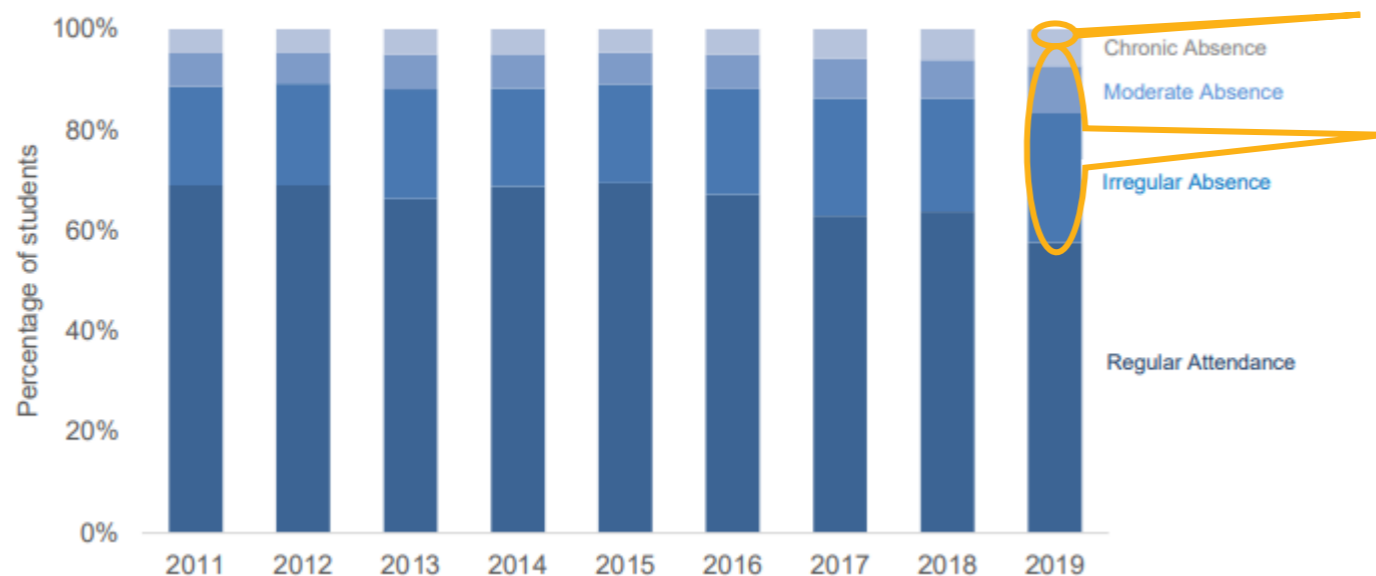


Regular school attendance was declining before COVID-19

Figure 1. Attendance has fallen substantially since 2015



Attendance Services work with over 10,000 of the most chronically absent students (aged 6-15) and a similar number of non-enrolled students each year - with the aim of improving attendance and/or returning them to school or to another educational setting (eg AE or Te Kura)

Improving the attendance of the vast majority of students who are not attending regularly remains the responsibility of schools, parents, caregivers, whānau, communities and students themselves – with support from the Ministry

The drop in regular attendance has shown up across all regions, ethnicities, deciles and year levels. Irregular (attending 80% to 90%), moderate (attending 70% to 80%) and chronic absences (attending school 70% or less) have all increased.

There are large inequities in school attendance: students in lower decile schools are much less likely to attend school regularly (42% of students in decile 1-2 schools attended regularly in 2019, compared to 67% in decile 9-10 schools).

While regular attendance is lowest amongst senior secondary students, the largest drop in regular attendance since 2015 has been in Years 1-8

Figure 2: Percentage attending regularly by year level

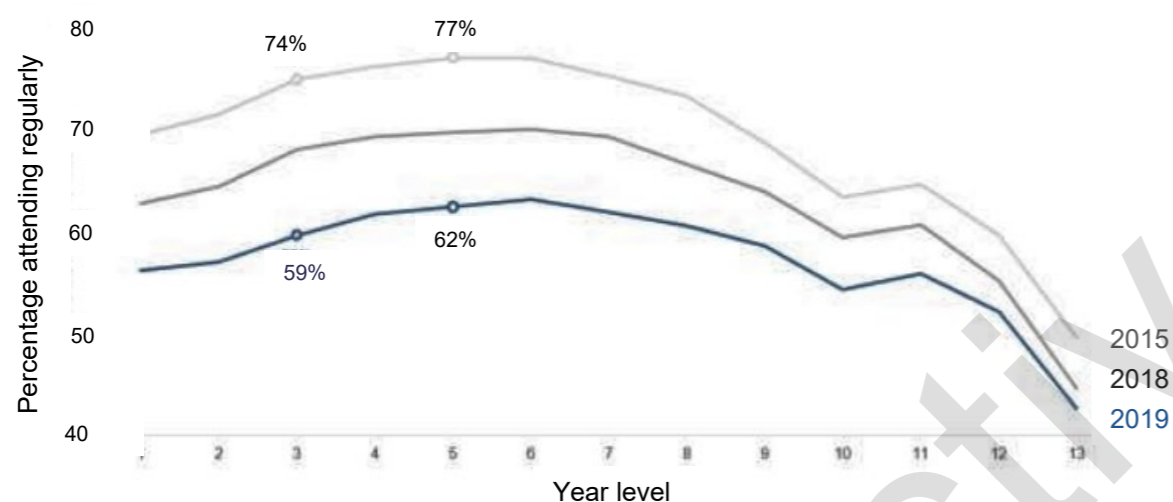


Table 1: Non-Enrolment cases (NE) opened between 2015 - 2019

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 up to 30 October
Non-Enrolment cases (NE) opened	7,748	8,180	9,862	11,060	10,798	8,351

Lockdowns had an impact on school attendance after schools reopened ...

- Regular attendance was **up nationally** for the seven weeks after the lockdown in Term 2, compared to 2019
- Daily attendance rates were up in the weeks after the national lockdown
- Although, the **return to school in Auckland was slower** after the Auckland lockdown in August.
- Raising attendance is a focus for the Urgent Response Fund. Interventions supported include:
 - Attendance interventions focusing on the barriers to re-engaging family and ākonga such as transport assistance and home visits
 - Activities to support disrupted and anxious ākonga (counsellors, Māori support services, community workers, attendance advisers, peer support, cultural support activities)
 - Additional staffing time to allow more time for teachers to support ākonga

... and the evidence suggests that the negative effects of COVID-19 on attendance are concentrated in communities that were already the most socio-economically disadvantaged and where the largest barriers to attendance were present before the pandemic.