



SHIRLEY BOYS'  
HIGH SCHOOL  
Ngā Tama o Ōruapaeroa

## Shirley Boys' High School Attendance Plan 2026

### Our Purpose: Why Attendance Matters at Shirley Boys'

*At Shirley Boys' High School, our core mission is to support our ākonga to achieve their full potential, both in their academic studies and in their personal well-being. These two areas are fundamentally linked, and both depend on regular attendance.*

- **Attendance and Student Well-being**

*We know that our students' well-being is the foundation for their success. That's why we take the connection between attendance and well-being so seriously. National research from the Education Review Office (ERO) confirms that more frequent non-attendance is directly linked to poorer well-being, including schoolwork-related anxiety, a decreased sense of belonging, and fewer positive peer friendships. This can create a difficult cycle: poor well-being can lead to poor attendance, which in turn leads to poorer well-being. Our focus is on breaking this cycle by ensuring school is a supportive and engaging place to be.*

- **Attendance and NCEA Attainment**

*The path to academic achievement is built day by day. Research from Education Counts shows that **every single half-day** a student misses predicts a reduction in the NCEA credits they will ultimately achieve. This is true whether a student's attendance drops from 100% to 99% or from 71% to 70%. Even "regular" attendance of 90-95% sees students gain fewer credits than those with slightly higher attendance. The data is clear: **there is no "safe" level of non-attendance** for compromising achievement.*

### Our Responsibilities: A Partnership Under the Law

*To ensure every student has the opportunity to succeed, Shirley Boys' High School, our parents, and our whānau share a set of responsibilities outlined in the Education and Training Act 2020.*

- **The Law:** *All students are required to attend school whenever it is open (section 36). It is a legal offence for a parent to fail to ensure their child, while enrolled, attends school as required (section 244).*
- **Our Partnership:**
  - **Parents and Caregivers** *have the primary responsibility to ensure their son attends school and to be aware of their attendance record.*
  - **Shirley Boys' High School** *has a legal and moral responsibility to ensure attendance. This policy outlines the ways we will actively encourage, monitor, and follow up on attendance to support all our ākongā.*
- **Our Benchmark for Success:** *The Ministry of Education defines "regular attendance" as **90% or higher**. While this is our minimum benchmark, it's important to note that 90% attendance still equates to four full weeks (20 school days) of learning missed over a year. Our school is committed to helping the government achieve its national target of having 80% of all students meet this 90% attendance standard by 2030.*

## **Shirley Boys' High School Attendance Policy**

### **Our Guiding Principles**

*At Shirley Boys' High School, we believe that regular attendance is fundamental to student success. It is a key habit for personal responsibility and is directly linked to both **well-being and academic achievement**. Our goal is to work in partnership with ākongā and whānau to ensure every student is present and ready to learn.*

**Policy is present on School Docs.**

**A summary of our processes relating to policy follows:**

- *All ākongā (students) at Shirley Boys' High School are expected to attend all scheduled classes, form times, assemblies, and other official school activities.*
- *Attendance is recorded **every period** via our student management system, KAMAR.*
- *Any unexplained absence will be followed up by our pastoral team, including Form Tutors, Deans, and the relevant Assistant Principal.*
- *Attendance data will be included in students' school reports. It can also be accessed through the school portal on our website and it will be emailed home to ākongā and caregivers every Friday evening. If concerns about a student's*

attendance arise, the school will communicate this directly to parents/caregivers.

- In line with the Ministry of Education's definition, Shirley Boys' High School expects attendance to be **above 90%**. This percentage will be clearly recorded on students' fortnightly reports and in attendance emails sent to caregivers on a weekly basis. As of November 2025 Shirley Boys' High School has a regular attendance rate of 47% (i.e. 47% of students have attended greater than 90% of the time measured in half days). The goal for 2026 is 60%.
- Our Deans and pastoral team will identify ākongā at risk of significant non-attendance. These students will be closely monitored and supported by the school's pastoral network (see also STEPs attendance response document).
- When a student is identified as non-attending, a range of pastoral procedures will be followed. This includes escalating communication with whānau, providing appropriate support, and, where necessary, may involve a referral to the Ministry of Education's Attendance Services.
- This escalating approach reflects the government's "**Stepped Attendance Response**" (STAR) system. STAR outlines the responsibilities for schools, parents/guardians, and the Ministry in responding to absence. At SBHS, our actions will be tailored to the specific reasons for a student's absence.
- Shirley Boys' High School will develop and maintain an attendance management plan in accordance with all current and future Ministry regulations.

### **Attendance Requirements (School Rules)**

Regular attendance and punctuality are personal habits valued both at school and in the workplace, and they are a core part of being a 'Shirley Man'!

- Ākongā must attend and be on time for all timetabled classes, form times, assemblies, field trips, and other school-related activities.
- School classroom hours are from **8:35 am to 2:45 pm** (except for Thursdays, when school starts at 8:45 am and finishes at 3:00 pm). Students must attend all scheduled classes between these hours.
- Any absence from school (for family, health, or other reasons) must be explained by a parent/caregiver, in advance where possible. A written note, email, text, or medical certificate is required. Absence can also be reported by phoning the school and leaving a voicemail message.
- Students who are absent without a valid reason, or who are late to school or class, will be subject to follow-up action from our pastoral team.

- *With the exception of **Year 13 students during their study periods**, no student is permitted to leave the school grounds during the school day (including interval and lunchtime). Exceptions are:*
  - *Sickness or medical/dental appointments, provided prior approval has been obtained from the Student Office or a Dean.*
  - *Any other reason, only with the prior approval of their Dean, who will issue an official EXIT pass.*

### **Procedures and Responsibilities**


*Shirley Boys' High School operates an electronic register (KAMAR) approved by the Ministry of Education.*

### **Parent/Caregiver Responsibilities:**

- *To notify the school's Attendance Office (by phone, text, or email) if their son is going to be absent. This notification is expected by **9:00 am** on the day of the absence.*
- *To seek permission in advance for any planned or exceptional absences (e.g., for sporting or cultural events, tangihanga, or significant family matters). Board approval may be required for extended leave.*
- *To attempt to schedule appointments (e.g., dentist) outside school hours or during school holidays.*
- *To work in partnership with the school to manage and resolve any attendance issues.*

### **School Responsibilities:**

- *The school will send a text message to parents/caregivers if a student is marked absent during any time of the day and no notification has been received.*
- *All absences will be coded in KAMAR according to Ministry of Education guidelines.*
- *An absence will be recorded as "**unjustified**" if no justifiable explanation is received or if the explanation does not align with school policy (e.g., family holidays during term time).*
- *In line with the Education and Training Act 2020, the Principal is responsible for ensuring a full attendance record is kept for every student. This duty is carried out by all teaching staff.*
- *Class and Form teachers will maintain accurate attendance records and must alert their Dean to any attendance concerns.*

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- *Contact with parents/whānau regarding attendance will follow our 'Stepped Attendance Response' (STAR) and may include emails, phone calls, letters, and formal meetings as attendance issues escalate.*
  - *Specific permission is required in advance for prolonged or exceptional absences. In considering such requests, the school will regard the student's academic standing, the nature of the event, and the principles of its policy.*