



Attendance Management Plan 2026

Attendance Procedures

Otago Girls' High School has procedures to record and monitor attendance and to identify and follow up on concerns. We share attendance expectations with students and their parents/caregivers, and staff are responsible for reminding students of these expectations. This plan outlines current practices and expectations.

Recording Attendance

- Subject teachers are responsible for marking attendance each period using the Helix system
- Class attendance at the start of the day will be recorded by period one subject teachers by 9:30am
- The Attendance Officer will send an email reminder to subject teachers directly if their rolls remain unmarked
- Students arriving late must sign in at the 'Attendance Desk' in the office using the self-service sign-in tablet. This information will be used to update their attendance on Helix.
- Students must have parent/caregiver/staff member permission to leave school during the day. They must sign out at the Attendance Desk in the office using the self-service sign-in tablet and then receive a blue exit slip from the Attendance Officer.
- Relievers will use a school issued device to mark the attendance of their assigned classes using Helix.

Monitoring Attendance

- The Attendance Officer monitors daily attendance and updates the attendance data on the Helix system using information from the School App, phone messages and emails
- The Attendance Officer will contact the caregivers of any students who are not marked present in their timetabled class if no explanation from a caregiver has been received
- By 10:30am each day the Attendance Officer will make contact through automated attendance texts, email or via phone calls with the caregivers of students who have not been marked present in their first two classes. They will ask for confirmation of any reason for the student's absence and update Helix with the appropriate attendance code.
- Additional times throughout the day the Attendance Officer will contact students' caregivers via attendance texts or via phone calls if they note concerning unexplained absences (?) from classes

- Students will be marked L if they arrive beyond 10 minutes after the start time of a class.

Attendance Codes: The following codes will be used with some further clarifications for D and Q.

Attendance Code Descriptions		Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga Ministry of Education	
Present for ½ day calculations		Justified absence	Unjustified absence
P Present	N Present but out of class	J Explained and approved	T Truant
Student is present in class. This includes supervised dual tuition with Te Kura.	Student is present but out of class due to an on-site school activity (cultural or sporting event), internal appointment, temporary removal from class, or time in the sickbay.	Student is absent due to explained and approved reasons (e.g. family emergencies, bereavement, representing in national / cultural events, approved exemptions, or accompanying parents on overseas diplomatic / military postings).	Student is absent without explanation or permission from a parent / caregiver (e.g. skipping class).
L Late to class	Q Board approved offsite learning	M Illness / Medical absence	E Explained but not approved
Student is late to class. Schools set the threshold for lateness (e.g. 10 minutes) in their school policy.	Student is present in Board-approved off-site learning, including courses, school-organised activities, and work experience.	Student is absent due to illness or medical reasons, including mental health-related absences (e.g. anxiety).	Student is absent and the reason provided does not meet the school policy for a justifiable absence (e.g. a parent states their child didn't want to attend sports day).
A Alternative provision	D Approved external appointment	X Exam leave	G Holiday during term time
Student is present in a Ministry-approved alternative provision, such as a teen parent unit, alternative education, secondary-tertiary program, health school or activity centre.	Student is present but has a medical appointment which is unable to be scheduled outside of school hours (e.g. doctor or dentist and includes travel time) or is participating in court proceedings.	Student is absent studying offsite preparing for exams. NOTE: Time allocated to this code is not included in Ministry attendance calculations.	Student is absent due to a holiday taken.
V Unsupervised exam study		U Stood down or suspended	? Unknown (temporary)
Student is present in an examination or unsupervised study where the student is on-site.		Student is absent due to formal stand down or suspension. This code applies to the period of the stand-down or suspension, excluding the day it was imposed.	Temporary code used when the reason for a student's absence is initially unknown. This will be updated once the reason is confirmed.
(S) Secondary schools only			

Otago Girls' has defined additional circumstances for the following codes:

D - Approved external appointment

The student is present, but has an appointment which is unable to be scheduled outside of school hours or student is participating in court proceedings.

A student is present but is temporarily attending an appointment which is unable to be scheduled outside of school hours. Examples include appointments with:

- doctor, dentist, medical specialist
- social worker, mentor, psychologist, therapist
- government and non-government agencies, court proceedings
- learning specialists

Q - Board approved offsite learning

The student is present in board-approved off-site learning. USE THIS CODE WHEN a student is learning off-site and where the learning is approved by the school board (Section 53).

Examples include: • organised school trips e.g. camps, competitions, exhibits. • board approved cultural, academic or sporting activities e.g. haerenga tapu, noho marae, cultural performances, kapa haka, community events, inter-school events and sports tournaments • visits and orientation activities e.g. transition visits to another school • other learning experiences e.g. work experience, civic engagement, cultural practices, commitments and obligations • emergency situations where the school is temporarily closed, and students are learning from home. This includes regional and/or national sporting or cultural activity representation organised by outside organisations where the student is also engaging in online academic work while off-site.

- Daily Attendance Summaries showing ? or T will be emailed to year level deans by the Attendance Officer (by 4pm each day) so they can monitor attendance patterns of students and have follow-up conversations with students and/or caregivers regarding their attendance. Appropriate updates will be made on Helix by the deans.
- Automated Weekly Attendance Summaries for all students will be emailed on Sunday evening to year level deans and to whānau teachers who will follow up any ? with students/staff/parents and make appropriate updates on Helix. Updates on Helix are to be completed by the following Sunday.
- Automated Weekly Attendance Summaries for students under an 80% attendance threshold will be emailed to parents/caregivers on Saturday evening. This report shows whether a student has been present, absent or late during the previous week. It assists parents to stay informed and encourages early intervention.
- Lists of students with concerning attendance levels will be collated by year level deans and **monitoring groups** will be created on Helix. Automated daily attendance summaries will be emailed home each day at 7pm to parents/caregivers so they can stay informed, have discussions with the student and support improved attendance. These groups will be refined as improvements are made.
- Alert notifications will be set up on Helix by members of the pastoral team to track specific students' attendance. This will generate an automated email to specified staff members when target students are not marked present in their timetabled class. This allows timely checking and intervention during the day.

- The summary data of overall attendance rates will be reviewed regularly by the year level deans and the DP Pastoral. Students will be referred by the DP Pastoral to external supports such as Otago Youth Wellness Trust. Students will be referred if they meet a threshold of attendance below 70% and it is deemed the most appropriate intervention AFTER school-based interventions have been implemented and are proving to be ineffective.

School-based responses to concerning absences may include:

1-1 meetings with students

Mentoring with older peer/staff member

Goal setting and incentives

Transport or financial assistance

Designated break/reset spaces

Alerts on Helix set up so staff are notified via email when target students are absent from a class

Emails/calls home

Daily or weekly attendance reports emailed to caregivers

Termly updates via Student Learning Conferences, School Reports or formal email notifications home

Parent meetings at school

Modified learning programmes, including use of dual enrolment at Te Kura (Reintegration Pathway) and the Southern Regional Health School

Mental Health Supports – Counselling referrals

Referral to Health Nurse

RTLB involvement

SENCO assistance

Special Assessment Conditions implemented

- Interventions will be recorded on Helix to guide future decision-making.

Reporting Absences

Parents and caregivers must notify the school if their child is absent.

Expected methods:

Email the school before 9:00am to: absences@otagogirls.school.nz

OR

Use the School App Absentee Notification

OR

Call the school on [474 0496](tel:4740496) and press 1 to leave a message

This allows the Attendance Officer time to enter the correct Ministry of Education attendance code before automated text messages are sent to parents. This process has been communicated in newsletters and will be updated as and when needed.

Planned Absences

Under the **Education and Training Act 2020**

- The principal may approve up to **5 days** of absence for a justified reason (e.g. illness, bereavement, tangihanga) Requests for extended absences must be received **one week in advance** and are approved at the discretion of the school.

Compliance

- Attendance data is submitted daily to the Ministry of Education as per the **Education (School Attendance) Regulations 2024**.
- Attendance data is kept for 7 years by Otago Girls' High School.

Early Pick-up Procedure

- **Parents or caregivers** must **sign the student out** on the tablet at the Attendance Desk in the office.

Verification Process The office staff will:

Sight the parent or caregiver picking up the student.

If the person is **unfamiliar/not named as an authorised contact on Helix**, the office staff will **confirm their identity and gain verbal consent** from the parent or caregiver first before the student is released.

Parent and Student Responsibilities

- Ensure students attend regularly (90% +) and arrive at school on time
- Avoid booking appointments during school hours (where possible)
- Inform the school about absences using correct procedures
- Travel during the school term is strongly discouraged and prior approval is required