Rationale:
The Education Act 1990 requires that all students between the ages of 6 and 17 years must be enrolled in school. It is therefore essential that at Picton High School, student attendance is a high priority. We believe that students who attend regularly are more likely to succeed at school. Picton High School, in partnership with parents, is responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students in accordance with current legislation.

Aims:
The Picton High School Attendance policy aims to enhance the process of parents and teachers working as a partnership to support student attendance for future success at school. It also aims to promote regular attendance to all classes to ensure that optimum learning outcomes can be achieved.

Processes:
- Roll call takes place every day in a DEAR period. If a student is absent from roll call then the teacher records the absence on the roll by placing an “a” against the absent student’s name. An SMS message is generated and sent to the parents/guardians of the absent student.
- Students are expected to provide an absentee note from their parent/guardian for all absent days within 7 days of the absence. In some instances, parents contact the school via telephone to inform the school of the absence and it is then cleared by the administrative staff and therefore a note will not be required.
- It is the responsibility of the DEAR teachers to request absent notes from students. The DEAR teacher collects the absentee note and places them in the ‘Attendance Tray’ in their staffrooms, where they are collected each day for processing onto a central database.
- It is expected that all students have an attendance rate above 85% in order to meet attendance requirements.
- Each week an email is sent to staff which identifies any student who has had less than 85% attendance.
- The Year Advisors need to check this 85% attendance sheet and identify any child who is recorded as having poor attendance without a known, valid reason. The Year Adviser should make a phone call home to find out the reason for the poor attendance and make a record of the phone call on Sentral.
- At the Junior and Senior Welfare meetings, the Year Advisers should identify any student who has not shown improvement in attendance since the attendance phone call has been made.
- The Head Teachers responsible for attendance or the Supervising Deputy Principal will then follow up with these identified students who have poor attendance. They must ring home to discuss the attendance concerns with the student’s parents and outline the legal requirements of attending school every day. This phone conversation should be recorded on Sentral.
- If the student’s attendance does not improve, and no acceptable reason has been given for the poor attendance, the Head Teacher responsible for attendance should organise for an attendance letter to be sent home. There are two types of attendance letters – one for students that are under 17 years of age and one for students that are over 17 years of age. This letter explains the legal requirements for school attendance and requests that the parents provide the school with a valid reason for the poor attendance or sends the child back to school immediately. If these two options do not occur, then the Head Teacher should refer the student to the Home School Liaison Officer for further action to be taken.
- A student who has successfully completed Year 10 is eligible to leave school if they have acquired a minimum of 25 hours per week of employment, or attends TAFE or has acquired an apprenticeship or traineeship. The student will need to provide evidence of this pathway by submitting a letter from their parents, which gives them permission to leave school, along with a supporting letter from either the employer or an enrolment acceptance letter from the alternate educational setting e.g. TAFE.
- A child who has not completed Year 10 may apply for an exemption through the school principal if they have secured an apprenticeship or traineeship. Students who have not completed Year 10 cannot leave school for employment only. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide supporting documentation to the principal to be granted an exemption from school.

Evaluation
This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three-year review cycle.

June 2014