



23 September 2021



Tēnā koe 

Thank you for your email of 1 August 2021 to the Ministry of Education requesting the following information:

- *Could you please tell me whether the Ministry gathers data on the following:*
 1. *The number of times an individual student is stood-down, suspended or excluded within a year. If so, could you please provide me with the number of secondary school aged students who were suspended or excluded more than once during the 2019 school year.*
 2. *The number of days which a student is stood-down for at any one time i.e. when filling out the stand-down form on ENROL do schools have to specify the number of days which the student is stood-down for?*
 3. *The number of days which a student is stood-down for within a term and a year. Related to this, could you please tell me whether it is the responsibility of individual schools to ensure the statutory thresholds for the number of days a student can be stood-down within a term and a year respectively are not exceeded or is this monitored by the Ministry?*

- *Could you also please provide me with:*
 4. *Age-standardised stand-down and suspension rates by gender from 2010 to 2020.*
 5. *The total number of students in Years 9 and 10 who were stood-down, suspended, excluded or expelled and who had received support from one of the following services: Behaviour Support Service, Resource Teacher Learning & Behaviour Service, Interim Response Fund, Communication Service, Ongoing Resourcing Scheme, High Health, Physical Disability Service, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Blind or Low Vision. I am requesting this information for the years 2018, 2019 and 2020.*
 6. *The total number of students in Years 9 and 10 who received one of the services referred to above in the years 2018, 2019 and 2020.*
 7. *The total number of students in Years 9 and 10 who were stood-down, suspended excluded or expelled in the years 2018, 2019 and 2020.*

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

Definitions of measures used

A **stand-down** is the removal of a student for a period of up to five days in a school term, where the decision is made by the Principal. A student may only be stood down for a total of 10 school days in a year.

A **suspension** is the formal removal of a student from a state or state-integrated school on a temporary basis, until the school board of trustees (the board) decides the outcome at a suspension meeting. The board can either:

- lift the suspension (with or without conditions), or
- extend the suspension, or
- exclude the student (if under 16), or
- expel the student (if aged 16 years or over).

Exclusions and expulsions are subsets of suspension where an enrolment is terminated. If the student is aged under 16, the board may decide to exclude the student from the school, with the requirement that the student enrolls elsewhere. If the student is aged over 16, the board may decide to expel a student, and is not required to ensure that the student enrolls elsewhere.

It should be noted that stand-downs, 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.

Question One: *Whether the Ministry gathers data on the number of times an individual student is stood-down, suspended or excluded within a year? If so, the number of secondary school aged students who were suspended or excluded more than once during the 2019 school year.*

Yes, the Ministry does collect information on the number of times a student is suspended or excluded within a year.

Over the 2019 school year, 157 secondary school aged students (\geq Year Level 9) had more than one suspension, more than one exclusion, or a combination of more than one exclusion(s) and suspension(s). Of those 157 students, eight students had multiple exclusions during the 2019 school year.

Question Two: *Does the Ministry gather information the number of days which a student is stood-down for at any one time? In ENROL do schools have to specify the number of days which the student is stood-down for?*

The Ministry gathers information on the number of days for which a student is stood down at any one time, through the ENROL database. Schools must enter information into ENROL on the day the decision to stand-down is made and include the number of days for which the student is being stood down. Section 80(2) of the Education and Training Act 2020 states that a stand-down may be for one or more specific periods. A stand-down may not exceed five days in a school term or ten days in a year. The day on which the student was stood down, or any day in which the school is closed, may not be counted.

Question Three: *Does the Ministry gather information the number of days which a student is stood-down within a term and a year? Is it the responsibility of individual schools to ensure the statutory thresholds for the number of days a student can be stood-down within a term and a year respectively are not exceeded or is this monitored by the Ministry?*

The Ministry gathers information on the number of days for which a student is stood-down within a term and a year, through the ENROL database. It is the responsibility of each board to ensure that the data is entered correctly and promptly, in accordance with legislative requirements set by the Education and Training Act 2020.

As mentioned above, a stand-down may not exceed five days in a school term or ten days in a year. The number of days for which a student is stood down for within a term and a year is managed by the ENROL system. When the student's quota of stand-down days has been reached, no further stand-downs are able to be entered.

Question Four: *What is the age-standardised stand-down and suspension rates by gender from 2010 to 2020?*

The Ministry publicly releases age-standardised stand-down and suspension rates by gender for the most recent year on the Education Counts website. The 2020 data is currently being finalised and is due to be released by October 2021. Therefore, I am refusing your request for the 2020 age-standardised stand-down and suspension rates by gender under section 18(d) of the Act, as the information requested is soon to be publicly available. When the 2020 data becomes available, it can be found at the following link: [Stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions and expulsions from school | Education Counts](#).

Table One below shows the age-standardised stand-down, suspension, exclusion, and expulsion rates by gender from 2010 to 2019. Although exclusions and expulsions are not strictly in scope of your request, we have provided this data for the years requested to ensure the information is comparable to the 2020 data which will soon be available.

Table One: Age-standardised stand-down, suspensions, exclusions and expulsions rates per 1000 students (2010 to 2019) by gender

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Standdowns										
Male	36.6	33.8	32.4	31.2	29.5	29.0	31.0	35.5	37.4	41.7
Female	15.9	14.1	13.4	11.4	10.1	9.6	10.5	11.6	13.6	15.7
Suspensions										
Male	7.8	7.3	6.5	6.1	5.6	5.4	5.4	6.3	5.7	5.9
Female	3.4	2.7	2.5	2.2	1.7	1.7	1.8	2.0	2.4	2.5
Exclusions										
Male	3.1	2.9	2.5	2.5	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.6	2.2	2.3
Female	1.2	1.1	1.0	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.9
Expulsions										
Male	3.2	2.7	2.3	2.2	2.0	2.6	1.8	2.2	1.8	2.3
Female	0.9	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.5

Question Five:

What was the total number of students in Years 9 and 10 who were stood down, suspended, excluded, or expelled and who had received support from one of the following services: Behaviour Support Service, Resource Teacher Learning & Behaviour Service, Interim Response Fund, Communication Service, Ongoing Resourcing Scheme, High Health, Physical Disability Service, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Blind or Low Vision, in 2018, 2019 and 2020?

Table Two below is a count of the number of students that were stood down, suspended or excluded and had also accessed the learning support referred to. If a student was stood down, suspended, or excluded more than once in the same year, they will only be included once in the table. However, if a student was stood down, suspended, or excluded in more than one year, they will be included in the count for each applicable year.

As mentioned above, no student under the age of 16 can be expelled. Therefore, this part of your request as it pertains to expulsions is refused under section 18(e) of the Act as the information requested does not exist.

Table Two: The total number of students in Years 9 and 10 who were stood down, suspended, or excluded and who had received support from specified services

Type	Year Level	2018	2019	2020
Stand-down	9	648	721	708
Stand-down	10	579	665	591
Suspension	9	186	195	176
Suspension	10	206	209	161
Exclusion	9	82	92	75
Exclusion	10	94	96	89

Question Six:

What was the total number of students in Years 9 and 10 who received one of the services referred to above in the years 2018, 2019 and 2020?

Table Three below is a count of the number of students, not the number of services received – if a student received more than one service in a year they will only be counted once in that year. However, if they received a service in more than one year, they will be included in the count for each applicable year.

Table Three: The total number of students in Years 9 and 10 who received support from specified services

Year	2018	2019	2020
9	2146	2200	1995
10	2651	1682	1588

Question Seven:

What was total number of students in Years 9 and 10 who were stood down, suspended excluded or expelled in the years 2018, 2019 and 2020?

Table Four below shows the number of students, not the number of stand-downs, suspensions, and exclusions. If a student was stood down, suspended, or excluded more than once in the same year, they will only be included once in the table. However, if a student was stood down, suspended, or excluded in more than one year, they will be included in the count for each applicable year.

As mentioned above, no student under the age of 16 can be expelled. Therefore, your request for the above data as it pertains to expulsions is refused under section 18(e) of the Act as the information requested does not exist.

Table Four: The total number of students in Years 9 and 10 who were stood-down, suspended, or excluded.

Type	Year Level	2018	2019	2020
Stand-down	9	193	208	146
Stand-down	10	263	280	197
Suspension	9	2392	2796	2485
Suspension	10	2677	3026	2562
Exclusion	9	472	543	430
Exclusion	10	654	719	480

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



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