



1 December 2022



Tēnā koe 

Thank you for your email of 15 November 2022 to the Ministry of Education requesting the following information:

1. *How many pupils were disciplined (suspended, excluded, expelled etc) in 2022 in Otago and Southland?*
2. *Please break this down into what offences pupils were disciplined for across the regions as well, such as drugs, vaping, violence etc. Please break this down per region.*

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

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),
- extend the suspension,
- 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.

It is important to note that stand downs, suspensions, exclusions, and expulsions are measures of a school's reaction to student behaviour. While one school may opt to suspend a student over a particular incident, another school may not. The number of these incidents should therefore not be used as a proxy measure for total student behaviour.

The requested data is set out below.

Table 1 shows the number of students who were stood down in Otago and Southland regions for 2021 and 2022 up to 23 November broken down by Behaviour.

Behaviour	Otago Region		Southland Region	
	2021	2022	2021	2022
Continual Disobedience	136	98	96	97
Drugs (Including Substance Abuse)	17	29	18	21
Physical Assault on Other Students	286	226	188	145
Physical Assault on Staff	47	39	26	26
Verbal Assault on Other Students	29	27	15	10
Verbal Assault on Staff	89	77	55	73
Smoking or Alcohol	105	75	77	35
Theft, Vandalism or Arson	46	52	33	18
Other	168	125	101	82
Total*	745	622	488	405

Table 2 shows the number of students who were suspended in Otago and Southland regions for 2021 and 2022 up to 23 November broken down by Behaviour.

Behaviour	Otago Region		Southland Region	
	2021	2022	2021	2022
Continual Disobedience	22	23	16	11
Drugs (Including Substance Abuse)	24	10	7	x
Physical Assault on Other Students	23	26	10	15
Physical Assault on Staff	x	7	x	7
Verbal Assault on Other Students	x	x	x	0
Verbal Assault on Staff	x	6	x	x
Smoking or Alcohol	15	x	6	x
Theft, Vandalism or Arson	x	0	5	x
Other	20	23	11	7
Total*	112	97	61	51

Exclusions and expulsions are subsets of suspensions and should not be added to suspensions.

Table 3 shows the number of students who were excluded in Otago and Southland regions for 2021 and 2022 up to 23d November broken down by Behaviour.

Behaviour	Otago Region		Southland Region	
	2021	2022	2021	2022
Continual Disobedience	6	12	6	x
Drugs (Including Substance Abuse)	x	x	x	0
Physical Assault on Other Students	11	11	x	x
Physical Assault on Staff	x	x	x	x
Verbal Assault on Other Students	x	x	0	0
Verbal Assault on Staff	0	x	0	0
Smoking or Alcohol	5	x	0	0
Theft, Vandalism or Arson	x	0	x	x
Other	6	9	x	x
Total*	35	39	18	14

Table 4 shows the number of students who were **expelled** in Otago and Southland regions for 2021 and 2022 up to 23d November broken down by Behaviour.

Behaviour	Otago Region		Southland Region	
	2021	2022	2021	2022
Continual Disobedience	0	x	x	0
Drugs (including substance abuse)	x	0	0	x
Physical assault on other students	x	0	0	x
Verbal assault on staff	0	x	0	0
Other	x	0	0	0
Total*	x	x	x	x

*** Caveats:**

- The data is live and therefore subject to change. It was extracted 11.15am, 23rd November 2022 and includes incidences recorded up to this date.
- 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.
- Privacy rules for incident counts less than 5 have been applied **under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of individuals** concerned. An "x" denotes a masked cell. On the same note, totals have been concealed.
- Students suspended more than once during a year for different behaviours have been counted once in each behaviour type, they were suspended for that year. Students suspended more than once in a year for the same behaviour are only counted in that behaviour type once for that year. Students are only counted once in "Total number of students" suspended in each year. Behaviour types should not be summed as this could lead to double counting of students suspended in a year.
e.g., a student suspended twice in a year for 'weapons' will only be counted once in this category and once in the total for that year. A student suspended twice in a year for 'weapons' and 'Alcohol' will be counted in each of these categories and once in the total for that year.
- "Other" category includes sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, weapons, and other harmful or dangerous behaviour.

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.

You have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review my decision on your request, in accordance with section 28 of the Act. You can do this by writing to Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143 or to info@ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Thank you again for your email. If you have further questions, please feel free to contact our media team in the first instance at media.team@education.govt.nz.

Nāku noa, nā

Nancy Bell
Hautū | Deputy Secretary
Te Mahau | Te Tai Runga (South)