

Thank you for your email of 21 May 2018 requesting the following information:

"For each of the past five years:

1. *How many students have been disciplined for bringing a weapon to school in Manawatū?*

For each student:

2. *What weapons were brought into Manawatū schools?*
3. *How many weapons were brought into Manawatū schools?*
4. *How many of those children were stood down and how many were expelled or excluded?*
5. *What ages were the children?*
6. *What school did the students go to?*
7. *Could you send me brief details of any incidents?"*

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

Questions 1, 4, 5 and 6 of your request asks for information on exclusions, expulsions, stand downs, and suspensions. Answers to these questions are provided.

Questions 2, 3 and 7 are refused under section 18(g) of the Act, as we do not hold the information requested and we have no grounds to believe that any other department or Minister of the Crown or organisation or local authority holds this information, nor do we have grounds to believe that this information is more closely connected with the functions of another department or Minister of the Crown or organisation or of a local authority.

You have asked for information on schools in Manawatū. This does not directly correspond to a geographic area we use, so we have interpreted your request to be limited to all schools in the Palmerston North and Manawatū Territorial Authority areas.

In questions 1, 4, 5 and 6, you have requested data on exclusions, expulsions and stand-downs. Exclusions and expulsions are recorded as subsets of suspensions. Where we have provided figures for exclusions and expulsions, they are to be read as included in the figures for suspensions.

A state or state integrated school principal may consider the formal removal of a student through a stand-down from school for a period of up to five school days. 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 are able to return automatically to school following a stand-down.

A suspension is a formal removal of a student from a school until the school's Board of Trustees (the Board) decides the outcome at a suspension meeting. Following a suspension, the Board decides how to address the student's misbehaviour. The Board can either lift the suspension (with or without conditions), extend the suspension (with conditions), or terminate the student's enrolment at the school.

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. This decision should be arrived at only in the most serious cases. If the student is aged 16 or over, the Board may decide to expel them from the school, and the student may or may not enrol at another school. Again, this decision should be arrived at only in the most serious cases.

It is important to note that stand-downs and suspensions are not necessarily measures of student behaviour; rather they are measures of schools' reactions to behaviour. What one school may suspend for, another school may not. The number of these events should not therefore be used as a proxy measure for total student behaviour.

Similarly, schools are only able to select one of 15 behaviour reasons when recording the stand-downs or suspension. There are no specific guidelines or definitions for which behaviour reason a school should use. While a school may select 'weapons' for one case, another school may choose 'physical assault on other student' or 'continual disobedience' for a similar event. As mentioned previously, schools are only required to report to us on the reason they have chosen to record as being the reason for a stand-down or a suspension.

We provide good practice guidelines for managing behaviour that may lead to stand-downs and suspensions that can be found at the following link:

<https://education.govt.nz/school/managing-and-supporting-students/student-behaviour-help-and-guidance/stand-downs-suspensions-exclusions-and-expulsions-guidelines-part-2/>.

Please find below responses to each of your seven questions.

Question 1: *How many students have been disciplined for bringing a weapon to school in Manawatū?*

We record data on students who were formally stood-down or suspended. Schools may have used internal discipline processes in some cases, which would mean that the student was not stood-down or suspended, therefore, they would not be captured in the data provided below. The table below details the number of students who have had a formal stand-down or suspension for bringing a weapon to Manawatū schools.

Year	Number
2017	9
2016	15
2015	6
2014	15
2013	9

Question 2: *What weapons were brought into Manawatū schools?*

This part of your request is refused under section 18(g) of the Act.

Question 3: *How many weapons were brought into Manawatū schools?*

This part of your request is refused under section 18(g) of the Act.

Question 4: *How many of those children were stood down and how many were expelled or excluded?*

The following table details the number of students who have been stood-down, suspended or expelled or excluded.

Year	Stood-down	Suspensions	Excluded or Expelled
2017	6	3	1
2016	7	8	1
2015	5	1	0
2014	12	3	1
2013	9	0	0

Question 5: *What ages were the children?*

The following is the ages of students who have been stood-down or suspended.

Year	Age of Student									
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
2017	2		1		1	1	1	1	2	
2016					1	2	7	2	3	
2015						1	5			
2014						1	11	2	1	
2013			1	2		1		1	3	1

Question 6: *What school did the students go to?*

The following table lists schools where students were stood-down or suspended.

Year	Schools
2017	Freyberg High School, Longburn Adventist College, Milson School, Riverdale School, Roslyn School, Ross Intermediate, Somerset Crescent School.
2016	Feilding High School, Freyberg High School, Palmerston North Boys' High School, Palmerston North Intermediate, Queen Elizabeth College, Roslyn School, Ross Intermediate.
2015	Ashhurst School, North Street School, Queen Elizabeth College.
2014	Awatapu College, Feilding High School, Freyberg High School, North Street School, Palmerston North Boys' High School, Palmerston North Intermediate, Queen Elizabeth College, Ross Intermediate.
2013	Freyberg High School, Queen Elizabeth College, Riverdale School, Roslyn School, St Peter's College, Takaro School.

Question 7: *Could you send me brief details of any incidents?*

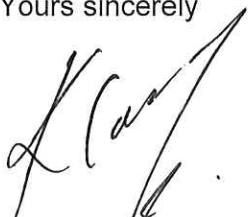
This part of your request is refused under section 18(g) of the Act.

Please note that the Ministry might proactively release this response on our website within five working days. If it is, all of your personal information will be redacted.

If you have any further questions about this issue, please contact our Media Team in the first instance. You can do this by writing to media@education.govt.nz.

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.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Katrina Casey', written over a horizontal line.

Katrina Casey
Deputy Secretary
Sector Enablement and Support

cc Jann Marshall, Director of Education Taranaki, Whanganui, Manawātū