



**Te Tāhuhu o
te Mātauranga**
Ministry of Education

Attendance Service Provider Newsletter

30 March 2026

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Introduction

Kia ora koutou

This newsletter brings together some practical updates as we move toward the end of the first quarter of delivery for the new service.

A key focus for the next month will be quarter 1 reporting. This is the first formal check-in of the year and an opportunity to step back and reflect on how things are going - what's working well and where further support may be needed. The information below sets out what to expect and key dates. Please make sure you register for the drop-in sessions on reporting in April.

We have provided an update on the national fuel situation following the government announcements on Friday where it was emphasised that school learning and attendance remains a high priority. At present the current system settings will remain and we will inform you of any potential changes to delivery.

Ngā mihi maioha

Mel Harrington - Manager, Attendance Service Delivery Model

Preparing for quarterly reporting

Q1 reporting is an important early opportunity for us to take stock. It's designed as a supportive process and an opportunity to share what's working well, highlight any emerging risks or challenges, and identify where further support or adjustments may be helpful as we move through the year.

For the Q1 reporting process, we have developed a MS Word-based reporting template. This template:

- covers all contractual measures you are required to report on
- includes space to record progress against your Q1 actions and activities in your Service Delivery Plan
- prompts reflection on what is working well, any risks or pressures, and what additional support may be needed.

Your completed report will be due by **23 April 2026**.

Following submission, your Contract Relationship Manager (CRM) will meet with you between 24 April and 8 May to discuss your report. These conversations are intended to be constructive and forward-looking, helping us understand your experience on the ground and how we can best support delivery.

We will share the template and guidance to support you to complete your report in early April.

All outcome and case management service level measures required under the contract will be available in AS CMS by 9 April at the latest. We will advise you when these are available.

You may also want to refresh your understanding of expectations for migrated cases [here](#).

Webinars to support you

We will be running short webinars to walk through the Q1 reporting process and answer questions. Please ensure at least one person from your ASP is registered to attend one of the following sessions:

- Thursday 9 April, 12-12.45pm – click [here](#) to register
- Friday 10 April, 1:00–1:45pm – click [here](#) to register

Readiness for any impacts from rising fuel costs

We have had some questions about contingency planning in response to rising fuel costs, and the potential impacts.

On Friday, the Government released a new Fuel Response Plan aligned with the National Fuel Plan that provides Response Phases to help manage the impact on fuel distribution across New Zealand.

New Zealand is at Response Phase 1, which means there is currently minimal impact on fuel distribution across the country.

The Ministry is working with MBIE as the lead agency and central government to actively monitor the situation and planning so we can respond promptly to sector stakeholders should the Government advise of any changes to current settings.

The Fuel Response Plan is about being prepared; it is not a predetermined pathway forward. It provides clarity, confidence, and a shared understanding of how New Zealand would respond if conditions changed.

Ministers have been clear and transparent that there is no immediate cause for alarm. We currently have sufficient fuel stocks in the country and en route, with good confidence across fuel orders through to the end of May.

You can read more about the Fuel Response Plan in this factsheet:

[Fuel Response Plan 2026 \[PDF, 206 KB\]](#)

Ministers have also been clear that a priority is maintaining onsite classroom learning and attendance through all phases.

Schools remain open for onsite learning as normal, with any change an absolute last resort. Student attendance, achievement and safety remain the priorities.

While we are at Response Phase 1, it's helpful for you to plan and be as prepared as possible and here are some things you can consider now:

- reviewing your business continuity plans so you are ready if there is a change to current settings
- checking discretionary travel and associated activities that can be reduced where you need to manage cost increases
- possible impacts and practical supports for students and families
- reading the fuel efficiency information available on Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority's website and consider what steps you can take to ensure your usage across any transport you operate is as efficient as possible.

In the meantime, it remains business as usual. Please continue to raise any emerging issues or risks through your usual channels, as this information helps inform our ongoing work.

Introduction to the Central Investigations Team

The Central Investigations Team plays an important part in supporting the Attendance Service by making sure non-enrolment (NEN) referrals from schools are sent to the right provider as quickly as possible. When a NEN referral comes in, CIT reviews the details, makes sure that the referral meets criteria and confirms where the case should be allocated based on the student's last known address.

As part of this process, the team may carry out Immigration and MSD checks, contact schools for up-to-date enrolment information, and confirm whether an exemption is already in place.

CIT's role is to complete the upfront checks and direct cases to the correct place. Once a case has been allocated to a provider, CIT steps back and does not carry out any further casework - unless a provider identifies that a case needs to be reallocated to a different catchment. In those situations, the provider requests reassignment, and CIT ensures the referral is redirected appropriately.

Oranga Tamariki information-sharing protocol updated

The Ministry of Education has an information-sharing protocol with Oranga Tamariki. It enables safe and timely referrals of students who are chronically absent to Oranga Tamariki using Section 19 (S19) of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989. The scope of the protocol now includes the attendance service (when working in partnership with the enrolling school).

The protocol outlines when and how to make a S19 referral and includes a S19 referral form template.

Alongside the updated protocol we have published guidance to support attendance service providers to make a referral to Oranga Tamariki if they have concerns about the care and protection of an ākonga who are chronically absent.

You'll find all this information [here](#)

AS-CMS update

We want to acknowledge the issues some of you are experiencing with the AS-CMS system. We know that some bugs and system behaviours are causing real frustration. We also know how important reliable tools are for supporting attendance across your communities. We sincerely apologise for the disruption this has caused.

Please know that our teams are working hard to identify, resolve, and prevent further bugs, and we will keep you updated as improvements roll out.

Thank you for continuing to tell us when things aren't working. Your feedback is essential and helps us pinpoint issues faster. Please keep talking to us.

If you need support, we are here to help. Contact the Service Desk: call 0800 422 599 or email service.desk@education.govt.nz

We appreciate your patience and the critical work you do for ākonga every day.

AS-CMS Drop-in Sessions

This week there are two AS-CMS drop-in sessions, both covering the same content, so you can choose the time each week that best suits you and we can keep group sizes manageable.

You can register below:

AS-CMS: Using Reports and Dashboards (same session, 2 options)

- Mon 30 March, 4-4.45pm - click [here](#) to register
- Wed 1 April, 12-12.45pm - click [here](#) to register

Please note these sessions will not cover the Q1 Service Level Dashboards. This will be covered in a subsequent drop in when the functionality is available. The focus of this session is on how you can use the existing reports and dashboards functionality.

Identifying yourselves to schools

We've received a small number of reports of schools being unsure who ASP staff were and feeling uncomfortable discussing student cases as a result.

Please ensure you have clear processes in place for kaimahi to identify themselves to schools.

ASP kaimahi should ensure they:

- clearly introduce themselves by name and organisation
 - explain their role as an Attendance Service Provider and the purpose of their engagement
 - carry and present appropriate identification.
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Tell us about your existing multi-agency forums – survey coming in April

We are undertaking a national stocktake to understand what multi-agency forums exist across the country that support school attendance. This includes any forums where agencies, iwi, community groups, or attendance service providers come together to discuss named ākonga who are not enrolled or are chronically absent - even if that isn't always the main purpose of the meeting.

Your responses will help us get a clear picture of:

- what forums are running in your area
- who's involved
- how they work
- what's helping, and what's getting in the way.

Look out for our survey link in our next newsletter. We would really appreciate your insights. This work will help inform the future rollout of multi-agency forums nationally in 2027.

Information shared with schools

The next bulletin for School Leaders is 28 April 2026.

Other attendance-related updates

In this section, we will share what else is happening to support better attendance - from new initiatives to helpful resources and ideas that might be useful in your day-to-day work.

Attendance Service Providers in the news

A couple of providers have featured positively in the news recently, talking about issues of interest to all of us.

[School attendance improves in some areas after truancy overhaul | RNZ News](#)

[School attendance services warn rising fuel prices likely to drive up truancy | RNZ News](#)

We'd love to hear from you on what you are doing to make a difference with students and in your communities, feel free to drop us a message via email –

attendance.service@education.govt.nz

Final Term 4 2025 attendance data released

The Ministry released final Term 4 2025 attendance data on 19 March. In Term 4 of 2025 57.3% of students met the criteria for regular attendance at schools and kura. This is an increase of 0.9 percentage points from Term 4 2024.

Short-term illness and medical reasons were the leading cause of absence in Term 4 2025, accounting for 4.9% of all term time. Unjustified absences declined to 5.4% of total term time in Term 4 2025, down from 5.8% in Term 4 2024.

More information can be found [here](#).

Coming up in our next newsletter

- Updates on the AS-CMS
- Update on Quarter 1 reporting

We want these updates to be useful for you so please let us know if there is anything you'd like us to cover in future newsletters. Please email

attendance.service@education.govt.nz. You can find this and previous newsletters [here](#)