

Age related case management

This guidance is for attendance service providers.

Attendance Services mainly help ākonga aged 5–16, however age is not the only factor when deciding support for ākonga. Care decisions should consider the student's individual situation.

This guidance clarifies expectations relating to:

- Referrals involving 5-year-olds
- Students approaching age 16 and beyond

Referrals with 5-year-olds

When a child under six is enrolled in a school, they must attend regularly. Whānau can withdraw their five-year-old but they must reenrol again at age six.

Providers must engage with referrals involving five-year-olds. If a child is not attending because the whānau judge them not developmentally ready and they want to wait until six years of age, help them to formally withdraw the child from the school.

If the family decide to withdraw their child from the school roll, the child's case can be paused in the Attendance Service case management system (AS-CMS) if:

- the child has been located **and**
- you have been in contact with the whānau to explore pathways to re-enrolment **and**
- you are confident that the child is safe, and the whānau have made an informed choice to wait until the child is older before enrolling them **and**
- the child has been withdrawn from school

The case will automatically reopen if the child is re-enrolled or turns six. You can also reopen it manually at any time and continue with normal case management.

If the whānau do not withdraw their child, you must keep actively working to return the child to regular attendance.

Students approaching age 16

Ākonga who disengage from school in their mid-teens are at increased risk of becoming NEET - Not in Education, Employment, or Training. This is especially relevant for those who have failed to gain qualifications as they approach leaving school. It is significantly more likely that these students will become long term beneficiaries and experience poorer life outcomes.

Cases should not be set aside to 'time out' just because the student is approaching 16 or be automatically closed just because the student turns 16. Providers are expected to support

students up to the age of 16, and beyond the age of 16 if they want to carry on with school. Once a student turns 16, the case can be closed if the student no longer wants support from the provider.

For students approaching 16 who have expressed the intention to leave school providers are expected offer support such as transition planning into training or employment, or referral to a Youth Service or the Ministry of Social Development to access a youth coach.

For more information about NEET support provided by MSD, see the following link:

[Not in education employment or training \(NEET\) | Youth Service - Ratonga Taiohi](#)