



29 June 2021



Tēnā koe 

Thank you for your email of 17 May 2021 to the Ministry of Education requesting the following information:

Thank you for the letter dated 14 May 2021 in response to my Official Information Act request made on 17 February. I have two further queries arising from this response.

*Question one of my request asked for information in relation to directions to schools "for each year" from 2010 to date. However, the information provided in response to question one simply gives a total figure without a yearly breakdown. **Please provide the annual breakdown requested.***

I note that you have refused my request in question two on the grounds that the disaggregated information requested is not available without substantial collation or research. Although this may be a ground for withholding information under the Official Information Act, waiting almost three months to refuse to provide information on this basis without giving the opportunity to refine my request seems unreasonable if not obstructive. In particular, it is unclear why no information about complaints at all has been provided such as the number of complaints made each year from 2010 to date.

Accordingly, I now request any information compiled by the Ministry of Education in relation to the complaints made by students or those acting on their behalf including:

- 1. The number of complaints made by students or those acting on their behalf each year from 2010 to date; and*
- 2. Any other information or analysis undertaken by the Ministry of Education in relation to complaints by students or those acting on their behalf for example.*

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

Regarding your request for the annual breakdown, since 2010, for the number of directed enrolments I am providing you this information in the table below.

Table 1: The numbers of directed enrolments to the suspending school or into a new school as a result of an exclusion broken down by year, between 2010 and 2020.

Year Student was excluded	Number of students returned to suspending school	Number of students enrolled at new school
2010	17	88
2011	10	78

Year Student was excluded	Number of students returned to suspending school	Number of students enrolled at new school
2012	12	51
2013	10	46
2014	16	54
2015	4	57
2016	9	46
2017	16	120
2018	33	128
2019	23	152
2020	15	80
Total	165	900

Notes:

- Data was extracted on 1 April 2021.
- Data is live and subject to change.
- It is important to note that suspensions, exclusions and expulsions are not measures of student behaviour but measures of a school's reaction to such behaviours. What one school may choose to suspend for, another may not. The number of these events should not be used as a proxy measure for total student behaviour.

As per the previous response from Katrina Casey on 14 May 2021, when a complaint is received into the Ministry of Education, we are not able to determine from our systems if a complaint was made by a student or someone acting on their behalf as this type of information is not captured in our systems. In order to determine if we do hold this type of information it would require the manual searching of complaints made by checking file notes and emails across our offices to determine if this information is captured. Therefore, I am refusing this information under section 18(f) of the Act, that the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

As we do not collect data on students making school complaints, we have not made any analysis on this data. Therefore, I am refusing your request for analysis under section 18(g) of the Act, as the information is not held by the Ministry.

Since 2016, the Ministry has collected complaints it receives from, or about schools, in a complaints system. This system does not capture all complaints the Ministry receives regarding property matters or complaints against the Ministry or Ministry staff. These complaints from or about schools can be broken down into high level categories on what the complaint was about such as achievement, attendance, health and safety, stand down and suspensions but it does not have a category on the complainant. I am able to provide you with complaints data broken down by the nature of complaint since 2016.

Table 2: The number of school complaints received by the Ministry of Education by calendar year and nature of contact.

Nature of Contact	2016*	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021 YTD*
Achievement	20	32	56	58	25	13
Attendance	25	35	72	66	46	7
Attendance Service Providers				3		
Bullying	51	143	287	256	136	42
Communities of Learning (COL)			1			
COVID-19					29	
Donations				4	22	5
Enrolments	19	32	82	77	44	18
Finance	3	8	9	20	8	3
Governance (BoT)	44	83	164	121	66	19
Health and Safety	64	144	221	251	133	33
Leading and Managing (Principal)	89	154	336	303	164	53
Learning Support		28	87	89	22	
Ministry		1	8	10	3	
Network	3	6	9	4	4	1
Other	51	91	205	152	123	41
Property	3	7	12	11	10	5
Resourcing	9	7	40	30	7	2
Staff			26	17	11	
Stand-downs/Suspensions	29	64	109	104	35	9
School Lunch Programme*						1
Total	292	563	1146	1097	641	192

Caveats:

- Data was extracted on 2 June 2021 (YTD*) from the Schools database.
- Cancelled complaints are excluded from this report.
- The school contacts system was introduced around the middle of 2016, thus the 2016* numbers are not for the full calendar year.
- The nature of contact option, School Lunch Programme*, was introduced at the end of May 2021.
- Complaints which relate to more than one nature of contact type have been counted in each type group, but only once in "Total". Complaint nature of contact type groups should not be summed as this could lead to double counting.
- The blank cells in the above table indicate no cases were reported under that nature of contact type for the relevant year.

Please note, the Ministry now proactively publishes OIA responses on our website. As such, we may publish this response on our website after five working days. Your name and contact details will be removed.

Thank you again for your email. You have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review this decision. You can do this by writing to info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Nāku noa, nā



Helen Hurst
Tumu Te Hāpai ō Rāngai
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