



“Maa mahi,  
ka ora”



Matamata  
College

## NAG 6 ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

Matamata College is responsible for the safety and wellbeing of students. Students are expected to attend school regularly in order to take advantage of every possible learning opportunity.

### **Responsibilities for Attendance at School**

**Parents:** Parents are legally required to enrol their children at school. They also have a responsibility to ensure their children attend school.

**Principals:** Principals are responsible for the accurate keeping of an admission and attendance register for all pupils attending school.

**Teachers:** Teachers are required to be responsible for the accurate keeping of a register of daily attendance for all pupils attending the classes they teach and follow school attendance protocols.

**Education Review Office:** ERO reviews a school's practice of recording and ensuring attendance and make comments on this.

**Students:** Every person who is not a foreign student is required to be enrolled at a registered school at all times during the period between the person's sixth birthday and the person's sixteenth birthday.

- Truancy is defined as an educational and welfare concern.
- Truancy definitions:
  - *Truancy:* The total of all a student's unjustified and intermittent unjustified absences.
  - *Frequent truancy:* Truancy that occurs on more than 20% of the half days which the school is open taken over a four week period.

### **GUIDELINES**

- Pro-active steps to increase student attendance with Principal setting annual targets to be reported on to the BOT.
- Student attendance will be marked electronically at Group time and every teaching session through the school's Student Management System (KAMAR), together with the reason for absence.
- Parents/caregivers will be contacted as soon as practicable in relation to any unjustified absence.
- The Principal will develop protocols on the recording of student attendance/absences and on the steps which will take in order to maximise student attendance. The protocols will include and outline which kind of absence the Principal will accept as 'justified', together with the steps to be taken in the case of 'unjustified' absences.
- The Principal implement a strategy to inform parent/caregivers and the community-at-large about the school's policy on attendance/absences (and to keep the community aware of it on an ongoing basis).

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**Protocols:**

1. Staff are required to take a roll every class and record accurate attendance using the electronic attendance register (KAMAR) within the first 10 minutes of each class. If unavailable to staff an accurate paper attendance roll must be completed and sent by student runner to the Attendance Officer or Main Office. Using the information collated by KAMAR the Group Teacher will make sure the attendance data is accurate and account for any unexplained absences.
2. A parent/caregiver must notify the school of an absentee. They can do this by phone or by txt or email using ‘School Links’ early notification system, or by letter. This information will be entered into KAMAR by the Office Staff or Deputy Principal in charge of Attendance who will attempt to get in contact with parents/caregivers of non-notified absentees.
3. If parents/caregivers have not notified the school of an absentee a note or letter of explanation, written and signed by the parent/caregiver is required as soon as possible after the student returns to school, clearly stating the dates and reasons for the absence. This is to be submitted to the group teacher for acknowledgement on KAMAR.
4. A parent/caregiver must notify of a prolonged absence. If appropriate work will be arranged for completion at home. Continued absenteeism (with no communication between home and school) will be followed up by the Deputy Principal, Deans or guidance team.
5. Group Teachers should make contact with home if one of their students has three or more unexplained absences. For continued absenteeism Group Teachers must refer absentee students to the Deans, and members of the guidance team. This will usually take place after three days of unexplained absence, or earlier if the student is either a known truant or the absence is suspicious. In such circumstances the Deputy Principal may refer students to ‘Rock On’.
6. If a student’s attendance falls below 80% then the Dean may send a letter home expressing concern about attendance. This will be done in consultation with the Group Class Teacher to determine the necessity of the letter and circumstances around the absences.
7. Students suffering illness or injury while at school use the procedures laid down in the policy on student health. No student will leave the school grounds unless these procedures have been followed.
8. Students must have permission to leave the school grounds.  
They get permission by:
  - ✓ Producing a dental or doctor’s appointment card
  - ✓ Bringing a note signed by parent/caregiver explaining clearly why the student requires leave

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- ✓ Being given permission by a senior leadership team member

Note: When permission is granted the student must pick up their pass from student reception and show it as explanation on their return to school.

- Students who require a permanent lunch pass may apply to the Principal. A signed note must be brought from the parent/caregiver. Permission is given to that student only, to go to their home only i.e. no other student is involved and permission is not given to go to town.
- CLASSIFYING ABSENCE;** *Matamata College clearly establishes guidelines for how we categorise absence. It's up to all staff to apply this consistently across our school.*

| Justified absence                                                                                                                                                        | Unjustified absence                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Cultural or sporting representation (regional or national)                                                                                                               | No explanation – truanting                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Overseas – National representation sport, culture or academic                                                                                                            | White-baiting season, Duck shooting season, lambing season, milking, any farming ‘pressure’ season                                                                                                |
| Bereavement                                                                                                                                                              | Driver’s licence test                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Force majeure – road closure, flooding, bus breakdown, car accident, flood, fire                                                                                         | Holiday in New Zealand or overseas during school time                                                                                                                                             |
| Exceptional family circumstances – (many of these can be very sensitive and involve other agencies) – domestic violence, protection order, family separation etc         | Sleeping in<br>Recovering from weekend’s activities<br>Sales/shopping/birthday<br>Cat run over                                                                                                    |
| Illness (hospitalisation) – may imply confidentiality and parents/caregivers could be reluctant to provide details<br>Sickness<br>Appointments other than medical/dental | Babysitting – could possibly fit into exceptional family circumstances<br>Mother sick – child had to cook and clean<br>Waiting at home for service person to call<br>Visiting (very) ill relative |
| Exam leave<br>Ballet/music (etc) exam*                                                                                                                                   | Staying away from home (caregivers may be away) with no means of transport to school                                                                                                              |
| Bullying (follow up)                                                                                                                                                     | Taking the dog to the vet<br>Moving house, packing, unpacking                                                                                                                                     |
| Medical or dental appointment (these count as present in ½ day summary statistics)                                                                                       | Working early morning – always late                                                                                                                                                               |
| Internal school activity, appointments school trip – sporting or cultural, camp (these count as present in ½ day summary statistics)                                     | Travel and attending sporting event or (rock) concert<br>Ballet/music (etc) exam*                                                                                                                 |



\*Note: Sometimes excuses may be justified and unjustified. Remember guidelines used by a school do not preclude the Principal from using discretion over a specific student absence.

**Matamata College Absence Procedures**

- Staff mark electronic register within first 10 minutes of each period.
- During period one the DP in charge of attendance uses School Links to notify parents of absentee.
- During Group time, Group Teachers chase up absence from previous day. Three or more unexplained absences require Group Teacher to notify home to seek explanation. If no contact able made matter referred to Dean.
- Ongoing truancy issues will result in a referral through to ROCK ON.

**Legislation**

- Attendance Regulations 1951
- Education Act 1989
- Health and Safety in the Workplace Act 2015

**Evidence**

- Principals reports to BOT
- Kamar

**Review details:**

| Version No            | Action          | Date                    |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 1                     | Reviewed -Audit | Jun 17                  |
| 1                     | Approved by BoT |                         |
| 2                     |                 |                         |
| 2                     |                 |                         |
| 3                     |                 |                         |
| 3                     |                 |                         |
| 4                     |                 |                         |
| 4                     |                 |                         |
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