested from the student's previous school.
- b) When the student leaves the school to go to another school, the Enrolment Record will be updated and passed on to the student's next school.
- c) The school the student is attending will hold the Enrolment Record, and the student and parent can request a copy from the school, and
- d) The Enrolment Record will be made available to the Ministry of Education or its agents if requested for a specific purpose.

The most likely circumstances in which the Ministry may want access to a student's Enrolment Record is when the Ministry is dealing with a funding or enrolment issue.

- The fact that a school holds a student's Enrolment Record does not automatically lead to resourcing in respect of that student.
- Resourcing goes to the school in which the student is enrolled and attending on the key date(s) for resourcing purposes.

The Non-Enrolment Truancy Service (NETS) may need a student's Enrolment Record if the student has been reported as possibly non-enrolled.

When a student moves to his/her next school, the first school retains a photocopy of the student's Enrolment Record, AND the school's own enrolment form signed by the student and/or parents.

Rule 5

When a student moves from one school to another:

- a) The principal of the second school must request in writing the student's Enrolment Record from the principal of the first school within seven days of the student beginning to attend the second school.
- b) The principal of the first school must forward the student's Enrolment Record to the principal of the second school within seven days of receiving the written request from the second school.
- c) Should any student who has expressed an intention to enrol in a second school not have begun to attend on or near the date the parents and student have agreed with the school, the principal must arrange for his/her staff to attempt to contact the parents, and if necessary, advise the student's first school.

If the first school is not aware of which school the student is now attending, and the student is under 16, the principal of the first school initiates a referral to NETS as in Rule 7.

Proper application of this rule will ensure that students under 16 (who are required by Section 20 of the Education Act 1989 to be enrolled at a school) do re-enrol after leaving a school, unless exempted as in the notes in Rule 7.

In accordance with the Privacy Act 1993, having informed the student and/or parents of their intention, schools may agree to share other information such as the student's record of progress and achievement and/or other school records.

Rule 6

The following transitional arrangements apply to students who were already enrolled in a school on 18 February 1999 and for whom the school does not hold an Enrolment Record as specified in these rules.

a) The principal is not required to set up an Enrolment Record as specified in these rules while the students continue to attend that school.

b) If a student moves from that school to another school, the principal of the first school must draw up the specified Enrolment Record, listing any known previous schools. The principal must then send the student's Enrolment Record to the principal of the next school.

To simplify this procedure, the first school may simply attach a copy of the school's own enrolment form to the specified Enrolment Record. The school retains its own enrolment form and a photocopy of the Enrolment Record as in Rule 3.

Rule 7

This rule applies only to students under 16 who have left (or appear to have left) their school, and the principal has not, within 12 days, received a request from a second school for the student's Enrolment Record.

The purpose of this rule is to ensure that principals arrange for their staff to follow up promptly if a student under 16 seems to have "disappeared" from a school.

- If the principal has concerns about the safety of the student, s/he should advise the local Police or Children Young Persons and Families Agency (CYPFA) immediately.
- If it is a matter of truancy, the school must deal with it promptly. Section 25 of the Education Act 1989 requires boards of trustees to take all reasonable steps to ensure that all students attend the school. Schools may refer students to the local District Truancy Service. Circular 1996/35 outlines steps schools can take to deal with extensive truancy.
- If the student seems to have left, and the principal and staff do not know where the student has gone, follow the procedures set out in 7a and 7b below.

a) The principal must take reasonable steps to find out where the student has gone in order to send the student's Enrolment Record to the principal of the school at which the student is then enrolled.

b) If the principal cannot locate the student, the principal must inform the Ministry of Education using the form NETS-1, and retain the student's Enrolment Record as in Rule 3.