

09 NOV 2015

National Office

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Aaron Goodwin-O'Neill
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Dear Aaron

Thank you for submitting a request for official information held by the Ministry of Education. On 16 October 2015, you asked:

- *Please advise the current 2015 numbers of children "opted out" of religious instruction in all New Zealand primary schools, and the number who do receive the instruction*

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

New Zealand schools are self-governing and are free to make their own decisions about the provision of religious instruction. Under the Education Act 1964, school Boards can allow some religious instruction, but we recommend they consult with the community first. All participation by students and staff must be voluntary.

We don't require schools to provide us with statistics about the uptake of religious instruction. Because of this, I am declining your request under section 18(e) of the Act, as the information you have requested does not exist.

I hope this response has been of use to you. Under section 28(3) of the Act, you have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review this response. You can do this by writing to info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Yours sincerely



Andrea Schöllmann
Deputy Secretary
Education System Policy