



30 April 2021

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 16 March 2021 to the Ministry of Education requesting the following information:

1. *The number and nature of complaints relating to stand-downs and suspensions at secondary schools which you received last year.*
2. *The number of secondary school students (excluding composite schools) who were stood-down, suspended, excluded or expelled and who had received one of the Ministry of Education's specialist learning and behaviour services. I am requesting this information for the years 2019 and 2020.*
3. *The total number of secondary school students (excluding composite schools) in the years 2018, 2019 and 2020.*
4. *The total number of secondary school students (excluding composite schools) who received one of the Ministry of Education's specialist learning and behaviour services in the years 2018, 2019 and 2020.*

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

My response below is provided in the number order of your request:

Question 1

The total number of complaints received by the Ministry in 2020 relating to stand-downs and suspensions at all schools was 35. The reason attributed to these 35 complaints was 'stand-downs and suspensions'.

For all schools, it is good practice to have a clearly articulated complaints procedure in place, that is readily accessible and transparent. It is common practice for the Ministry to direct the complaint back to the school in the first instance. The Ministry upholds the school's ability to self-govern and follow their own policies and processes for managing complaints. If a principal has managed a complaint and the complainant is not happy with the outcome, they can raise the complaint to the board of trustees. If they are still not satisfied, complaints about boards of trustees can be directed to the Office of the Ombudsmen (refer [12. Managing complaints – Education in New Zealand](#)).

Question 2

The table below shows the total number of secondary school students stood down, suspended, excluded or expelled who had received learning and behaviour support services, compared against the total number of secondary school students stood down, suspended, excluded or expelled across New Zealand between 2019 and 2020.

Secondary school students - comparison of learning support and stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions and expulsions

Number of stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions and expulsions	Year	
	2019	2020
Total students stood-down, suspended, excluded, or expelled	10,907	9,039
Received individualised learning and behaviour support services	1,061	1,008
Percentage of students who were stood-down, suspended, excluded or expelled who received individualised learning and behaviour support services	9.73%	11.15%

The Ministry uses a three-tiered framework (universal, targeted and individualised) for providing a continuum of evidence-based supports and interventions for schools to meet learning and behaviour needs. The supports and interventions increase in intensity depending on the needs of the individual and the context.

The data provided above relates only to individualised Ministry-funded supports, specifically the Behaviour Service, Communication Service, Ongoing Resourcing Scheme, High Health, Physical Disability Service and Deaf and Hard of Hearing Moderate Needs.

The data does not include targeted or universal support provided to whānau or school teams supporting these students. For example, universal supports across a whole school including Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) initiatives or targeted support including the Huakina Mai programme and professional development and support for teachers around specific identified needs such as trauma informed practice, within a school, have not been included.

In addition, students may have received support through the Interim Response Fund and/or Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour (RTLb) but this has not been included in the data provided.

Question 3

The total number of secondary school students (excluding composite schools) in the years 2018, 2019 and 2020 is publicly available on Education Counts website, and can be viewed here: [School Rolls | Education Counts](#)

Question 4

The table below shows the total number of school students (excluding composite schools) who received one of the Ministry of Education's specialist learning and behaviour services in the years 2018, 2019 and 2020.

Number of school students who received specialist learning and behaviour support services delivered by the Ministry of Education (excludes fundholders)

Year	Number of Students
2018	19,486
2019	21,012
2020	21,915

Note:

- i) *The specialist services data cannot be broken down by the school type as the system contains only current school data and not historic. Substantial collation would be required to complete this data for all schools.*
- ii) *The data has been extracted on 31 March 2021 and the data is live and subject to change.*
- iii) *The learning support services included are - Behaviour Service, Communication Service, Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (do not include students who received ORS through fundholder schools - e.g. specialist schools), High Health, Physical Disability Service, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Moderate Needs (Ministry delivered services only).*

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.

Yours sincerely



Katrina Casey
Deputy Secretary
Sector Enablement and Support