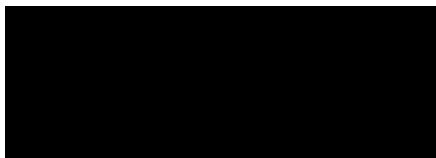




22 MAY 2017



Dear 

Thank you for your email of 20 April 2017 to the Ministry of Education Media Team requesting the following information:

- *the number of stand-downs and suspensions, listed by reason, that occurred in Carterton, South Wairarapa and Masterton in 2012, 2013 and 2014*

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

Stand-downs and suspensions are not measures of student behaviour so much as they are measures of schools' reactions to behaviours. What one school may suspend for, another may not. The number of these events should not therefore be used as a proxy measure for total student behaviour.

A 'stand-down' is the removal of a student for a period of up to five days, where the decision is made by the Principal. A stand-down, for any student, can total no more than five school days in a term, or 10 days in a school year. Students return automatically to school following a stand-down.

A 'suspension' is the formal removal of a student from a state or state integrated school until the school Board of Trustees (the Board) decides the outcome at the suspension meeting. The Board can choose to lift the suspension (with or without conditions), extend the suspension, or terminate the student's enrolment at the school through an exclusion (where a student is under 16) or an expulsion (for students over 16). This decision should be arrived at only in the most serious cases.

A table with the number of stand-downs and suspensions between 2012 and 2015 is attached to this letter as **Appendix A**. I have broken this information down by schooling level and behavior reason. Where the number of students in a particular reporting measure is fewer than five, I have marked this with an 'x', to denote information withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of natural persons.

Every year, we invest millions of dollars to help schools manage behaviour through initiatives such as Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L), special behavioural education support and

anti-bullying schemes. These initiatives have provided schools with increased options for responding to incidences of challenging behaviour. Stand-downs and suspensions in schools have decreased over many years. The national rates of suspensions, stand-downs, exclusions and expulsions have nearly halved since records began in 2000.

PB4L gives students, teachers, families and whānau the tools they need to address problem behaviour, improve children's wellbeing and increase educational achievement. The New Zealand Council for Educational Research evaluated PB4L School-Wide in 408 schools between 2010 and 2013 and reported overall improvements in behaviour, including decreases in stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions and expulsions, and decreases in class disruption. The evaluation also showed an increase in positive behaviours such as being on task and engagement with learning. By strengthening relationships and creating more positive home and school environments, we aim to remove barriers to engagement and improve students' chances to achieve at school and beyond. You can find more about PB4L at <http://pb4l.tki.org.nz/>.

I hope this response has been useful to you. For more information on this matter, please refer to the Media Team's response to you of 10 April 2017. If you have any more questions about this, please contact the Media Team in the first instance, by email at Media.Team@education.govt.nz.

Under section 19(3) of the Act, you have the right to refer this response to an Ombudsman.

Yours sincerely



Katrina Casey
Deputy Secretary
Evidence, Data and Knowledge

Appendix A

Stand-downs and suspensions by reason for Carterton, South Wairarapa and Masterton schools, 2012 to 2015

primary schools (refer notes 1 and 5)

Reason	2012		2013		2014		2015	
	standdowns	suspensions	standdowns	suspensions	standdowns	suspensions	standdowns	suspensions
Alcohol	—	—	—	—	x	x	—	—
Arson	—	—	x	—	x	—	—	—
Continual Disobedience	16	x	14	6	14	x	7	x
Drugs (Including Substance Abuse)	—	—	x	x	x	—	—	—
Other Harmful or Dangerous Behaviour	9	—	8	x	x	x	x	x
Physical Assault on Other Students	34	x	37	x	17	x	11	x
Physical Assault on Staff	x	x	6	x	9	x	5	x
Sexual Harassment	—	—	x	—	—	x	—	—
Sexual Misconduct	x	x	x	x	—	—	x	—
Smoking	x	—	x	x	x	—	—	—
Theft	x	x	x	x	7	—	—	—
Vandalism	x	—	5	—	7	x	x	—
Verbal Assault on Other Students	x	x	x	—	x	x	x	—
Verbal Assault on Staff	18	—	33	6	21	5	10	—
Weapons	—	—	—	—	x	—	—	—
Total	91	9	120	23	93	19	39	6

secondary schools (refer notes 3 and 5)

Reason	2012		2013		2014		2015	
	standdowns	suspensions	standdowns	suspensions	standdowns	suspensions	standdowns	suspensions
Alcohol	x	x	x	6	10	—	—	—
Continual Disobedience	46	8	34	6	53	15	38	5
Drugs (Including Substance Abuse)	30	13	34	11	22	7	18	5
Other Harmful or Dangerous Behaviour	10	x	16	x	15	x	11	x
Physical Assault on Other Students	39	x	26	—	26	x	29	x
Physical Assault on Staff	x	x	x	—	x	x	x	—
Sexual Misconduct	x	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Smoking	8	—	11	—	18	—	x	—
Theft	x	—	x	x	8	—	8	x
Vandalism	x	—	7	—	x	—	x	—
Verbal Assault on Other Students	5	—	x	—	x	—	x	—
Verbal Assault on Staff	39	x	25	x	33	—	25	—
Weapons	—	—	—	x	—	—	x	—
Total	191	30	165	34	190	27	140	15

composite schools (refer notes 2 and 4)

2012		2013		2014		2015	
standdowns	suspensions	standdowns	suspensions	standdowns	suspensions	standdowns	suspensions
3	0	4	—	3	0	2	3

all schools

285	39	289	57	286	46	181	24
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notes

- 1 We have defined a primary school as a contributing school (years 1 to 6), an intermediate school (years 7 and 8) or a full primary (years 1 to 8)
- 2 We have defined a secondary school as one with pupils at either year 7 to 15 or years 9 to 15.
- 3 A composite school is a school which takes pupils across a range of year levels
- 4 All suspensions and standdown data by reason at composite level has been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of natural persons, due to the low numbers of children concerned
- 5 "x" denotes information withheld under section 9(2)(a), due to the low numbers of children concerned

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