

## **HUKANUI SCHOOL NAG 6: Legislative Requirements**

### **PROCEDURE - STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

#### **Rationale:**

Student attendance along with teacher effectiveness has the greatest influence on student engagement and achievement. All enrolled pupils aged 6 and over are expected to attend school every day that the school is open. In terms of S31 of the Education Act 1989 the Board of Trustees will take all reasonable steps to ensure students attend school when it is open.

#### **Purposes:**

1. To ensure the school is meeting legislative requirements regarding school attendance and the length of the school year and school day.
2. To ensure attendance is carefully monitored so the school can respond appropriately to attendance issues as they arise.

#### **Guidelines:**

##### **General**

1. Any absence of a pupil from the school at any time must be with the knowledge and consent of the pupil's parents / caregivers, who must contact the school to advise absences on the morning of the first day of a period of absence. If this requirement is not met, the parents/caregivers must supply a written note of explanation to the teacher or contact the teacher, otherwise truancy will be assumed.
2. The school may require a medical certificate for continuous absences for medical reasons for longer than 3 days, so the absence can be recorded appropriately.
3. Approval for planned absences must be in writing in advance to the Principal with the expected date of return. If the absence is extended from the original date due to unforeseen circumstances, then the school must be kept informed. Students will be withdrawn from the school roll if an extended absence is longer than 8 school weeks. Students will need to be re enrolled if seeking to return to Hukanui School after 8 school weeks.
4. Parents/ Caregivers are made aware of the Attendance Policy when enrolling through our Prospectus. A copy is also available on the school webpage.
5. The school will comply with all general legislation and Ministry of Education guidelines regarding the length of the school day and the length of the school

year. Term dates will be communicated to the school community before term four of the previous year.

### Using an eAR

6. The school will use an eAR that is Ministry approved (SMS-Assembly) so that attendance data can be recorded, monitored and analysed with greater accuracy and speed. It will be a mixed system, i.e. a combination of decentralised and centralised inputting of attendance data by classroom teachers and the office administrator.
7. Every student will be marked as present or absent in the system by classroom teachers before 9.10am in the morning and before 1.40pm in the afternoon.

The following codes will be used in our attendance system in line with Ministry of Education Guidelines.

( For these and Points 6 – 9 refer to “Attendance Matters – Guidelines of Implementing an effective attendance management plan.” NZ Ministry of Education. )

J	=	Justified absence within school policy
E	=	Unjustified
O	=	Justified Overseas
D	=	Medical Appointment: Doctor or Dentist
M	=	Short term illness
S	=	Sickbay
T	=	Truant: no info, or trivial excuse
L	=	Late – not present when classes start
?	=	Unknown

8. The school will follow Ministry of Education Guidelines for recording an absence as Unjustified (E). These include:
  - as an initial entry for an absence when the reason is unknown.
  - the explanation for the absence is accepted as the reason for the absence but it doesn't fit within policy as a justifiable reason even though the parents may consider the absence was justified. This includes a NZ holiday or overseas absence. (A parent's note does not provide justification.)
  - an absence where no verifiable explanation is received, or the explanations are like the following: 'I don't like my teacher' or 'I was at the shops' etc

9. A justified absence (J) is one where the school is properly informed and the reason deemed acceptable by these guidelines. If the classification is unclear then any final decision will be at the discretion of the Principal. The validity of the reason, the duration of the absence, past patterns of attendance, the effect on a student's continued learning and alignment with Ministry of Education Guidelines will be some factors taken into account.
10. Justified Overseas (O) refers to a student accompanying or visiting a family member who is on an overseas posting. E.g. military or diplomatic.
11. Relievers will use a full class roll and an absence notebook. This will be sent to the school office to be entered into the system by 9.10 am and again at 1.40 pm if students are absent.
12. The office administrator will ensure attendance data has been received from all classrooms each day.
13. Any student arriving after the 9.00 am bell must register their arrival at the school office. They will be handed a blue late card to give to their classroom teacher. This confirms to the teacher that they have been checked in at the office and marked on the eAR.
14. The office administrator will in the first instance follow up unexplained absences by telephone. Where no contact can be made the Principal will be consulted and if deemed necessary an Attendance Service application will be completed.
15. In the case of resolved unexplained absences the SMS will be updated with the appropriate code by the office administrator
16. Teachers will identify children with continuous or irregular absences and inform the Principal of concerns. The Principal will ensure that absence issues are dealt with and consult with Truancy Services when needed.
17. The office administrator will print and archive a paper copy of the eAR at the end of each term. A copy of each class will be given to classroom teachers for their reference.