



# Exclusions and expulsions from school

**Age-standardised exclusion and expulsion rates continue to decrease and are now below 2000 rates. Actions such as the Student Engagement Initiative have helped to reduce these rates over recent years**

## Indicator Description

Age-standardised proportion of students enrolled who are excluded or expelled from school.

## Why This Is Important

Quantity of instruction or potential 'opportunity to learn' strongly influences student outcomes. The New Zealand Smithfield study found student attendance during Year 11 to be one of the most significant variables influencing student achievement in senior secondary school. Hattie (1999) reported instructional quantity to have the fourth highest effect size (.84) of any instructional variable. The practices of exclusion and expulsion interrupt, or cut short, potential opportunity to learn at school.

Following a suspension, the Board of Trustees decides how to address the student's misbehaviour. The boards can either lift the suspension (with or without conditions), extend the suspension (with conditions), or terminate the student's enrolment at the school.

If the student is aged under 16, the board may decide to exclude him or her 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 him or her from the school, and the student may enrol at another school. Again, this decision should be arrived at

only in the most serious cases. Exclusions and expulsions may lead to these students:

- accessing Correspondence Schooling, where there may be fewer direct learning supports
- entering Alternative Education provisions, where there may not be access to highly trained teaching staff
- dropping out of the education system.

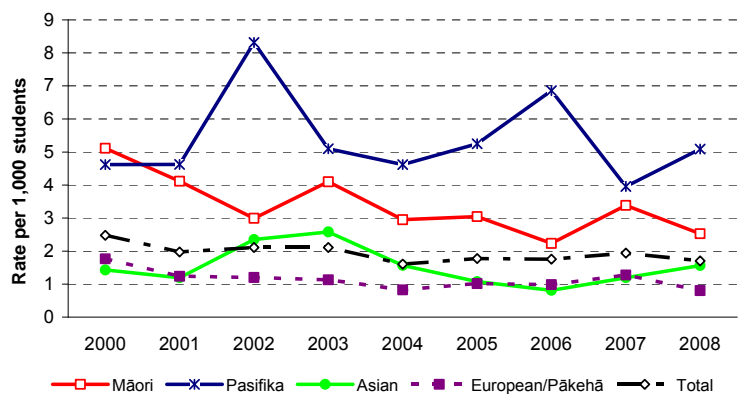
International research emphasises the importance of proactive partnerships with parents and a strategy focused on both achievement and behaviour. Approaches that are focused only on disciplinary or pastoral responses have been found to be ineffective for positive outcomes for the students involved in U.K. and Australian research.

## How We Are Going

The rates of exclusion have remained relatively constant over the last eight years. In 2008, the age-standardised exclusion rate was 2.2 students per 1,000, the lowest since 2000. Between 2007 and 2008 the age-standardised expulsion rate decreased by 12%.

Schools are excluding Māori students more than any other ethnic group. In 2008, the age-standardised exclusion rate for Māori students (4.6 students per 1,000) was 56% higher than the rate for Pasifika (2.9 students per 1,000), and 3 times as high as that for European/Pākehā (1.4 students per 1,000). The age-standardised exclusion rate for Asian students is the lowest for all ethnic groups.

Age-standardised expulsion rates, by ethnic group (2000 to 2008)

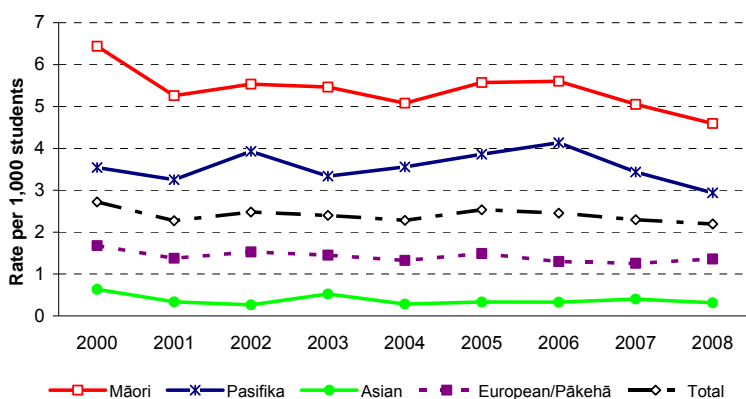


As a result of a rising suspension rate, Pasifika students have been a focus of the Student Engagement Initiative (SEI) since July 2006. The evidence suggests that this approach has so far been successful in helping to reduce exclusions among Pasifika students, with 29% reduction from 2006 to 2008, after substantial increases for both measures from 2003 to 2006.

With expulsions the pattern differs slightly. Schools are expelling more Pasifika students. In 2008, the age-standardised expulsion rate for Pasifika (5.1 students per 1,000), was more than twice as high as the rate for Māori (2.5 students per 1,000), and over six times higher than the rate for European/Pākehā (0.8 students per 1,000).

There is a clear correlation between the socio-economic mix of the school the student attended and age-standardised exclusion rates. Schools in the lowest quintile (deciles 1 and 2) draw their students from communities with the highest degree of socio-economic disadvantage. In 2008, students from these lowest quintile schools were 4.3 times more likely to be excluded from school than students in the highest quintile (deciles 9 and 10). When considering age-standardised exclusion rates by quintile the general pattern for the different ethnic groups remains, albeit less clearly. Age-standardised exclusion rates were highest for Māori and Pasifika in each quintile, except in quintile 1 schools where the European/Pākehā rate was higher than that of Pasifika.

Age-standardised exclusion rates, by ethnic group (2000 to 2008)

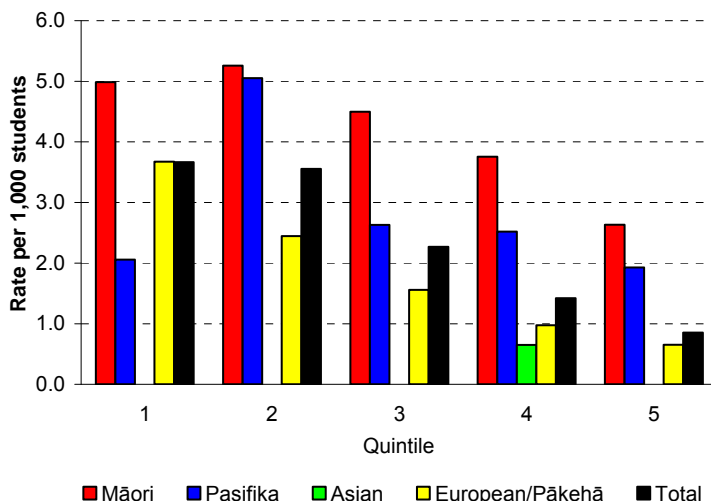


The relationship between school quintile and age-standardised exclusion rates is similar to that for expulsions. Students from quintile 1 schools were 2.5 times more likely to be expelled from school than students in the highest quintile schools.

Schools remove more male students than female students. In 2008, the age-standardised exclusion rate was 2.6 times higher for males than for females, while the age-standardised expulsion rate was 3.4 times higher.

Continual disobedience was the main reason for exclusion and expulsion and was responsible for 40.1% and 22.7% events respectively in 2008. Physical assault on other students accounted for 19.4% of exclusions and 25.3% of expulsions in 2008. The proportions of exclusions and expulsions relating to drugs (including substance abuse) have both dropped markedly. Exclusions relating to drugs peaked at 24.4% in 2001 and have dropped to 12.2% in 2008. Expulsions due to drugs have decreased from 32.3% in 2000 to 19.5% in 2008. These three behaviours made up approximately three-quarters of all exclusions and expulsions handed out in 2008.

**Age-standardised exclusion rates, by ethnic group and school quintile (2008)**



The proportion of exclusions for physical assault on staff has increased gradually since 2000 from 2.7% to 6.3% in 2008. The proportion of expulsions for physical assault on staff varies from year to year. However, this proportion has been high for the last couple of years and was 6.5% in 2008.

**Percentage of exclusions and expulsions, by behaviour (2000-2008)**

Measure	Year	Behaviour								
		Continual Disobedience	Drugs (Including Substance Abuse)	Physical Assault on Other Students	Physical Assault on Staff	Verbal Assault on Other Students	Verbal Assault on Staff	Smoking or Alcohol	Theft, Vandalism or Arson	Other
Exclusions	2000	32.5	23.9	16.9	2.7	1.4	5.5	2.3	7.6	7.1
	2001	33.0	24.4	16.5	3.8	0.9	4.8	1.8	7.9	6.9
	2002	33.1	21.1	16.4	4.0	0.8	7.2	1.9	6.9	8.6
	2003	32.5	21.1	14.5	5.0	0.7	5.9	2.0	9.0	9.4
	2004	34.7	17.8	19.6	4.1	0.9	5.9	1.8	6.8	8.4
	2005	35.6	18.9	17.8	5.2	1.2	4.8	1.5	6.1	8.9
	2006	38.6	13.7	17.4	5.4	1.0	5.7	1.6	8.1	8.5
	2007	37.1	14.2	18.1	5.5	0.9	4.1	2.0	7.6	10.6
	2008	40.1	12.2	19.4	6.3	0.7	4.6	1.2	6.7	8.9
Expulsions	2000	22.4	32.3	9.4	3.1	1.0	6.8	4.2	11.5	9.4
	2001	26.0	24.7	15.3	3.3	2.0	6.0	6.7	7.3	8.7
	2002	23.5	28.4	18.5	1.9	1.2	2.5	6.2	9.3	8.6
	2003	23.8	22.6	16.1	3.0	3.0	6.0	4.2	11.3	10.1
	2004	23.0	25.9	22.2	1.5	0.7	3.0	5.2	7.4	11.1
	2005	27.8	21.9	22.5	2.6	0.0	2.0	2.6	11.3	9.3
	2006	25.8	12.9	18.1	3.2	1.3	1.3	5.8	12.9	18.7
	2007	23.6	16.3	20.2	6.7	1.7	4.5	4.5	11.2	11.2
	2008	22.7	19.5	25.3	6.5	0.6	4.5	1.3	9.7	9.7

## Where To Find Out More

To obtain information about other forms of student disengagement consider indicators:

- Stand-downs from school
- Suspensions from school
- Truancy from school
- Early leaving exemptions.

The Ministry of Education has established an Iterative Best Evidence Synthesis Programme to systematically identify, evaluate, analyse, synthesise and make accessible, relevant evidence linked to a range of learner outcomes. Evidence about what works for this indicator can be found in:

- Quality Teaching for Diverse Students in Schooling: Best Evidence Synthesis
- The Complexity of Community and Family Influences on Children's Achievement in New Zealand: Best Evidence Synthesis.

## References

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