

9 October 2019

Kia ora

We understand that your school may have received correspondence from Tara Jackson of the NZ Antivivisection Society. NZASE have been contacted by a number of schools who are concerned by the email and unsure whether to engage in it. The request was also sent out previously in February 2018.

On behalf of schools, NZASE have sought clarification and guidance.

**We have confirmation from The Office of the Ombudsman of the following:**

Since the OIA request went to schools and not the Ministry of Education, the MOE cannot provide comment on the specific request.

However, we have received advice from NZSTA who contacted the Office of the Ombudsman.

1. A group under the name of the NZ Antivivisection Society have sent an OIA request to a number of schools in the form of a survey.
	1. The survey can be viewed at the following link.  <https://nzavs.infoodle.com/form_process?g=bbfa871e-7122-4221-89f1-4cadf24d58fa>
	2. The survey seeks information about the use of animals or animal body parts for dissection or similar activity in the school’s curriculum.
	3. The survey has been reviewed by the Ombudsman’s Office and is deemed to be a legitimate OIA request.
	4. Given the term break schools need to be aware of the timeframe for responding to the request.
	5. The other concern raised by schools who have received the survey is the requirement that the provider of the information be named along with their position at the school. Once again the Ombudsman’s office has confirmed that the request for those details is appropriate.

**Other advice:**

Similar to other requests made to schools, each school will/should have a policy that guides their use if animals/animal products in school.

The MOE does provide advice on the use of animals in teaching and schools which can be found here:

* <https://gazette.education.govt.nz/articles/animal-ethics-and-schools/>
* <https://scienceonline.tki.org.nz/Teaching-science/Ethics/Caring-for-Animals/The-law/Policy-on-animals-for-ECE-centres-and-schools>
* NZASE (<https://nzase.org.nz/animal-ethics/use-of-animals-in-teaching-and-schools/>)  - note MPI refers to this site here <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/protection-and-response/animal-welfare/animals-in-research-testing-and-teaching/>
* <https://anzccart.org.nz/schools/animal-ethics-in-new-zealand-schools/> .

Schools could refer to these guidelines in their responses.

**The survey data and its use**

Schools could ask for more information and assurance on the use of the information. The information on the survey site seems pretty brief – e.g. they could ask about the identification of individual schools, how the data will be presented, etc.

This is because, similar to ethnicity data, there will be sensitivities around the presentation of this information.

Clearly the organisation has a particular philosophy, and the use of information (e.g. through naming and ‘shaming’ campaign) could potentially occur. While not in itself a reason not to complete the survey, students and schools may themselves become targets as part of a further campaign, which would be a concern.

We suggest that you discuss the survey and the advice above with your Principal to determine the best steps to take.

Please don’t hesitate to contact NZASE with further queries.

Ngā mihi

Samantha York

President NZASE