



SUSPENSION & EXCLUSION POLICY

Approved by the Board of Management: 09-11-2022

REVIEWED BY	DATE

SUSPENSION AND EXCLUSION POLICY



This Policy relates to the steps that the school management may adopt when dealing with serious breaches of the Code of Positive Behaviour. These steps may affect a student's access to education and must be applied having regard to the rights of the individual student. Procedures imposed under this policy will be based on Procedural Fairness.

Procedural Fairness is a basic right of all individuals dealing with authorities. All Communities have a legitimate expectation that schools (Boards, Principals, teaching staff) will follow these principles in all circumstances particularly when dealing with suspensions and exclusions

Why is it needed?

All students and staff have the right to be treated fairly and with dignity in an environment free from disruption, intimidation, harassment and discrimination. In some cases of unacceptable behaviour, it will be in the best note rest of the school community and/or the student involved, or the student to be removed from the school for a period of time or completely.

Who is Responsible?

The Code of Positive Behaviour was drawn up in consultation with the Board of Management, the teaching staff, parents/guardians and students.

The aim of the Code of Positive Behaviour is to provide a safe, secure learning environment, free from disruption for all students by promoting a sense of respect and responsibility for oneself, for others and for the environment.

Each student and their parent/ guardian, agree to uphold the Code of Positive Behaviour in detail and spirit.

SCOPE: This policy applies to all our students during the school day, while involved in school related activities, Behaviour to and from school, behaviour outside of school that can have a serious impact on the life of the school.

What is Procedural Fairness:

Procedural Fairness is a basic right of all individuals dealing with authorities. All Communities have a legitimate expectation that schools (Boards, Principals, teaching staff) will follow these principles in all circumstances particularly when dealing with suspensions and exclusions

Procedural fairness is generally recognised as having two essential elements.

1. The right to be heard which includes:	2. The right of a person to an impartial decision which includes:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The right to know why the action is happening.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The right to impartiality in the investigation and decision making phases.

SUSPENSION AND EXCLUSION POLICY

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The right to know the allegations in the matter and any other information which will be taken into account.• The right of the person against whom the allegations have been made to respond to the allegations• The right to appeal. | |
|--|--|

To ensure the elements of procedural fairness are met, it is appropriate to provide student and their parents/guardians with details of all allegations relating to the incident. This usually will involve providing copies of any relevant statements. Should the principal be of the view that it is not appropriate to provide copies of the statement, for example, because of a fear that witnesses may be intimidated, full details of the allegations outlined in the statements should be provided instead

SUSPENSION:

What is it?

Suspension is considered to be the withdrawal of permission for a student to attend the school for a specific period of time.

Internal suspension is the withdrawal of permission for a student to attend timetabled classes during the school day. The student will be supervised while in school.

Why is it used?

Suspension allows students time to reflect on their behaviour, to acknowledge and accept responsibility for the behaviour which led to the suspension and to accept responsibility for changing their behaviour to meet the school's expectations in the future.

Suspension provides time for the school to put a plan in place to help modify or improve students behaviour. It also provides a period of respite for student and school.

Grounds for Suspension

Suspension is a serious sanction and may be considered in the following circumstances:

- Verbal abuse of staff
- Damage to property
- Regular detentions
- Student's presence constitutes a threat to the safety of members of the school community.
- Student's behaviour is having a serious detrimental effect on the education and learning of other students.
- Serious breach of the Code of Positive Behaviour.
- Bullying of another student or other students

This list is not exhaustive. Reference should be made to the school's Code of Positive Behaviour for more details.

A single incident may warrant suspension.

Examples would include:

SUSPENSION AND EXCLUSION POLICY

- A serious threat of violence against a member of the school community
- Actual violence against a member of the school community
- Gross defiance
- Drug or alcohol offences

This list is not exhaustive. Reference should be made to the school's Code of Positive Behaviour for more details.

Suspension Procedure

S U S P E N S I O N	<p>Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Given an opportunity to write an account of what happened. •Meet with a member of the school management team and understand the reason(s) for suspension and the school's expectations of the student while on suspension. <p>School:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Ensure all discipline options under the Code of Positive Behaviour have been applied. •Consult with the student's support personnel. •Copy and record all correspondence. •Explain clearly to the student why they are being suspended and what is expected of them while on suspension. <p>Parent/Guardian:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Following notification of the suspension from the school via phone call, will collect the child or grant permission to walk home. •On receipt of letter, contact the school if unable to attend meeting on proposed date.
O N S U S P E N S I O N	<p>Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Meet the expectations set out by the school i.e. complete assigned work. •Reflect on the incident and complete a Restorative Practice form to better understand the result of their actions and to avoid it happening again. <p>School:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •All members of the student's support team to be informed of the suspension. •Ensure student's file is updated. •Notify the EWO in cases of a suspension over 5 days or where the student has been suspended for more than 20 days during the school year to date. <p>Parent/Guardian:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Support the school's expectation of the student while on suspension i.e. supervise completion of work assigned. •Understand that the student is under their care/responsibility for the duration of the suspension.
R E T U R N S C	<p>Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Return to school with a parent/guardian present, in full uniform with appropriate school equipment and work assigned completed. •Understands and agrees to the agreed conditions set out by signing the meeting record template. •Gives each teacher their disciplinary card to sign and shows it to his/her parent/guardian each night <p>School:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Implement further supports/sanctions where appropriate. •Record meeting with student/parent on return to school as well as signed agreed conditions. •Place student on Report and review after 1 week. •Notify BOM of suspension <p>Parent/Guardian</p>

SUSPENSION AND EXCLUSION POLICY

H	•Attend meeting with child and school management on return to school.
O	•Sign agreed conditions.
O	•Monitor child's progress on a Report card and sign each night.
L	

REPEATED SUSPENSIONS MAY RESULT ON THE STUDENT BEING REFERRED TO THE BEHAVIOURAL COUNCIL

Appeal to the Board of Management

1. A parent/guardian has seven days in which to lodge an appeal. If the student appealing suspension is 18 years or older, he or she may appeal in their own right.
2. The grounds for the appeal must be made in writing for the attention of the Secretary of the Board of Management.
3. The appeal will be considered at the next Board meeting or at an extraordinary meeting of the Board, which the parents/guardians can attend at a specific time, subject to giving two days' notice of their intention to attend the meeting.
4. At the Board meeting, the Principal outlines the reasons for his/her recommendation.
5. The Parents' appeal is then heard by written submission and/or orally.
6. The Principal may take no further part in the discussion other than to clarify matters raised in the parent's /guardians' appeal. The Principal and parents (if present) leave.
7. The Board makes its decision and communicates it to the parent/guardian.
8. The Board may agree that another sanction is applied.
9. If the appeal is heard and upheld after the suspension has been served, then the suspension will be removed from the student's record.

Procedures for the reintroduction of the student into the school

The parents/guardians may be requested to attend a meeting with the Principal, or another member of staff delegated by the Principal, before the student returns to class. The purpose of this meeting is to emphasise the seriousness of the behaviour that gave rise to the suspension and also to ensure parental support for the school's Code of Positive Behaviour. It is also an opportunity to stress parental responsibility in supporting the school in its efforts to help the student behave well on their return to school.

In some cases, students and parent may need to agree to special conditions on return. e.g. report, attendance to counselling etc.

EXCLUSION

What is it?

Exclusion is the permanent exclusion of a student from the school.

Why is it used?

SUSPENSION AND EXCLUSION POLICY

The Board of Management (BOM) of Rath Dara Community College has the authority to expel a student. Expulsion is a serious step and should only be taken by the BOM in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. The school should have taken all steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid the expulsion of the student.

Grounds for Exclusion:

- The authority to exclude a student rests with the Board of Management.
- The grounds for exclusion may be similar to the grounds for suspension. A key difference is that where exclusion is being considered the school authorities have tried a series of interventions and believe they have exhausted the possibility of changing the student's behaviour.
- There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a student should be excluded for a first offence. Examples of such circumstances could include (but are not limited to) cases where:
 - There is a serious threat of violence towards a member of the school community.
 - Actual violence or physical assault.
 - Supplying of prescription/illegal drugs or alcohol to other students.
 - Possession of illegal drugs or alcohol.
 - Using illegal drugs or alcohol in the school.
 - Sexual assault.

Factors to be Considered before Exclusion

1. Nature and seriousness of the behaviour.
2. Context of the behaviour.
3. Impact of the behaviour.
4. Interventions tried to date.
5. Whether the expulsion is a proportionate response.
6. Possible impact.

Exclusion Procedure

- A detailed investigation should be carried out under the direction of the Principal.
- The parents/guardians must be informed in writing of the grounds upon which exclusion is being considered.
- At least five days' notice of the Board meeting must be given to the parents/guardians.
- The parents/guardians must be informed of their right to make representations to the Board of Management on behalf of the student.
- A report must be prepared for the Board containing all the relevant material relating to the case. A copy of this report must be posted to the parents/guardians of the student.
- Parents/guardians are expected to give two days' notice to the Secretary of the Board of Management of their intention to attend the Board meeting. They will then be given a time at which to attend the meeting.

Meeting of the Board of Management

SUSPENSION AND EXCLUSION POLICY

- The Board will examine the report and will seek clarification from the Principal where needed.
- The parents/guardians are given sufficient time at the meeting to respond to the report and make representations on behalf of the student.
- The Principal may take no further part in the discussion other than to clarify matters raised in the parent's/guardians response. The Principal and parents (if present) leave.
- The Board makes its decision and will communicate it in writing to the parents/guardians.

Decision to Exclude

- Decisions to exclude are subject to appeal under Section 29 of the 1998 Education Act.
- The parents/guardians must be informed of their right to appeal the decision to Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board.
- The board must inform the Educational Welfare Officer assigned to the school of its decision.
- The student shall not be considered excluded from the school before the passing of twenty school days from the receipt of such notification by the Educational Welfare Officer. The Board may decide to suspend the pupil from school during this period.

Decision not to Exclude

The Board will define an alternative restorative measures and behavioural expectations in consultation with the Principal.

Appeals

A parent/guardian or a student aged over 18 years, may appeal a decision to exclude to Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board.

Monitoring and Review

The number of days lost due to suspensions will be monitored by the school management to ensure that the use of this measure

is consistent with school policies and is used appropriately. The Board of Management will be provided with the findings at regular intervals.

Ratification and Communication:

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 09-11-2022.

It is available on request from the school office.

Parents/guardians will be informed of this policy through the school website where the policy is included.