



Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 19 March 2019 to the Ministry of Education requesting the following information:

- *Could you please provide me with the number of stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions and expulsions over the last four years at Waitaki Boys' High School, Waitaki Girls' High School, St Kevin's College, East Otago High School and Waimate High School?*
- *I would also like to know the reason for the stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions and expulsions, please.*
- *Would you be able to tell me whether parents have challenged the decisions and when they have been successfully challenged?*

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

Please find attached as **Appendix One**, data on the number of stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions and expulsions (SSEE), including behavioural reasons, broken down by school for the last four years.

Values less than five in the cohort of data have been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of natural persons and to avoid identifying individual students. These values are shown as 'x' in the Appendix.

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. A student may only be stood-down for a total of ten 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 final outcome at a meeting. The board can then either:

- lift the suspension (with or without conditions),
- 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.

Considerations when interpreting the data

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

A comprehensive view of age standardised data per 1,000 students is available by going to our website *Education Counts* at <http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/indicators>, and choosing "stand downs, suspensions, exclusions and expulsions" from the drop down list.

Support for schools

Schools are required to develop comprehensive local approaches to promoting pro-social behaviour and wellbeing within their setting. We support these efforts, and the development of whole school capability, with programmes such as Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L).

Our '*Teaching for Positive Behaviour*' resource supports teachers to understand and use effective practices that enhance students' behaviour, engagement, participation, and learning. You can read about both of these resources in more detail at: <http://pb4l.tki.org.nz/PB4L-School-Wide>.

Our Learning Support professionals work specifically to support children and young people with higher levels of challenging behaviour. '*Understanding Behaviour – Responding Safely*', a training workshop for behaviour management that focuses on preventative and de-escalation techniques, has been developed for New Zealand schools. It is delivered by Learning Support professionals who can provide ongoing support to schools.

The school-based Resource Teacher: Learning and Behaviour (RTLb) service supports clusters of schools to develop whole school behaviour management strategies to help manage the additional learning needs of students and help enhance students' learning, participation and wellbeing.

We also provide bullying prevention guidance for school boards of trustees, which you can find by searching the resources section at: <https://www.bullyingfree.nz>.

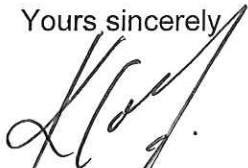
Decisions challenged by parents

We can't overturn a decision made by a board of trustees regarding SSEs. Families may approach the New Zealand School Trustees Association, the Office of the Ombudsman or the Human Rights Commission if they feel that a board decision is unfair.

As such, we do not collate these details and we are refusing your request under section 18(g) of the Act as we do not hold the requested information.

Thank you again for your email. If you are unsatisfied with my response, you have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review it. 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 the printed name.

Katrina Casey
Deputy Secretary
Sector Enablement and Support

cc: Julie Anderson, Director of Education for Otago Southland.

Number of stand-down, suspension and exclusions cases received between 2015 and 2018 broken down by the individual school.

	School Name	2015	2016	2017	2018
Stand-down	East Otago High School	13	16	10	14
	St Kevin's College (Oamaru)	0	x	x	x
	Waimate High School	12	8	x	11
	Waitaki Boys' High School	46	41	39	16
	Waitaki Girls' High School	9	6	x	20
Suspension	East Otago High School	x	x	x	0
	St Kevin's College (Oamaru)	0	0	0	0
	Waimate High School	6	x	x	x
	Waitaki Boys' High School	x	10	12	6
	Waitaki Girls' High School	x	x	0	14
Exclusion	East Otago High School	x	x	0	0
	St Kevin's College (Oamaru)	0	0	0	0
	Waimate High School	0	x	0	0
	Waitaki Boys' High School	x	x	0	0
	Waitaki Girls' High School	0	x	0	6

Number of stand-down cases broken down by behaviour in the last four years

School Name	Behaviour	2015	2016	2017	2018
East Otago High School	Alcohol	x	x	0	x
	Continual Disobedience	x	x	x	0
	Other harmful or dangerous behaviour	0	x	0	x
	Physical assault on other students	x	x	x	x
	Smoking	0	0	0	x
	Vandalism	0	x	0	0
	Verbal assault on other students	x	x	0	0
	Verbal assault on staff	x	x	x	x
St Kevin's College (Oamaru)	Other harmful or dangerous behaviour	0	x	0	0
	Physical assault on other students	0	0	x	0
	Theft	0	0	0	x
	Verbal assault on staff	0	0	0	x
Waimate High School	Continual Disobedience	x	x	x	x
	Other harmful or dangerous behaviour	0	0	0	x
	Physical assault on other students	x	x	0	x
	Physical assault on staff	0	0	0	x
	Theft	x	0	0	0
	Vandalism	0	0	0	x
	Verbal assault on other students	0	0	0	x
	Verbal assault on staff	x	x	x	x
Waitaki Boys' High School	Alcohol	0	x	0	x
	Continual Disobedience	21	x	15	x
	Drugs (including substance abuse)	0	6	x	0
	Other harmful or dangerous behaviour	7	7	x	x

	Physical assault on other students	x	x	9	x
	Physical assault on staff	0	x	x	x
	Sexual harassment	x	x	0	x
	Theft	0	0	x	0
	Vandalism	0	0	x	0
	Verbal assault on other students	0	6	0	0
	Verbal assault on staff	13	10	x	x
Waitaki Girls' High School	Alcohol	x	0	0	0
	Continual Disobedience	0	x	0	7
	Other harmful or dangerous behaviour	0	x	0	7
	Physical assault on other students	x	0	0	x
	Physical assault on staff	0	0	x	0
	Verbal assault on other students	0	0	0	x
	Verbal assault on staff	x	x	0	x

Number of suspension cases broken down by behaviour in the last years four years

School Name	Behaviour	2015	2016	2017	2018
East Otago High School	Continual Disobedience	x	x	x	0
	Verbal assault on other students	x	0	0	0
	Verbal assault on staff	x	0	0	0
	Continual Disobedience	x	x	0	x
Waimate High School	Drugs (including substance abuse)	x	0	0	0
	Physical assault on other students	0	0	x	0
	Continual Disobedience	x	x	7	x
Waitaki Boys' High School	Drugs (including substance abuse)	0	x	x	x
	Other harmful or dangerous behaviour	0	x	x	x
	Physical assault on other students	0	x	x	x
	Physical assault on staff	0	x	x	0
	Verbal assault on other students	0	x	0	0
	Verbal assault on staff	x	x	0	0
	Alcohol	x	0	0	0
Waitaki Girls' High School	Continual Disobedience	0	x	0	7
	Drugs (including substance abuse)	0	0	0	x
	Other harmful or dangerous behaviour	0	x	0	x
	Physical assault on other students	0	x	0	x
	Verbal assault on staff	0	0	0	x

Number of exclusion cases broken down by behaviour in the last 4 years

School Name	Behaviour	2015	2016	2018
East Otago High School	Continual Disobedience	x	x	0
	Verbal assault on other students	x	0	0
Waimate High School	Continual Disobedience	0	x	0
Waitaki Boys' High School	Continual Disobedience	x	0	0
	Drugs (including substance abuse)	0	x	0
Waitaki Girls' High School	Continual Disobedience	0	x	x
	Other harmful or dangerous behaviour	0	0	x
	Physical assault on other students	0	0	x
	Verbal assault on staff	0	0	x

There were no expulsion cases in any of the five schools between 2015 and 2018

Caveats

1. The information contained in this response relates to incidents of stand-downs and suspensions and not numbers of students. A student may be stood-down or suspended on more than one occasion.
2. Exclusions and expulsions are subsets of suspensions and should not be added to suspensions.
3. Values less than five have been concealed under section 9(2)(a) of the Act to protect the privacy of students involved.
4. It is important to note 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.

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