



20 JUN 2017

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request to the Ministry of 10 May 2017, for information about non-enrolment notifications. You requested:

1. *How many children have been given non-enrolment notifications in 2014, broken down by age*
2. *How many children have been given non-enrolment notifications in 2015, broken down by age*
3. *How many children have been given non-enrolment notifications in 2016, broken down by age*

Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

Attending school is critically important for students' achievement and success. Parents are legally obliged under the Education Act 1989 to enrol their children in school from the age of six to 16, and to ensure their children attend school every day the school is open. School boards of trustees are legally required to take all reasonable steps to ensure enrolled children attend school every day, unless there is a justifiable reason for their absence such as an illness or family bereavement. All schools should have policies, processes and personnel in place to monitor attendance, follow up on absences and take action quickly if a student has patterns of poor attendance. Schools take action to try and get these students to attend school regularly again. Schools manage the vast majority of occasional, unexplained absences well, without the involvement of an attendance service.

Attendance Services are contracted to support schools with attendance in the cases of chronic truancy. If a student has been persistently unjustifiably absent and contact with their family/whānau has not improved their attendance, the school can refer the student to their local Attendance Service for additional support. Local attendance providers locate students and work with families to determine the best form of support to get students back into formal education. Cases are resolved when agreement is reached between the school and family that a student will begin attending regularly.

Attendance advisors work with students and their families to address the root causes of non-attendance, which are often complex. Advisors look at the factors contributing to a student's unjustifiable absence or non-enrolment, and identify what school, family/whānau, iwi, community and government support is required to improve attendance up or transition the student to another legal learning environment. Each advisor tailors their approach based on local knowledge of what works in their community.

The attendance service does a good job at engaging with families to get children who have been persistently absent back to school, often in difficult family circumstances, made more challenging by mental health issues, addiction or other factors.

Schools are supported by the attendance service and a number of other agencies, such as social and health services and Police. Attendance advisors include former teachers, social workers, and police officers with significant experience working with families under stress. Many of the students being referred to the service have already had interventions from other community and government services.

A table containing the data you have requested is attached to this letter as Appendix A. Figures show the number of students who have received a non-enrolment notification (NEN). A student may have received more than one NEN within the same year. If the second notification was referred at a different age, it will be counted in more than one age group. For example, a student was referred in February at age 14, this case could be resolved and then another opened in October when they are 15.

For further information about NENs and the role of Attendance Services, please refer to my response of 9 May to your previous request. Thank you again for your request. Under section 28(3) of the Act, you can refer this response to an Ombudsman. You can do this by writing to info@ombudsman.parliament.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely



Katrina Casey
Deputy Secretary
Sector Enablement and Support

Appendix A

Number of non-enrolled students between 2014 and 2016 by age at referral

As at 5 May 2017

		2014	2015	2016
Age at referral	6	560	533	545
	7	316	319	368
	8	290	295	324
	9	273	260	263
	10	317	279	281
	11	446	427	472
	12	556	516	506
	13	1077	978	1105
	14	1469	1456	1497
	15	2273	2253	2367
	Total	7577	7316	7728
National number of non-enrolled students		7382	7138	7514

Notes

- 1 This table shows the number of non-enrolled students reported to the Ministry of Education each year, not the number of notifications. A student may have more than one non-enrolment notification within a year.
- 2 Similarly, this is not for the total number of active cases at any point in time. The number of students actively not enrolled at any point would be significantly less than the total numbers provided and sits between 2,000 and 2,500 students.
- 3 The data is broken down by the age at referral. A student can be counted in more than one age group. However they are only counted once within the national figures.
- 4 These numbers are for students aged 6 to 15 only, as attendance at school is not compulsory before age 6, or after a student turns 16. If a non-enrolment notification is created for a 5 year old, this will only be referred to an attendance service when the child turns 6.