Information for schools about the new Attendance Services (February 2026)

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What are the new Attendance Services?

New Attendance Service providers (providers) have been contracted to support students who are in the 'very concerning attendance' STAR category (chronically absent) based on referrals from schools and kura. They also support all non-enrolled students. These providers are working under new contracts with the Ministry of Education and a refreshed service delivery model.

There is a provider in each of 84 catchments across the motu. Together, they deliver attendance services nationwide. Providers were selected through a competitive tender process in 2025, and they began delivering services on 5 January 2026.

For more information about the new providers, and the schools they work with, see Attendance Service Catchment map.

Alongside this, 170 schools are receiving funding to offer extra support to some of their chronically absent students through what's called *in-school provision*. These schools have the highest numbers of chronically absent students. They can still refer students to their local Attendance Service provider if the student has complex needs, or if in-school provision isn't improving attendance.

What are the new features of the Attendance Services?

The services are backed by new contracts, stronger contract management, improved operational support, and national oversight. Providers are encouraged to use flexible and innovative approaches, where there is evidence that these approaches make a difference.

Targets have been set for the attendance improvements expected for students supported through the new model. Services will be monitored, evaluated, and adjusted to make sure they are achieving the intended outcomes.

The new Attendance Service model includes a new Attendance Service Case Management System (AS-CMS), replacing ASA. This system supports referrals, day-to-day service delivery, and better data collection and analysis.

What do new Attendance Service providers do?

Attendance Service providers deliver a wide range of support, in partnership with schools, to help improve attendance for all students referred to them. They support students through individual case management activities and can also provide support for schools and groups of students.

Providers are contracted to:

- Work with the student, their whānau, and the school, to understand what's affecting attendance and what might help
- Engage in culturally appropriate ways – for example, all providers can deliver services in te reo Māori and within a Te Ao Māori context where appropriate
- Cover the costs of unmet basic needs (such as clothing, transport, or equipment) when these are significantly affecting attendance and can't be met elsewhere
- Work alongside other agencies, services, and forums so that students and their whānau can access the support they need
- Suggest changes to how the student engages with school, including stepped approaches to improving attendance
- Continue supporting the student and the school as attendance improves, until that support is no longer needed
- Explore other education pathways when regular school attendance may not be the right or achievable option
- Take further steps – including recommending enforcement action – if the student and whānau refuse to engage, or if there are concerns about the student's wellbeing
- Provide information and insight to schools gathered from students, their whānau and agencies that may support improved attendance for non-referred students

What is expected of schools?

Schools continue to hold the responsibility for working alongside the student and their whānau to support attendance. A key part of the new model is that providers work *with* you to give students the best possible support. Schools are expected to request assistance at the right time, collaborate closely with the provider throughout the case, and keep relevant information in the AS-CMS up to date.

Requesting support appropriately
Schools are expected to request chronic absence (CA) support after taking all reasonable steps to support the student. Further information about when to request support is in the following sections.

Non-Enrolment Notification (NEN) forms should be completed promptly when required. Accurate, complete information must be provided so the provider can begin case

management without delay. Further information about when to request support is in the following sections.

Working collaboratively with the provider

Once the provider has received your request for support in the AS-CMS the school continues to hold responsibility for supporting the student's attendance. You will meet with the provider initially to discuss the case, and the provider will continue to check in with you at key points, for example, before moving the case into Transition status and before taking major steps such as escalating non-engagement, considering prosecution, or raising the case at a multi-agency forum.

You are expected to work constructively with the provider to explore support options. These may include short-term arrangements (like a gradual return), longer-term adjustments (such as timetable changes), or responses to specific issues (for example, bullying).-

Keeping the Attendance Service Case Management Service (AS-CMS) updated

The AS-CMS is designed for you to be able to share relevant information directly on a case to help with case management. This may include:

- notes on communications with the student or whānau
- safety information about the student's living situation
- changes in circumstances or planned actions that may affect attendance
- instances where the school has lost contact with the student or caregivers

Providers will also update the system and keep you informed as the case progresses. When the student no longer requires active case management, the provider will discuss the timing of transition back to school-led support ahead of the case being closed.

When to submit a NEN form

There are legal requirements relating to informing the Ministry promptly, through ENROL, when students are no longer enrolled at your school.

- You **must** make a Non-Enrolment Notification (NEN) using ENROL when a student is withdrawn from your school roll for Continuous Absence. Please ensure that you record the students last day of attendance (not the date on which they were un-enrolled) when you withdraw the student.
- You **should** make a Notification when a student is withdrawn for any other reason, if you are concerned that they may not re-enrol in a timely manner.

The ENROL system will send you a reminder to complete a NEN form if the student does not re-enrol at another school within 20 school days of their previous Last Day of Attendance. If you receive this reminder, you must complete the NEN form as soon as possible to ensure that the student is appropriately referred to Attendance Services.

Note: If you do not withdraw a student from your roll in ENROL, the Ministry cannot tell that they are not attending school. Please do not keep students on your roll to 'keep an eye on them', as this leaves them at risk and delays support.

How to submit a NEN form in ENROL

A **NEN** case is created by completing the Non-Enrolment Notification form in **ENROL**.

When you are completing a NEN form in ENROL it is important to use the most up-to-date contact details that you have available. If you have more than one set of contact details they can be added in the comments section of the NEN form. Contact details are used to allocate the case to the correct provider and to make contact with the student and caregivers as quickly as possible.

Further information can be found under 'How to use the application' on the Applications & Online Systems - ENROL page (under 'About the app').

Note: If a child with a NEN case enrols at your school you should have a transition meeting with the attendance service provider to ensure that there is a plan to help support the child back into regular attendance. This meeting may be set up by the provider or you can reach out to arrange it. If you need further case management support from the provider, you can complete the CA request for support online and this changes the case to a CA case. The case will then be actively managed by the provider.

When to request Chronic Absence (CA) support

Before requesting CA support, schools must follow their Attendance Management Plan. This includes trying school-based strategies, documenting actions taken and creating an individual attendance plan for the student. Attendance Service support is intended for ākonga whose attendance concerns are ongoing, significant, or complex, and have not improved through schooled approaches alone.

This section provides guidance on when to request CA support. If you're still unsure whether a referral is appropriate, check your Attendance Management Plan and the STAR Framework, or talk with your local Attendance Service provider.

A request for CA support can be made if the ākonga is chronically absent (or shows a clear pattern consistent with chronic absence), or if there are exceptional circumstances that mean provider support is needed.

You should consider requesting support when:

- School-based actions and an individual attendance plan have been implemented and reviewed, with little or no improvement.
- The ākonga has barriers to attendance that the school cannot address on its own.
- Barriers are multiple, complex, or long-standing and would benefit from case management support.

Referral is **strongly recommended** when the ākonga:

- Has previously received attendance service support.
- Has a history of stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions, or frequent non-structural school moves.
- Faces significant barriers outside their control, such as housing instability, poverty, mental health or addiction issues, or disability or additional learning needs (for the ākonga or within the whānau).
- Is at risk of disengaging from education altogether, including where the ākonga or whānau are not engaging with school-led support.

Other situations where referral may be appropriate

Referral may also be appropriate when:

- Reasonable attempts to engage whānau have not been successful.
- Wellbeing, behavioural, or social issues are contributing to non-attendance and remain unresolved.
- The ākonga is already supported by other services but attendance has not improved.
- The ākonga is transitioning between education settings or living situations and is at risk of disengagement.

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- Another child in the whānau is already being supported by an Attendance Service provider.

When to wait

You should consider waiting if:

- The individual attendance plan has not yet been fully implemented or reviewed.
- Attendance is improving with current strategies.
- The barrier is primarily school-based and can be addressed internally.
- Another service (such as health or social support) is more appropriate and the school can make that connection directly.

When referral is not appropriate

Referral is not appropriate when:

- An international ākonga does not hold a valid visa to attend school in New Zealand.
- The ākonga is generally attending school but regularly misses a single class only.

If you are unsure

Contact your local Attendance Service provider or your local Ministry of Education regional office (Te Mahau) for advice.

Please note:

Each year, around 200,000 students are chronically absent for one or more terms. Under the new model, Attendance Service providers have capacity to support up to around 45,000 chronically absent students each year, as well as around 20,000 non-enrolled students.

Criteria for requesting support may be adjusted to manage service demand and maintain service quality. Schools and providers will be advised of any changes.

How to request Chronic Absence support

A **CA** attendance case is created by submitting a CA support request online – accessed through ESL.

To access the online CA support request, you need an Education Sector Logon (ESL) and a role in the AS-CMS. Further information on **system access** & **user roles** is covered in the following section.
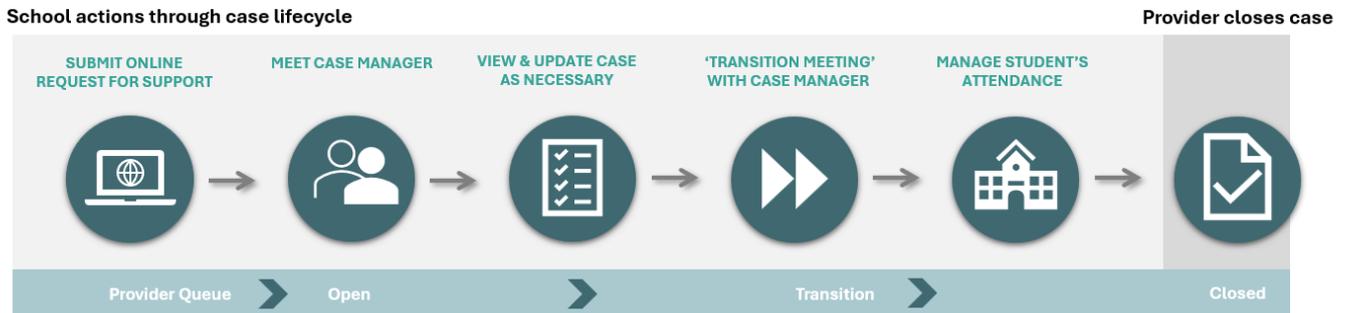
When completing the CA support request form you'll be asked to provide key information including:

- Contact details for the student/ whanau
- Actions that the school has taken already
- The reason for the request
- Name and contact details for the key person at the school who will liaise with the attendance service provider on the case (School Primary Contact).

The CA request form is designed to be quick and easy to complete. You will share further details when you meet with the provider to discuss the case.

You can start the CA support request and save it as a draft if you're not ready to submit it straight away. You can then reopen your draft, to complete and submit it when you have all the required information.

What happens once the request for support is submitted?

School actions through case lifecycle

Provider closes case

| SUBMIT ONLINE REQUEST FOR SUPPORT | MEET CASE MANAGER | VIEW & UPDATE CASE AS NECESSARY | 'TRANSITION MEETING' WITH CASE MANAGER | MANAGE STUDENT'S ATTENDANCE | |

| Provider Queue | Open | | Transition | | Closed |

An attendance case is created in the AS-CMS when you submit a CA request online or when you complete a NEN form in ENROL. Cases are allocated to the appropriate provider.

Case allocation

- **CA cases** are automatically allocated to the catchment provider based on the school that the student is enrolled at.
- **NEN cases** are allocated to the catchment provider by the Ministry's Central Investigations Team (CIT), based on the student's address.
- **Schools with In-School Provision (ISP):** When submitting a CA request online, schools can choose whether the case is allocated to their ISP or to the catchment provider.

Case management activities

Once allocated, the case is assigned to a Case Manager. The Case Manager's first step is to arrange a meeting with the right people at your school to gather key information about the student. Providers have been asked to hold this meeting within **five working days** wherever possible, so please work with them to schedule it promptly.

The case manager will also meet with the student and their whānau to gather more information about the situation. Providers have been asked to hold this meeting within **10 business days** of your referral.

The case manager continues working with the school's Primary Contact, the student, and their whānau to:
- Identify and record all barriers
- Develop and implement support plans
- Engage other services if further help is needed
- Use the Unmet Basic Needs Fund where appropriate

Case Managers continue case management activities, working closely with the ākonga, their whānau, and the school until the case is resolved, for example when the student is re-engaged in school. All case activity – such as meetings, comments, documents, barriers, and plans – is recorded in the AS-CMS.

How schools can collaborate on active cases

As a school user you can log in to the AS-CMS to view and collaborate on your school's cases that are being managed by the Attendance Service provider. This shared access supports transparency and ongoing collaboration.

Through the AS-CMS you can:

- See the current status of a case (for example, **Open**, **Transition**, or **Closed** – see definitions on page 12)
- View an activity timeline showing actions such as meetings or phone calls
- Access files and comments that the provider has chosen to share
- Upload relevant files (such as letters or forms)
- Add comments to provide updates or additional context

When a school user adds files or comments, the Case Manager is notified. Likewise, when the provider shares new information, the School Primary Contact receives an email notification.

If you have the **School Primary Contact** or **Attendance Lead** role you can view case activity and shared information on a case. As a School Primary Contact you can only see details on cases that you are the primary contact for.

For step-by-step guidance, see the Quick Reference Guide:

Attendance Services Quick Reference Guide.

Referrals to Oranga Tamariki under S19

The existing protocol that enables schools to make referrals to Oranga Tamariki under Section 19 of Oranga Tamariki Act for chronically absents students, is being updated so that providers can also make these referrals. Further guidance on how to raise a Section 19 will be shared with providers when it becomes available.

Considering prosecution

Both the school and the provider can refer a case to the Ministry's prosecution team. As a school you will have received guidance on the process to follow.

If a provider is considering referring a Chronic Absence case to the Ministry for prosecution, they will let you and the regional office know and discuss the situation first.

For Non-Enrolment (NEN) cases, the provider will usually already have contacted the last school the student was enrolled at to gather key information and context, well before considering prosecution.

Prior to the provider referring to the prosecution team they must have sent formal communications to the caregivers informing them of their legal obligations for enrolment

and attendance at school and warning them of the potential consequences of non-compliance.

Multi- agency forums

Multi-agency forums are intended to help students who are chronically absent or non-enrolled, with significant, complex barriers to attendance. Students are referred to the forums by the provider when they believe that the student would benefit from multiple agencies working together to support the student to return to education.

 The Ministry is running pilots in six catchments across the country during Terms 1 and 2 this year (Whangārei South, Mt Albert Lynfield, Napier, Kāpiti, Porirua and Marlborough). Findings from these pilots will then be used to inform the rollout of multi-agency forums across the country during 2027. Existing forums will continue to operate, and detailed information about them will be collected and used to inform the 2027 rollout.

When will case management support end?

Usually, a case record will be put into Transition status before being closed. The length of the transition period will depend on a number of factors and is at the discretion of the provider, in consultation with the school. During this time, the provider steps back from case management activities while keeping an eye on attendance and staying in touch as needed. The school resumes sole responsibility for supporting the student.

The case manager will close the case if:

- the student is attending regularly or
- the student is not attending regularly, but they are well engaged with the support provided by the school.

If you would like the service provider to begin supporting the student again, you can make another Chronic Absence request using the online request form. If this request is received within 3 months of the previous case closing, then the previous case will re-open. If it is received more than 3 months after the previous case was closed, a new case will be opened.

Note: Once the case is closed, you and the provider can still access the case to view all case comments and actions on it.

Case statuses and school action

Each attendance case in the AS-CMS will have a status that reflects its current stage in the case lifecycle. Understanding these statuses helps you know what to expect and how to engage appropriately.

Status	Description	School action required
Provider Queue	The case has been received by the provider and is waiting to be assigned to a Case Manager	No action required.
Open	A Case Manager is actively working on the case – meeting with the school, student, and whānau or caregivers, identifying barriers to attendance, engaging other services, and developing a student plan.	Add notes/comments, view the timeline, and engage with the Case Manager as needed.
Transition	Attendance has stabilised, or the student is engaged with the school process and no longer needs additional support from the attendance service. The school continues to support the student using the strategies in their Attendance Management Plan, supported by the STAR Framework. The case manager steps back from actively managing the case and remains available to the school if needed.	Lead attendance support. Contact the Provider if further help is needed.
Closed	The Provider has closed the case.	Continue managing attendance. Submit a new request if support is needed again.

Age related case management

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.

Children under six

When a child under six is enrolled in a school, they must attend regularly. Schools can request attendance support for five years olds who are enrolled. Whānau can withdraw their five-year-old if they decide the child is not developmentally ready for school, but they must reenrol again at age six. In this situation, if there is an open attendance case, the provider can pause the case in the AS-CMS if:

- the child has been located and
- they have been in contact with the whānau to explore pathways to re-enrolment and
- they 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. The provider can also reopen it manually at any time and continue with normal case management. If the whānau do not withdraw their child, the provider and the school must keep actively working to return the child to regular attendance.

Students approaching 16

There is no limit to the age which students can receive Attendance support. Students over 16 can continue to be supported through the attendance service providers if they are keen to attend school and are facing challenges with their attendance.

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' because the student is approaching 16 or be closed just because the student turns 16. Providers are expected to support students up to and beyond the age of 16 if they want to continue at school. Once a student turns 16, the case can be closed only if they choose not to continue receiving support.

For students approaching 16 who intend to leave school providers are expected to 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: NEET | Youth Service - Ratonga Taiohi

Support for schools and groups of students

Providers may also run targeted projects or initiatives to support improved attendance for ākonga. These could be group or school-based activities. Providers are encouraged to be creative, flexible and innovative, while also making sure work is purposeful, well-documented, and contributes to improved attendance. If you have ideas about possible initiatives, please contact your provider.

Examples of support could include:

- Supporting schools during key transitions such as moving from intermediate to secondary school
- Helping schools with groups of chronically absent students who have similar needs for example, refugee, migrant, or ethnic communities
- Supporting schools after events that significantly disrupt attendance such as natural disasters
- Advising schools on how they can support their chronically absent students so that a referral may not be needed.

Unmet Basic Needs fund

Providers can use the Unmet Basic Needs Fund to help address immediate, attendance related barriers for referred ākonga. This guidance outlines how the Fund is used, what it can and cannot support, and the accountability requirements providers must follow: Unmet Basic Needs Fund.

Sharing information

Schools can and should share information with providers to help improve attendance and keep everyone safe. Sharing relevant, up to date, accurate information free from bias helps Attendance Services to do their job well. It gives them what they need to make good decisions about services and supports for ākonga.

Schools should have privacy and information-sharing policies that allow appropriate information to be shared with the Attendance Service to support attendance. In some cases, this may require reviewing and updating existing policies or practices.

For support or advice with this contact the NZ School Board Association.

Sharing information on the referral form

The Attendance Service case management system (AS-CMS) is set up to collect the details needed for the referral on the Chronic Absence request for support form. You will need to provide the following when you are requesting CA support online:

- Ākonga full name, date of birth, school, and year level
- Whānau names and contact details
- Home address and any alternative contact address
- Brief reason for referral (chronic absence and a short factual note)
- Actions carried out so far by the school

Sharing information during case management

The initial meeting between the school primary contact and the provider case manager is the first opportunity to share all relevant details about the ākonga. This will include:

- Background information
- Attendance history and actions already taken
- Whānau context that impacts attendance
- Barriers to attendance
- Supports and services that have helped ākonga to attend school regularly
- Safety notes — information the Attendance Services need to know when they contact ākonga and their whānau. E.g. dangerous animals, information about whānau that may impact on the safety of Attendance Services staff
- Other agencies or organisations who are working with the ākonga and their whānau e.g. Oranga Tamariki, Police, Health or Social Services.
- Health information when relevant to attendance or safety

It's important to share information with the provider that will help with their case management for example if a significant event has taken place, or if the school/caregiver relationship has broken down.

Information for ākonga and whanau (plain language template)

The following can be shared with ākonga and whānau when discussing or notifying of a referral to the Attendance Service: [Attendance Service – privacy statement - Ministry of Education](#).

Appendices

System access and user roles

Accessing AS-CMS to submit CA requests & to collaborate on cases

To access the online Chronic Absence request form and any cases for students enrolled at your school (CAs or NENs) you need an Education Sector Logon and a role in the AS-CMS.

The school's **Delegated Authoriser (DA)** is responsible for setting up ESL accounts and assigning the correct AS-CMS role. This is done through the existing ESL process by searching for the user, selecting the *Attendance Service CMS* application, and choosing one of the three school roles.

Schools that have been funded for In-School Provision have received additional guidance.

Useful information:

- Support for Delegated Authorisers
- School guidance - ESL DA - Setting up staff with ESLs and CMS access

Roles for school users in the AS-CMS

The AS-CMS uses role-based access to ensure information is shared securely and appropriately. You will be given one of three roles in the AS-CMS: Attendance Lead, School Primary Contact or Office Support.

Each school can choose which roles they want to use, who will hold those roles, and how many (if any) people will be given each role.

Attendance Lead Role:	Attendance Lead Scope:
- Maintains oversight of attendance cases - Can be a School Primary Contact for any case - Can add case comments and documents to the case record to support a connected, collaborative approach - Stays informed by reviewing shared case updates and other case information - Can access reports and school dashboards that can be used for other school purposes.	- Can make requests for Attendance Service support - Can see all attendance case records The school can decide how many Attendance Lead users to appoint.

School Primary Contact Role:	**School Primary Contact Scope:**
• Works closely with the service provider's Case Manager, so that support for the child is consistent and collaborative • Can add case comments and documents to the case record to support a connected, collaborative approach • Can access reports and school dashboards that can be used for other school purposes • Receives notifications when key changes are made to the case record, including shared information or status changes.	• Can make requests for Attendance Service support • Can see case records for children where they are the School Primary Contact Each case must have one School Primary Contact.

Office Support Role:	**Office Support Scope:**
• Provides administrative support by completing requests for Attendance Service support and adding case updates • Can access reports and school dashboards that can be used for other school purposes.	• Can make requests for Attendance Service support • See all attendance case records for students enrolled at the school The school can decide how many Office Support users to appoint.

Accessing ENROL for submitting NEN forms

When you are required to submit a NEN form (see this earlier section: When to submit a NEN form) you need access ENROL to do this. Follow your school's existing processes for gaining access to ENROL.

Roles and Responsibilities

Ākonga and Whānau

> Key responsibilities:
> Ākonga attend school, while both ākonga and whānau take part in plans, communicate needs or barriers and work with the school and provider to support attendance.

Ākonga are expected to attend school regularly and take part in learning. Whānau support this by encouraging attendance and learning at home, and by helping children be ready for school each day.

Ākonga and whānau are expected to engage with the school and Attendance Service providers when contacted. This includes working together on attendance plans and supporting agreed actions to help improve attendance.

Both ākonga and whānau are encouraged to share any needs, challenges, or barriers that may affect attendance, and to work with the school and provider on solutions. Open communication and collaboration are key to supporting improved attendance over time.

Schools

> Key responsibilities:
> Ensure daily attendance, follow Attendance Management Plan (AMP) / Stepped Attendance Response (STAR), make referrals, collaborate with providers, share information appropriately

Schools are responsible for keeping accurate attendance records and ensuring these align with their Attendance Management Plan (AMP) and STAR thresholds. You play a key role in identifying attendance concerns early and monitoring patterns over time.

Before requesting Attendance Service support, you are expected to take all reasonable steps to re-engage an ākonga using your own school supports. Requests should be made promptly when the non-enrolment threshold is reached, or when an ākonga is chronically absent **and** school-based actions have been tried without successfully re-engaging them.

Once a referral has been made, schools are the first point of contact for the Attendance Service provider. You will work closely with providers and whānau to develop and support attendance plans, sharing relevant information about the ākonga in line with privacy requirements.

Schools also play an important role in promoting a positive attendance culture within your school community, helping set clear expectations that support regular attendance.

Useful information / documents:

- [Roles for school users in the AS-CMS](#)
- [STAR framework](#)
- [Attendance Management Plans](#)

Attendance Service Providers

> Key responsibilities:
> Manage cases, engage whānau, address barriers, use unmet needs fund, report progress, work with schools and agencies

Attendance Service providers promote awareness of their service and how it works, both within schools and the wider community. They respond promptly to referrals from schools and are responsible for managing cases through to resolution.

Providers work closely with ākonga and their whānau to build trust and understand the underlying reasons for chronic absence or non-enrolment. Their focus is on addressing root causes and providing culturally responsive, appropriate support. Providers are expected to understand and apply culturally responsive practice and to support frontline staff to build cultural competence.

A strong part of the role is working in partnership. Providers build and maintain collaborative relationships with schools, and develop strong local networks that include iwi, hapū, community groups, and other agencies. They also work with other Attendance Service providers across regions, meeting regularly to share learning and strengthen practice.

Providers may use up to **3% of their contract funding** to help meet unmet basic needs when these are significantly affecting attendance. They are expected to maintain professional case management standards, show persistence when working with complex cases, and ensure cases are managed effectively.

Providers are expected to trial innovative practices and projects to improve how attendance challenges are addressed. This includes evaluating impact and refining approaches based on evidence and learnings.

Attendance Service providers are responsible for reporting to the Ministry on service delivery, progress, and outcomes. They use data consistently to inform their work, identify patterns and root causes, and improve practice over time. Providers are also expected to keep their staff capability strong through ongoing training, supervision, and continuous improvement, and to stay informed about new strategies, research, and developments in attendance services.

Schools with in-school provision

Key responsibilities:
Deliver extra support for chronic absentees within funded schools

In-school provision delivers targeted support for ākonga with chronic absence. This support is provided within the school and is focused on addressing attendance barriers early and effectively.

Schools delivering in-school provision work alongside Attendance Service providers and other school staff to ensure efforts are coordinated, aligned, and clearly communicated, so ākonga receive consistent and joined-up support.

Ministry of Education

Regions

Key responsibilities:
Manage contracts, monitor performance, support providers, resolve issues

Regional Ministry teams are responsible for managing contracts and the day to day relationship with Attendance Service providers and monitoring how services are being delivered. This includes overseeing performance and ensuring service level agreements and contract outcomes are met through regular structured engagements.

The regional teams also provide guidance and support to schools and providers, helping to clarify roles, expectations, and processes. Where issues arise, regional teams help facilitate problem-solving and coordinate escalation when needed.

A key part of the regional team's role is ensuring health and safety requirements are met and that providers and services operate in line with relevant compliance standards.

National (Attendance Service Delivery Model Team – Te Pae Aronui)

Key responsibilities:
Provide strategic leadership, operational support, and national oversight for the reformed Attendance Services

The national Attendance Service function leads the delivery of attendance services nationally. It ensures services are aligned with Ministerial expectations and focused on achieving positive outcomes for ākonga. This function sits within Te Pae Aronui.

A key part of the role is using data to understand what is working and where improvements are needed. The national Attendance Service function analyses data to identify trends, share insights, and support continuous improvement across the attendance system.

The function provides operational support to regional teams and providers. It is responsible for designing and implementing multi-agency forums to support coordinated responses for students with complex needs. It also leads evaluation activities to inform the ongoing development of attendance services.

Ministry Central Investigation Team (CIT)

Key responsibilities:
Assess and allocate non-enrolment cases, run agency checks

The Central Investigations Team (CIT) supports the Attendance Service by reviewing non-enrolment notification (NEN) cases before they are assigned to providers. Where appropriate, CIT may close NEN cases, ensuring only relevant cases are directed to providers.

CIT is also responsible for managing information checks with other agencies.

Where necessary, CIT coordinates the transfer of cases between Attendance Service providers to ensure cases are managed by the appropriate provider.

Ministry Prosecutions team

Key responsibilities:
Escalate and manage legal action when required

The Ministry Prosecutions team considers legal action only as a last resort, when all other reasonable steps to support engagement and attendance have been exhausted.

The team provides advice and guidance on prosecution matters to schools, Attendance Service providers, and Ministry regional teams. This includes helping others understand when prosecution may be appropriate and what is required to proceed.

Where a case moves toward prosecution, the Ministry Prosecutions team works closely with schools, providers, and regional offices to prepare and progress the case in line with legal and procedural requirements.

Community partners

Key responsibilities:
Provide local support, cultural guidance, resources

Community partners such as local community, iwi groups, NGOs and government agencies support attendance by providing local services, resources, and practical support that help address barriers affecting ākonga and their whānau.

They also play an important role in offering cultural advice and connections, helping schools and providers engage with whānau in ways that are respectful, appropriate, and effective.

Legal basis for information sharing

The following legislation frameworks apply when you are sharing information with Attendance Services:

Privacy Act 2020 (IPP 11): Disclosure for the purpose it was collected or a directly related. purpose, and for safety notes to prevent or lessen a serious threat to health or safety.

Education and Training Act 2020, section 32: Ministry may collect and use ākonga information for its functions.   Attendance Service providers act as agents of the Ministry so they can use these provisions.

Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, section 66C: Allows sharing for the wellbeing and safety of children and young people. Chronic attendance is a wellbeing issue.

Health Information Privacy Code 2020: Applies when sharing health-related information.

Key statistics

- More than **200,000** students are chronically absent for at least one term each year, and over **20,000** students become non-enrolled at some point during the year.
- The maximum capacity of the new service model – across both Attendance Service providers and in-school provision – is around **80,000** students (chronically absent and non-enrolled combined).
- The previous service model supported around **40,000** students (unjustified absence and non-enrolled) each year.