



12/02/2024



**OIA: 1320833 - Primary school information**

Thank you for your email of 4 January 2024 to the Ministry of Education (the Ministry) requesting the following information:

- 1) *How many primary schools are there within 10km from Aotea, Porirua?*
- 2) *What are the names of these schools?*
- 3) *How many students and teachers at each school?*
- 4) *How many new primary schools were built within the last 10 years (2013-2023) in Porirua?*
- 5) *What's the capital budget for investing in new primary schools for NZ in 2023/24 financial year budget and in the budget in the past five financial years?*
- 6) *How many people responded to the survey or provided feedback to the consultation of whether to build a new primary school in Aotea?*
- 7) *What stats did MOE used to make the decision of not progressing with building a new primary school in Aotea?*

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

When the Ministry assess the need or expected need of a new school to be built, we consider a number of different statistics and projections. As of 2023, for the Wellington region, the Ministry now uses the Stats NZ prediction of population growth, the Wellington Future Development Strategy and approved building consents which has finer grained accuracy for future population growth across the region over a 30 year period. We can use the dwelling count predictions to accurately predict growth right down to a neighbourhood block and calculate yield of students based on this modelling. The building consents also give us an indicator of extra dwellings that are generated in the area and a yield is calculated based on each dwelling for how many primary school aged or secondary school aged students would be generated from this.

The Ministry carries out an annual review of the Aotea Suburb to see if there is a need to build a new school within the Aotea Suburb vicinity. As of July 2022, the three primary schools closest to the Aotea Block development were operating at 85% utilisation. This left space for an additional 217 primary students in this network (this includes the out of zone students at each school). On this basis there is no need to build a school in Aotea due to the capacity being available in the three nearby schools.

We have seen evidence of roll drops from 2022 to 2023, and so have seen a similar trend for the three primary schools closest to the Aotea Block development. As of October 2023, the three schools (Papakowhai, Rangikura and Tairangi school) are operating at a 74% utilisation which is a significant drop from the 85% utilisation in 2022. Again, on this basis there is no need to build a school in Aotea due to the capacity being available in the three nearby schools.

One of the tools that encompasses this information and where anticipated growth has been identified is outline in the National Education Growth Plan (NEGP). Further information about NEGP can be found here: <https://www.education.govt.nz/school/new-zealands-network-of-schools/about/national-education-growth-plan/>

In response to **parts one - three** of your request, we provide you the information requested as **Appendix A**. We note that the Ministry only holds information on the number of teachers in state and state-integrated schools, therefore, we are unable to provide the information for Porirua Montessori Primary School in the provided list.

Up to date information can be found at the Education counts website at the following link: <https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/teacher-numbers>

In response to **part four** of your request, there have been no new primary schools built within the last 10 years in Porirua.

In response to **part five** of your request, we provide you the below table outlining the capital budget for investing in new primary schools. Each year the Ministry puts forward a bid for Budget towards particular projects and overall funding, if granted, this allocated budget can be spent over four years.

For years where there was nil budget, this is due to no budget being allocated from an unsuccessful budget bid towards new primary schools in the given year. For Budget 2019, a larger sum was allocated in contingency to deliver more teaching spaces for school out to the year 2030 as well as to meet increased demand in school rolls.

New Schools Budgets for Primary Schools	Total (\$m)
Budget 2023	\$ 7.21
Budget 2022	\$ -
Budget 2021	\$ 27.14
Budget 2020	\$ -
Budget 2019	\$ 180.73
Budget 2018	\$ 57.56

In response to **part six** of your request, we provide to you the Ministry's community engagement report as **Appendix B**, which contains both phases of the Ministry's engagement and consultation including the survey with students and parts in the North Porirua region regarding the consideration of building a new primary school in Aotea. We also provide to you a copy of a Briefing Note from 5 September 2018 which provided an assessment of the school network in Aotea, Porirua to the former Minister of Education, Hon Chris Hipkins, this is attached as **Appendix C**. Some of the information has been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act to protect the privacy of the natural persons.

As required under section 9(1) of the Act, I have considered the public interest in releasing the information withheld. I do not consider the public interest considerations favouring the release of this information are sufficient to outweigh the need to withhold it at this time.

In response to **part seven** of your request, any data analysis prior to 2023 has been based on the Statistics New Zealand (Stats NZ) population predictions, and we also use the highest population or 95% percentile to ensure that the Ministry is able to deliver places for students in case the predictions are lower than anticipated. We use a yield calculation and generate student numbers based on these Stats NZ predictions.

Please note, 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 my decision on your request, in accordance with section 28 of the Act. You can do this by writing to [info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz) or to Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Nāku noa, nā



Roy Sye  
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**Te Mahau | Te Tai Runga (South)**