



MOUNTAINVIEW

— HIGH SCHOOL —

Kia ora e te whānau,

At Mountainview High School, we want every student to thrive in our whānau environment. One of the strongest foundations for success at school is regular attendance. Quite simply, students learn best when they are present, engaged, and participating in class every day.

Research in Aotearoa New Zealand continues to show a clear connection between regular attendance and student achievement. The Ministry of Education states that there is a clear link between going to school regularly and doing well in the classroom, and that regular attendance is the first step in accessing the skills students need for future success. The Education Review Office also notes that every day of school matters, and that missing school leads to lower achievement. Regular attendance is defined as being present for more than 90% of the term.

As part of this commitment, Mountainview High School uses the **Stepped Attendance Response (STAR)** process to respond early, clearly, and supportively when attendance begins to decline. The STAR framework is designed to create consistency, strengthen communication with families, and ensure that support is put in place before attendance issues become entrenched. The Ministry of Education says STAR helps schools set clearer expectations and communicate them more effectively with parents and whānau, while giving schools a structured approach to escalating responses to absence.

At Mountainview, our STAR process works in stages.

For students with **fewer than 5 days of absence in a term**, our focus is on maintaining strong attendance habits. Parents and caregivers are asked to report absences by 10.00am, either by phone or through the Skool Loop app, and to talk with their child about the importance of being at school each day. At school, we acknowledge and celebrate strong attendance, send daily reminders for unexplained absences, email fortnightly attendance updates home, and follow up class absences promptly.

When a student reaches **up to 10 days of absence in a term**, this becomes a signal that extra support may be needed. Families are asked to continue the earlier steps, provide a medical certificate for further absences after 5 days in the term, and attend an informal attendance hui organised by the Whānau Leader. At this stage, the school also monitors attendance more closely, gathers information about the student's progress, and considers what additional supports may help improve attendance.

If absences reach **up to 15 days in a term**, the response becomes more formal. Parents and caregivers are asked to attend an Individual Attendance Plan meeting with their child and senior leaders. Together, we identify barriers to attendance and co-construct a plan for improvement. This allows us to respond in a supportive and practical way, while keeping the student connected to learning.

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Where a student has **15 days or more of absence in a term**, the concern is significant and the school response is intensified. This may include meetings with the Principal and Deputy Principal, referral to the school's Attendance and Engagement support staff, involvement of external agencies, and referral to Attendance Services where appropriate. The goal is always to work alongside families to remove barriers and help the student return to regular attendance and learning.

It is important to remember that attendance is not only about being physically present. Regular attendance helps students keep up with coursework, build confidence, maintain friendships, and develop the routines and resilience needed for future success. Missing even one week of school each term adds up over time; ERO notes that students who miss a week or more each term can miss out on the equivalent of around a year of schooling by the time they are 16.

At Mountainview High School, we see attendance as a shared responsibility between school and home. We are committed to working in partnership with parents and caregivers to support every young person to attend regularly, engage positively, and achieve to the best of their ability.

Thank you for your ongoing support. If you have any concerns about your child's attendance, please contact their Ako teacher, Whānau Leader, or the school office so that we can work together early.

Ngā mihi nui



Kenny Diamond
Principal
Mountainview High School