



Teachers Guide

2020
GENERAL ELECTION
AND REFERENDUMS



**ELECTORAL
COMMISSION**
TE KAITIAKI TAKE KŌWHIRI

Have your say
Whakaputahia ō whakaaro

Teachers Guide

Thank you for taking part in **Kids Voting - Te Pōti a Ngā Tamariki** for the 2020 General Election and referendums.

This booklet will guide you through how to plan out and run a mock election at your school.

Curriculum-aligned teaching resources

You can cover material included in the **Your Voice, Your Choice** resources that are aligned with the vision, principles, values and key competencies of the New Zealand Curriculum and Te Marautanga o Aotearoa.

The learning activities included in these resources engage students in a social inquiry study of New Zealand's government, decision making and electoral processes.

The activities promote creative and critical thinking from students about the electoral process, how governments make decisions and key influences determining the choices voters make on election day.

Referendums

There will be two referendums held alongside this year's general election.

New Zealanders will vote on whether the End of Life Choice Act 2019 should come into force, giving people with a terminal illness the option of requesting assisted dying, and whether the recreational use of cannabis should become legal.

Our teaching units include a section on what referendums are and how they work. However, it's up to you to decide how to explore the issues of the referendums with your students.

Discuss with your colleagues if your school will include the referendums in your Kids Voting – Te Pōti a Ngā Tamariki mock election.

You can select whether you would like to receive voting papers for the referendums when you register.

Find out more about the referendums at www.referendums.govt.nz.

Initial preparation

Speak to colleagues whose classes will be taking part and involve them in the planning of your school's programme.

- Think about roles. To run the mock election, you will need to have a Returning Officer, a Registrar of Electors, a communications team and Issuing Officers. For the count you will need Counters. Students can fill many of these roles.
- Agree on the amount of time your school wishes to devote to preparation for the programme and learning activities.
- Delivery of Kids Voting – Te Pōti a Ngā Tamariki should be politically neutral and impartial. It's important that students are encouraged to vote on what's important to them. For example, if you're collecting information about parties, candidates or referendum options, ensure you're covering a range of material that represents a variety of perspectives.

Resources provided

The Electoral Commission has provided you with the following resources for Kids Voting – Te Pōti a Ngā Tamariki 2020:

- Ballot Box: please note that the box which your resources arrived is your ballot box.
- Your Voice, Your Choice curriculum-linked teaching units you chose:
 - Level 1-2 resource – Making Choices
 - Levels 3-4 resource – Have Your Say
 - Levels 4-5 resource – Be Heard
 - Level 5 resource – Tūranga Mua, Tūranga Tika
 - Level 5 resource – Votes for Women
- A sticker to be used to seal the top of the ballot box to secure it.
- A poster for your voting place

We will email you the voting papers (similar to real voting papers) for your chosen electorate(s) so you can print them for your mock election.

Your students may also be interested in our videos 'How to enrol', 'MMP' and 'How to vote', available at elections.nz



What you'll need for your **Kids Voting** - **Te Pōti a Ngā Tamariki** election

The key learning outcome of **Kids Voting - Te Pōti a Ngā Tamariki** is that students will understand the general election process and will have experienced voting for themselves.

What you'll need to do to run your own election:

- 1.** Decide when you will hold your election
- 2.** Get your students involved
- 3.** Understand the key roles
- 4.** Set up your voting place
- 5.** Set up your ballot box
- 6.** Create your school electoral roll
- 7.** Help your students understand key concepts for voting
- 8.** The election day vote
- 9.** Count the votes
- 10.** Announce your school results
- 11.** Send us your school results and your thoughts on **Kids Voting - Te Pōti a Ngā Tamariki**

1. Decide when you will hold your election



Election day for the 2020 General Election and referendums is Saturday 19 September.

Advance voting starts on Saturday 5 September.

You can hold your school election anytime from when you receive the voting papers in early September until Tuesday 15 September.

This is because there are restrictions on when copies of the **Kids Voting – Te Pōti a Ngā Tamariki** voting papers can be handed out. Replica copies of the voting papers cannot be distributed on the three days before the real election.

You can count your votes after election day.

The preliminary results for the 2020 General Election will be announced from 7.00pm on 19 September. The preliminary results for the referendums will be announced on 2 October.

The official results of the General Election and referendums will be declared on 9 October after all votes have been processed and counted.

2. Get your students involved



Encouraging your students to get involved in the lead up to your school election will help ensure they understand and are fully engaged in the process.

In the lead up to your mock election, you may wish to appoint students to the different roles that are needed to run your election – the key roles are on the next page.

There are plenty of ways students can participate in preparations.

Students could cover the event as journalists by writing articles, snapping photos and publishing them in your school newsletter.

You could appoint a team of students to advertise the event by creating posters and notices with their own motivational messages.

We would love to receive any photos, articles or videos you take of your mock election, with school and parental approval.

You can send us a copy to be published on our website elections.nz, or our Facebook page [Facebook.com/votenz](https://www.facebook.com/votenz)

3. Understand the key roles



There are more than 25,000 people needed to make an election happen. These people help raise awareness about the election and get people enrolled, prepare voting places and help people to vote.

The following roles can be taken by students or teachers:

Returning Officer (RO)

- oversees the processes and ensure the election runs smoothly.

Registrar of Electors (ROE)

- produces the electoral roll in time for the election (see below on how to create an electoral roll).

Communications team

- helps raise awareness of when, where and how to enrol and vote and to encourage student participation.

Issuing Officers (IO)

- issues voting papers and ensure correct procedures are followed.

Counters

- helps count the votes.

4. Set up your voting place



It is important to replicate the voting place layout and process as clearly as possible so that when your students vote, they'll know exactly what to expect.

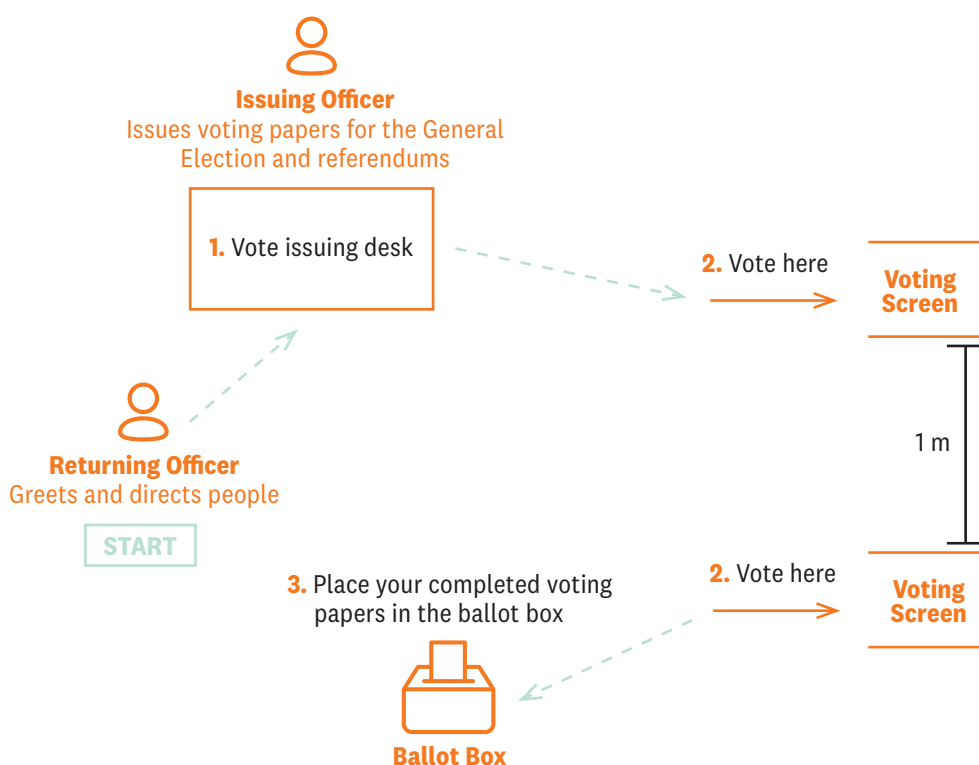
The most important part is ensuring students have access to a space where they can vote privately.

You could consider putting up partitions to create separate booths or having a separate voting area in your classroom.

You might want to make provisions for advance voting for those students who will not be at school on the day you plan to hold your election (details of how advance voting works in the real election can be found online at [vote.nz](https://www.vote.nz)).

Many schools are used as voting places for the real election.

The location of voting places will be available online at [vote.nz](https://www.vote.nz) from Monday 10 August.



5. Set up your ballot box



The box in which we sent your resources is your ballot box for Kids Voting.

Place the ballot box in a central location for all students to return their completed voting paper in time for your school to count the results.

6. Create your electoral roll



Your Registrar of Electors will need to produce an electoral roll for each class.

Using the template attached (Appendix 2), enter each student's first and last name and allocate them a number on the left-hand side of the roll.

7. Voting information for students



New Zealand uses the Mixed Member Proportional or MMP voting system to elect our Parliaments at a General Election.



You have two votes. Your party vote is for the political party you support.

Your electorate vote is to choose a member of Parliament to represent the area you live in.

More information on MMP is available at Appendix 1 of this Guide and a short video is available online at [elections.nz](https://www.elections.nz).

It's important that students know that their opinions and their choice is important, and so is their secret vote.

- **Your vote is your choice:** You decide which party and candidate best represents the issues that are important to you. It is illegal for anyone to pressure how you vote, especially by threats or bribes.
- **Your vote counts:** It is an opportunity to have your say. Vote! This is one of the ways you can make your opinion count.
- **Your vote is secret:** No one will know which party or candidate you have voted for. If you are blind, partially blind or physically unable to mark your voting paper, a trusted person can help you.
- **Your vote is important:** Your thoughts and opinions are unique and what you think is important. Consider the issues that matter to you so you can vote for the party and candidate that best represent your ideas.
- **How to vote:** Complete your voting paper and put it in the ballot box.

8. The election day vote



The process in the voting place:

- 1.** Voters wait in the queue to see the Issuing Officer.
- 2.** When each voter reaches the Issuing Officer they give their name and class.
- 3.** The Issuing Officer will draw a red line through their name on the electoral roll and will give the voter their voting paper. The Issuing Officer will also give them a voting paper for the referendums if you're taking part in the referendums.
- 4.** Voters should take their voting paper(s) to a vacant voting booth where they can vote in private.
- 5.** Once they have marked their voting paper(s), each voter should fold their own voting paper(s) in half and place it in the ballot box.

Support students to encourage their friends and classmates to turn up to vote and make their vote count!

You might also like to encourage your students to go to the real voting place with their parents or caregivers when they vote and watch the election coverage on television from 7pm on election night, Saturday 19 September.

9. Counting the results



You will need to appoint electoral officials called ‘Counters’ to help count the votes. Class participation in the count helps students can see and understand the process.

How to count electorate votes:

1. Open the ballot box and remove all voting papers.
2. Separate voting papers for the referendums.
3. Count how many voting papers you have in the ballot box for the general election.
4. Sort the voting papers into piles for each of the candidates.
5. You may receive some informal votes where it is not clear which candidate the student intended to vote for. Place these in a separate pile and record how many informal candidate votes have been received.
6. The votes for each candidate should be counted and recorded, along with the total number of informal votes. The totals for each candidate and the total number of informal votes should equal the total number of votes received in your ballot box (another electoral official should then recount the same pile to ensure the result is correct).
7. Use a spare voting paper as a results sheet to record the candidate results.
8. The candidate with the most votes wins the electorate vote and becomes the electorate MP.

How to count party votes:

1. Put all voting papers back into one pile, including the ones with an informal electorate vote.
2. Sort the voting documents into piles for each of the various parties.
3. You may receive some informal votes where it is not clear which party the student intended to vote for. Place these in a separate pile and record how many informal party votes have been received.

4. The votes for each party should be counted and recorded, long with the total number of informal votes. The totals should equal the total votes received in your ballot box (another electoral officer should then recount the same pile to ensure the result is correct).
5. Use a spare voting paper as a results sheet to record the party results.
6. You can use the MMP calculator at <https://elections.nz/stats-and-research/mmp-seat-allocation-calculator/> to enter your results and calculate the makeup of Parliament based on the votes from your class or school.

How to count referendum votes

1. Count how many referendum voting papers you have in the ballot box.
2. Sort the voting papers into piles for those who answered 'Yes' and those that answered 'No'.
3. You may receive some informal votes where it is not clear if the student intended to vote 'Yes' or 'No'. Place these in a separate pile and record how many informal referendum votes have been received.
4. The votes for 'Yes' and 'No' should be counted and recorded, along with the total number of informal votes. The totals for each answer and the total number of informal votes should equal the total number of votes received in your ballot box (another electoral official should then recount the same pile to ensure the result is correct).
5. Use a spare referendum voting paper as a results sheet to record the results.
6. The answer with the most votes wins the referendum.

10. Announcing the results



Announce your school's Kids Voting results in class or at assembly and compare it to the official election result. You may want to publish the results on your school notice board or in a school newsletter.

You can view the preliminary results for the real election at vote.nz from 7pm, Saturday 19 September. The confirmed results for the general election will be declared on Friday 9 October after all votes received in time have been processed and counted.

Preliminary results for the referendums will be released on Friday 2 October. The official results for the referendums will be declared on Friday 9 October.

Send us a copy of your schools' results when you complete the survey (see below) at elections.nz, so we can all see how kids voted across the country. We'll send you a link to the survey with your voting papers.

We will send you a nationwide result for **Kids Voting – Te Pōti a Ngā Tamariki** as soon as all results have been received. Individual schools' results will not be published.

11. Send us your school results and your thoughts on Kids Voting – Te Pōti a Ngā Tamariki



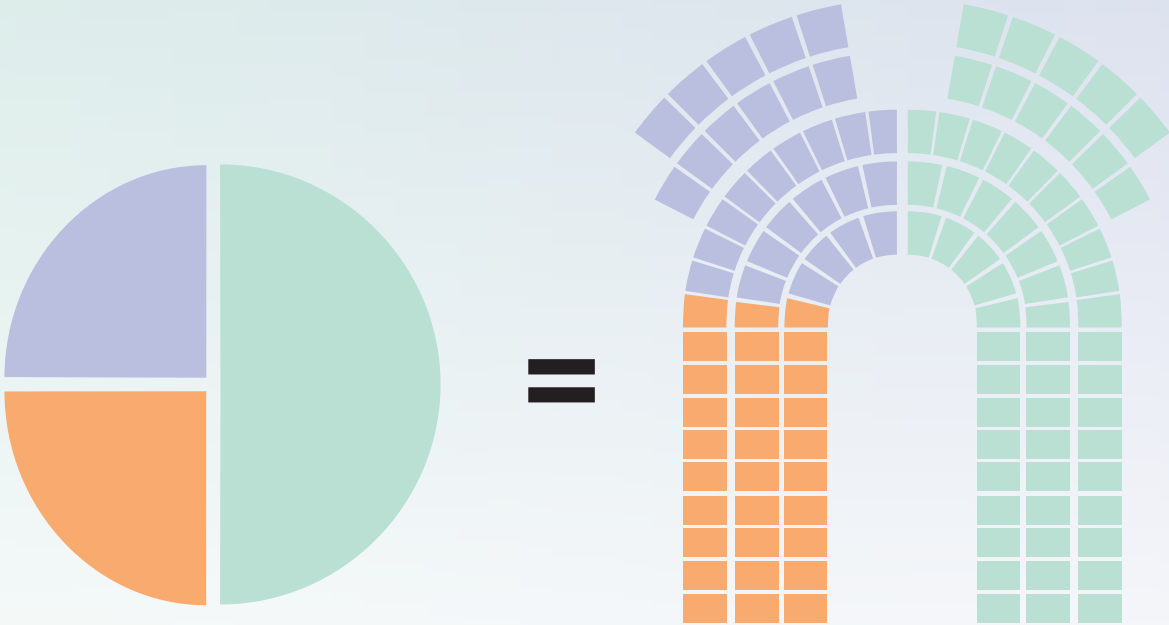
We value your thoughts and feedback about your experiences with **Kids Voting – Te Pōti a Ngā Tamariki**.

We will be offering a survey when you have completed the programme, which you can complete in only a few minutes.

Your feedback will help us to improve our resources and meet your needs at future event.

Appendix 1

Information about the MMP voting system



This proportion of the **party votes**

The same proportion of **seats in Parliament**

MMP voting system

Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) is the voting system we use to elect our Parliament.

There are usually 120 Members of Parliament (MPs). There are 72 electorates, including seven Māori electorates.

Each electorate chooses one MP to represent them in Parliament, called an Electorate MP. The other 49 MPs are elected from political party lists and are called List MPs.

Each voter has a party vote and an electorate vote.

The party vote is for the political party the voter supports. This largely decides the total number of seats each political party gets in Parliament.

The electorate vote is to choose the person to represent their local area. The candidate who gets the most votes wins. They do not have to get more than half the votes.

Under MMP, a political party that wins at least one electorate seat or 5% of the party vote gets a share of the seats in Parliament.

Parties with a bigger share of the party vote will get more seats in Parliament. The number of seats each party gets is proportional to the number of party votes that party gets.

For example, if a party gets 30% of the party vote it will get roughly 36 MPs in Parliament (being 30% of 120 seats).

So, if that party wins 20 electorate seats it will have 16 List MPs in addition to its 20 Electorate MPs.

Coalitions or agreements between political parties are usually needed before Governments can be formed.

You can watch a two-minute video explaining how MMP works on our website at <https://elections.nz/democracy-in-nz/what-is-mmp/>.

Appendix 2

Electoral roll template

Kids Voting 2020: Electoral Roll

School:

Class:

Reg. No.	First Name	Surname
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