



Code of Behaviour

CASTLEBAR PRIMARY SCHOOL

ROLL NO. 20562H

Code of Behaviour

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Development of the Code of Behaviour:

This Code of Behaviour is being prepared in accordance with the guidelines "Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools" published by the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB, 2008). The Code of Behaviour also conforms to legislation as required by Section 23 of the Education Welfare Act (2000). The Code of Behaviour will be available on the school website. The Code of Behaviour needs to be considered in association with the school "Anti-Bullying" and "Child Safeguarding" policies. **When parents enrol their child in Castlebar PS they are agreeing to support the implementation of the Code of Behaviour and other policies in the school. Parents indicate their agreement to this policy and others by signing the enrolment form.**

Our Vision:

The vision for relationships and behaviour in Castlebar PS is that:

"Each individual through positive learning experiences will be stimulated to reach his/her full potential, face life confidently, find fulfilment and be respectful in an ever changing world".

Mission Statement

We endeavour to create a caring atmosphere in our school where every child is helped to achieve his/her full potential through a holistic approach to education in partnership with the Community. The school is committed to the promotion of the Catholic faith and values. We promote an awareness of our own culture and heritage and also valuing the culture and heritage of others. We endeavour to enthuse the child with a zest for learning and life, a healthy respect for all people and the world around him/her, thus enabling him/her to become a responsible citizen.

Aims:

The code aims at creating a caring, ordered environment based on respect and tolerance where each child can feel secure and confident. The code not only applies everywhere on the school premises but also applies at any school related activity whether on or off the premises such as school tours, swimming, sports activities, religious ceremonies etc.

The above list is not exhaustive and consists of examples only.

Expectations of Staff

School rules are devised with regard to the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. It is imperative that adults 'practise what they preach' in their interaction with children and school community every day.

Staff are expected to:

- support and implement the school's code of behaviour and other school policies.
- be cognisant of their duty of care;
- to be familiar with and follow the school's policy on "Child Protection".
- create a safe, welcoming environment for each pupil;
- praise desirable behaviour;
- facilitate pupils to reach their full academic potential;
- recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils
- be courteous, consistent and fair;
- keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum;
- deal appropriately with misbehaviour;
- keep a record of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour;
- listen, at appropriate times, to pupils' explanations for behaviour;
- provide support for colleagues;
- communicate with parents and staff when necessary, always with courtesy and respect;
- provide reports on matters of concern.
- to be familiar with and follow the school's Complaints Procedure if he/she has any complaint against staff, parents or outside personnel.

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Expectations of Parents

Parents are expected:

- to support and uphold the school's code of behaviour and other school policies.
- to nurture in their children a positive attitude towards school..
- to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually. Our school hours are 8:50a.m. to 2;30p.m. (Senior Campus) and 9.00 a.m. to 1.40 p.m. for Infants and 2.40 p.m. for 1st & 2nd class (Junior Campus). Parents are asked not to wait on the corridors to collect children prior to class dismissal for safety reasons. For insurance purposes the Board of Management wishes it to be known that the school has no responsibility for children arriving at school prior to 10 minutes before the official start time on each campus or for children in the school premises or school grounds after school hours.
- to ensure full school uniform is worn each day. Please ensure appropriate clothing for the weather so that their child will be warm and dry playing outside during breaks.
- to ensure children wear the school tracksuit On P.E. days, **All clothes should be clearly marked for identification purposes.** Platform shoes are not allowed
- to send a written note to the class teacher explaining their child's absence from school if your child is absent from school a note is required on his/her return to class.
- to provide an explanation to the class teacher if pupils are to leave the school during school hours. Children do not have permission to leave the school at lunchtime.
- to ensure the school has up-to-date phone numbers of family/friends to be contacted in case of an emergency.
- to arrange and ensure that a family member/friend is contactable and available to attend the school in the event of an emergency.
- to ensure their child has a healthy and nourishing lunch in school every day, in line with the school policy on "Healthy Eating". Fizzy drinks, crisps, popcorn and chewing gum are not allowed. Children are encouraged not to waste food and uneaten food should be brought home and not thrown away.
- to arrange meetings with the class teacher and/or principal when they are concerned about any issue relating to their child; Parents are asked not to disturb teachers during class hours except in cases of necessity. Parents are also asked not to approach members of staff out of school regarding school issues.
- to avoid requesting a message to be delivered to your child except in case of an emergency. If you have any enquiries regarding school or if you wish to make an appointment feel free to call or ring the school at 094 9022902 (Junior Campus) or 094 9023438 (Senior Campus).
- to communicate with staff when necessary, always with courtesy and respect and to model good behaviour in their relationship with teachers;
- to encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves, for others, for their own property and that of others;
- to be interested in, support and encourage their child's school work , check homework is complete to the best of pupil's ability and sign homework
- to ensure that their child has the correct books and other materials;
- to co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties.
- to co-operate with the school in resolving a problem and on no account to approach or reprimand a pupil or staff member on the school grounds regarding an incident. Parents must make an appointment to resolve issues.
- to communicate to the school problems which may affect a child's education or engagement with school.
- to follow the school's "Complaints Procedure" if necessary.

Expectations of Pupils

Pupils should treat others as they would wish to be treated themselves.

Pupils are expected:

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- to respect and adhere to the school's Code of Behaviour.
- to listen to the class teacher, work hard and to the best of their ability, and make best use of their time in school;
- to enter and leave the school building at all times in an orderly fashion.
- during play time children do not enter the school building without getting permission from a teacher.
- to **walk** within the school building and corridors. Respect that others are working.
- to treat all members of the school community with respect, courtesy, consideration and honesty;
- to greet visitors and members of the school community.
- to never bully any person; any behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to be safe is unacceptable. Fighting, rough play or any physical force is never allowed or tolerated.
- to never use bad language.
- to wear their full school uniform. On PE days pupils wear the school track suit.
- not to bring chewing gum, glass bottles, correction fluids, other solvents, matches, cigarettes, vapes, alcohol or drugs to school either on the premises or to a school related activity; Please refer to the Substance Misuse Policy
- to avoid wearing excessive jewellery, make-up; dyeing of hair.
- to have long hair tied back for hygiene/safety purposes;
- to cycle/ scoot with care in the school grounds (on arrival/dismissal);
- to ensure mobile phones are switched off during school hours. These should only be brought to school if deemed totally necessary by parents.
- to respect the school building and property; if deliberate damage is caused, the parent/guardian will be responsible for the cost of repair/replacement. .
- to value our school environment and keep it litter-free. All empty cartons and wrappers are considered household waste and are taken home. Pupils are encouraged to take all uneaten food home.
- not to climb / swing from school fences, railings or trees.
- not to distribute birthday party invitations during school hours.

On wet days children are expected:

- to engage in activities in class as per teacher instructions.
- to stay seated in their classrooms and not move about the room.
- to never use sharp implements for any purpose.
- to never use a tin-whistle except under teacher supervision.

When going swimming children are expected:

- to wear a coat if walking to the swimming pool.
- to walk in line behind the teacher to the swimming pool. No running allowed.
- to never shout or run in the dressing rooms or pool area.
- to listen and obey the instructor and life guard.
- to wear a swimming cap. Arm bands are needed for beginners.
- to never push or play roughly in the pool, pool area or dressing rooms.
- to dress quickly after each session.

When on school trips/tours, children are expected:

- to enter/leave the bus in an orderly manner;
- to arrive on time
- to keep the school rules as per the list of pupil expectations listed above;
- to sit in their seats and avoid excessive movement and making noise that could in turn distract the driver;
- to stay in their appointed groups at all times;
- to wear uniform / tracksuit as requested on school tours;
- to return the parental/guardian permission slips allowing the child to go on tour;

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Children with Special Needs and School Rules:

- School staff will ensure that rules are communicated in a way that pupils with special educational needs can understand.
- Pupils may need opportunities to practise observing the rules to understand what is expected of them with appropriate supervision and feedback on progress

Promoting a Happy School

Students are more likely to benefit from their education and to be happy in a structured, caring environment where high standards of behaviour are expected and adhered to.

Roles and Responsibilities of Staff Members in relation to Behaviour

Staff members are expected to:

- Actively create a climate that promotes and reinforces good behaviour and prevents inappropriate behaviour
- Create a positive safe environment for teaching and learning
- Build positive relationships of mutual respect among each other pupils and parents
- Ensure that pupils are treated fairly, equally and firmly

The Purpose and Content of School Rules

The school and classroom rules translate standards into practical guidance about the behaviour expected of students. Rules provide clear boundaries. They describe in simple terms how to behave in order to learn well and to develop into mature and responsible individuals.

Children cannot remember long lists of rules. The Golden Rules of the Circle Time synopsis for the children what is expected of them, in a language they understand. It is expected that the children will know them 'by rote' by the time they reach second class.

The Golden Rules:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| • Be Gentle | Don't hurt anyone |
| • Be kind and helpful | Don't hurt people's feelings |
| • Be honest | Don't cover up the truth |
| • Work hard | Don't waste your or other peoples time |
| • Look after your property | Don't waste, damage or take things |
| • Listen to people | Don't interrupt or shout out |

Acknowledging good behaviour, progress and effort could involve:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval;
- Teachers creating moments of success and then acknowledging them.
- A comment in a pupil's exercise book;
- A visit to another member of staff or the Principal for commendation ;
- A word of praise in front of a group or class;
- Entry of a record of good behaviour in behaviour book or star chart
- Delegating some responsibility or privilege ;
- A mention to a parent – written or verbal;
- Teacher records improvement in the behaviour of a disruptive pupil;

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- Implementation of programmes such as *Circle Time* to promote positive behaviour.

How pupils, staff and parents can help each other meet the standards expected in the school

- The adults in the school should model the desired behaviours in their dealings with each other and the students. They should lead by example.
- Parents should also model the standards of behaviour that the students are asked to respect.
- The Code of Behaviour is accessible to all (on the school website). When parents enrol their child, they are expected to support the implementation of the Code of Behaviour.
- Students will contribute, as appropriate, to revising the Code of Behaviour through the consultative process.
- Teachers can teach the standards required so as to be able to observe the Code of Behaviour to the highest level.
- Parents and pupils can help to solve issues when matters of disagreement / conflict arise.

Consequences of unacceptable Behaviour

Procedures followed when dealing with misbehaviour:

- The Class Teacher or the person on playtime supervision deals with the situation and imposes a sanction / sanctions. Person on supervision reports the serious misbehaviour to Class Teacher and incident to be written into the relevant Yard Incident Notebook.
- The Class Teacher may consult with the parent(s) of the child with a view to helping the child to overcome the difficulty. If the problem persists or in the case of serious misbehaviour it may be necessary to have on-going discussions between the parents, teacher and Principal to monitor the situation, always with the objective of helping the child.
- A written record by the class teacher will be kept of instances of serious misbehaviour and of advice will be given to child.
- Improvement in behaviour will also be recorded.
- Sanctions are necessary to register disapproval of unacceptable behaviour. They take account of the nature and frequency of the indiscipline and, as far as possible, are matched to the seriousness of the misbehaviour.
- In imposing sanctions, it is the behaviour which is unacceptable and not the individual. When misbehaviour occurs the following is a list of possible sanctions or strategies used. This list is not exhaustive.

- a. Reasoning with the pupil.
- b. Verbal reprimand from the teacher.
- c. Prescribing additional work – to be signed by parents.
- d. Changing seating arrangements in the class.
- e. A note or comment on the child's homework journal to be signed by parent
- f. Withdrawal from a particular lesson or group
- g. Parents invited to meet the teacher.
- h. Referral to the Principal. Parents will be informed.
- i. Regular report to Principal.
- j. Deprivation of treats / school tour / hall events.
- k. Detention at lunch time – supervised by teacher on duty.
- l. The BoM has sanctioned the use of a reduced day by school authority for individual pupils in certain circumstances if deemed necessary.
- m. In the event of a child's behaviour having a detrimental effect on their own education/safety or that of others the BoM has authorised the school authorities to contact the parents to have the child removed from school for the remainder of that school day.

Yard Behaviour

1. Time out in yard
2. 3 Time outs report to Principal/Deputy Principal. They speak to child.
3. Child given 2 more chances
4. Parents notified by Principal.

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- n. Formal report to the Board of Management

Covid-19 Control Measures

All pupils are required to comply with any Covid-19 control measures that the school has in place.

These measures may change from time to time, according to advice received from the Department of Education and the public health authorities. Any changes will be communicated to parents. Pupils will be supported in adhering to the measures by their class teachers and other school personnel.

Pupils who persistently fail to comply with the measures may be subject to disciplinary action under this policy.

SUSPENSION:

Our Code of Behaviour enables the school authorities to strike an appropriate balance between our duty to maintain an effective learning environment for all and a responsibility to pupils whose behaviour presents a challenge to the teaching and learning process. Our Code of Behaviour is a key tool in enabling us to support the learning of every pupil in the school.

Suspension: is a sanction by which a Board of Management bars a pupil from attendance at school for a specific period of time. Suspension from our school will be in accordance with the terms of Rule 130 (5) of the Rules for National Schools.

The decision to suspend is made on grounds of gross misdemeanour and only following a series of procedures where a report has been compiled. Fair procedures require that the pupil has a right to be heard and the right to impartiality. An agreed form called the Record of Investigation for Serious Breaches of Code of Behaviour " will be used. This covers information such as the following:

- Names(s) of child/ children involved
- Nature of incident
- Witnesses to incident
- Victim's account of the incident
- Accuser's account of the incident
- Supervising teachers
- Acceptance or denial of culpability
- Child / children's reaction to correction
- Findings of investigation

The following behaviours may warrant suspension from school and should be read in conjunction with the factors below:

- Behaviour likely to cause serious injury to self or others
- Physical or verbal assault or threat of assault on any member of staff
- Unprovoked assault on a pupil – not the result of a clash during sports etc.
- Possession of or use of weapons that might constitute a threat to the Health and Safety of pupils, parents, staff and school personnel.
- Bullying – though proof would need to be clear and culpability accepted by child in

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question.

- Drug abuse or dealing in prohibited substances.
- This list is not exhaustive and other breaches of the school's Code of Behaviour – not included here, will be dealt with under the Code of Behaviour.

Factors which will be considered before suspending a pupil:

The nature and seriousness of the behaviour:

- What is the precise description of the behaviour?
- How persistent has the unacceptable behaviour been?
- Has the problem behaviour escalated, in spite of the interventions tried?

The context of the behaviour:

What are the circumstances of the incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. in class, in a particular teacher's class, in the yard, in a group)?

- What factors may have triggered incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. bullying, cultural or family factors)?
- What is the age, stage of development and cognitive ability of the student?
- Are there any factors that may be associated with the behaviour (e.g. particular home circumstances, special educational needs)?

The impact of the behaviour:

- How are other students and staff affected by the student's behaviour?
- What is the impact of the behaviour on the teaching and learning of the class?
- Does the behaviour have a particular or greater impact on some students or teachers?
- Does the student understand the impact of their behaviour on others?

The interventions tried to date:

- What interventions have been tried? Over what period?
- How have the interventions been recorded and monitored?
- What has been the result of those interventions?
- Have the parents been involved in finding a solution to the problem behaviour?
- Has the intervention of NEPS or other psychological assessment or counselling been sought, where appropriate?
- Are any other interventions such as peer mediation, restorative justice approaches or family conferencing available?

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- Is the student or parent involved with any support service and has this agency or support service been asked for help in solving this problem?
- Has any other agency been asked for assistance (e.g. Child Guidance Clinic, Child and Adolescent Services)?

Whether suspension is a proportionate response:

- Does the student's behaviour warrant suspension?
- Is the standard being applied to judging the behaviour the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other student?

The possible impact of suspension:

- Will suspension allow additional or alternative interventions to be made?
- Will suspension help the student to change the inappropriate behaviour?
- How will suspension help teachers or other students affected by the behaviour?
- Will suspension exacerbate any educational vulnerability of the student?

Suspension will be part of an agreed plan to address the student's behaviour:

The suspension should:

- enable the school to set behavioural goals with the student and their parents
- give school staff an opportunity to plan other interventions
- impress on a student and their parents the seriousness of the behaviour.

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school will observe the following procedures:

- inform the student and their parents about the complaint
- give parents and student an opportunity to respond.

Inform the student and parents

The school will let the student and their parents know about the complaint, how it will be investigated, and that it could result in suspension. Parents may be informed by phone or in writing, depending on the seriousness of the matter. Informing parents in writing has the benefit of ensuring that there is a formal and permanent record of having let parents know. It also ensures that parents are clear about what their son/daughter is alleged to have done. It serves the important function of underlining to parents the seriousness with which the school views the alleged misbehaviour.

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Give an opportunity to respond

Parents and student will be given an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed. A meeting with the student and their parents provides an opportunity for them to give their side of the story and to ask questions about the evidence of serious misbehaviour, especially where there is a dispute about the facts. It may also be an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction, and for the school to explore with parents how best to address the student's behaviour. If a student and their parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal should write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and, failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the negative behaviour. The school will record the invitations made to parents and their response.

Procedures in relation to immediate suspension

Where an immediate suspension is considered by the Principal to be warranted for reasons of the safety of the student, other students, staff or others, a preliminary investigation should be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. The formal investigation should immediately follow the imposition of the suspension. All of the conditions for suspension apply to immediate suspension. No suspension, including an immediate suspension, will be open-ended.

In the case of an immediate suspension, parents will be notified, and arrangements made with them for the student to be collected. The school will have regard to its duty of care for the student. In no circumstances will a student be sent home from school without first notifying parents.

The period of suspension:

A student will not be suspended for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the Principal considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is needed in order to achieve a particular objective. If a suspension longer than three days is being proposed by the Principal, the matter will be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval, giving the circumstances and the expected outcomes. However, the Board of Management may wish to authorise the Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board, to impose a suspension of up to five days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion, subject to the guidance concerning such suspensions.

The Board of Management will normally place a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension imposed by it. The Board will formally review any proposal to suspend a student, where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days or more. Any such suspension is subject to appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

These provisions enable school authorities to give the student a reasonable time to reflect on their behaviour while avoiding undue loss of teaching time and loss of contact with the positive influences of school. They recognise the serious nature of the sanction of suspension and ensure that this seriousness is reflected in school procedures. The provisions mean that the Board of Management takes

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ultimate responsibility for sanctions of significant length, especially where such suspensions might reach twenty days in one school year and therefore might lead to an appeal.

Appeals

The Board of Management will offer an opportunity to appeal a Principal's decision to suspend a student. In the case of decisions to suspend made by the Board of Management, an appeals process may be provided by the Patron.

Section 29 Appeal

Where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days, the parents, may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the Education Act 1998, as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007.

At the time when parents are being formally notified of such a suspension, they and the student will be told about their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under section 29 of the Education Act 1998, and will be given information about how to appeal.

Implementing the suspension

The Principal will notify the parents and the student in writing of the decision to suspend

The letter will confirm:

- the period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- the reasons for the suspension
- any study programme to be followed
- the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents (for example, parents might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the Code of Behaviour)
- the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management
- the right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998, section 29).

Engaging with student and parents

Where a decision to suspend has been made, it can maximise the impact and value of suspension if the Principal or another staff member delegated by the Principal, meets with the parents, to emphasise their responsibility in helping the student to behave well, when the student returns to school and to offer help and guidance in this. Where parents do not agree to meet with the Principal, written notification will serve as notice to impose a suspension.

Grounds for removing a suspension

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A suspension may be removed if the Board of Management decides to remove the suspension for any reason or if the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science directs that it be removed following an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

After the suspension ends

A period of suspension will end on the date given in the letter of notification to the parents about the suspension.

Re-integrating the student

The school will have a plan to help the student to take responsibility for catching up on work missed. This will be the responsibility of the class teacher. This plan will help to avoid the possibility that suspension starts or amplifies a cycle of academic failure. Successful re-integration goes beyond academic work. A suspended student may feel angry or resentful about their suspension, and these feelings can trigger problems with reintegration which, in turn, may lead to further problem behaviour. Where possible, the school will arrange for a member of staff to provide support to the student during the re-integration process.

When any sanction, including suspension, is completed, a student will be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start. Although a record is kept of the behaviour and any sanction imposed, once the sanction has been completed the school should expect the same behaviour of this student as of all other students.

Records of investigation and decision-making

Formal written records will be kept of:

- the investigation (including notes of all interviews held)
- the decision-making process
- the decision and the rationale for the decision
- the duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension.

Report to the Board of Management

The Principal will report all suspensions to the Board of Management, with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension.

Report to NEWB

The Principal is required to report suspensions in accordance with the NEWB reporting guidelines (Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, section 21(4)(a)). This will be carried out by the HSCL who has responsibility for attendance.

Review of use of suspension

The Board of Management will review the use of suspension in the school at regular intervals to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies, that patterns of use are examined to identify factors that may be influencing behaviour in the school and to ensure that use of suspension is appropriate and effective.

Expulsion

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Expulsion from our school will be considered in extreme cases and will be carried out in accordance with Rule 130 (6) of the Rules for National Schools.

A student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

Authority to expel

The Board of Management of a recognised school has the authority to expel a student. As a matter of best practice, that authority is reserved to the Board of Management and will not be delegated

The grounds for expulsion

Expulsion will be a proportionate response to the student's behaviour. Expulsion of a student is a very serious step, and one that will only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. The school will have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a student including, as appropriate:

- meeting with parents and the student to try to find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour
- making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of their behaviour, if it should persist
- ensuring that all other possible options have been tried
- seeking the assistance of support agencies (e.g. National Educational Psychological Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education).

A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- the student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- the student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
- the student is responsible for serious damage to property.

The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension. In addition to factors such as the degree of seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour, a key difference is that, where expulsion is considered, school authorities have tried a series of other interventions, and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour.

Expulsion for a first offence

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a student should be expelled for a first offence. The kinds of behaviour that might result in a proposal to expel on the basis of a single breach of the code could include:

- a serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff
- actual violence or physical assault

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- supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school
- sexual assault.

Determining the appropriateness of expelling a student

Given the seriousness of expulsion as a sanction the Board of Management will undertake a very detailed review of a range of factors in deciding whether to expel a student.

Factors to consider before proposing to expel a student

The nature and seriousness of the behaviour

- What is the precise description of the behaviour?
- How persistent has the unacceptable behaviour been and over what period of time?
- Has the problem behaviour escalated, in spite of the interventions tried?

The context of the behaviour

- What are the circumstances of the incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. in class, in a particular teacher's class, in the yard, in a group)?
- What factors may have triggered or provoked incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. bullying, cultural or family factors)?
- Are there any factors that may be associated with the behaviour (e.g. particular home circumstances, special educational needs)?

The impact of the behaviour

- How are other students and staff affected by the student's behaviour?
- What is the impact of the behaviour on the teaching and learning of the class?

The interventions tried to date

- What interventions have been tried? Over what period?
- How have the interventions been recorded and monitored?
- What has been the result of these interventions?
- Have the parents been involved in finding a solution to the problem behaviour?
- Has the intervention of NEPS or other psychological assessment or counselling been sought, where appropriate?
- Is the student or parent involved with any support service and has this agency or support service been asked for help in solving this problem?

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- Has any other agency been asked for assistance (e.g. Child Guidance Clinic, Child and Adolescent Mental Health services)?
- Is the Board satisfied that no other intervention can be tried or is likely to help the student to change their behaviour?

Whether expulsion is a proportionate response

- Is the student's behaviour sufficiently serious to warrant expulsion?
- Is the standard being applied to judging the behaviour the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other student?

The possible impact of expulsion

- To what extent may expulsion exacerbate any social or educational vulnerability of the student?
- Will the student be able to take part in, and benefit from, education with their peers?
- In the case of a student who is in care, what might be the implications of expulsion for the care arrangements?

Expulsion will not be proposed for:

- poor academic performance
- poor attendance or punctuality
- minor breaches of the Code of Behaviour.

However, any behaviour that is persistently disruptive to learning or dangerous can be a serious matter. Behaviour will be examined in context to understand both the behaviour itself and the response or sanction that is most appropriate.

Procedures in respect of expulsion

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures as well as procedures prescribed under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, when proposing to expel a student. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include:

1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.
2. A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal.
3. Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing.
4. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.
5. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

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These procedures assume that the Board of Management is the decision-making body in relation to expulsions.

It is a matter for the Board of Management to decide which of the tasks involved in these procedural steps requires separate meetings and which tasks can be accomplished together in a single meeting, consistent with giving parents due notice of meetings and a fair and reasonable time to prepare for a Board hearing.

Step 1: A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.

In investigating an allegation, in line with fair procedures, the Principal will:

- inform the student and their parents about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion
- give parents and the student every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made and before a sanction is imposed.
- Parents will be informed in writing of the alleged misbehaviour and the proposed investigation in order to have a permanent record of having let them know. This also ensures that parents are very clear about what their son or daughter is alleged to have done. It serves the important function of underlining to parents the seriousness with which the school views the alleged misbehaviour.

Parents and the student will have every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made about the veracity of the allegation, and before a sanction is imposed. Where expulsion may result from an investigation, a meeting with the student and their parents is essential. It provides the opportunity for them to give their side of the story and to ask questions about the evidence of serious misbehaviour, especially where there is a dispute about the facts. It may also be an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction, and for the school to explore with parents how best to address the student's behaviour.

If a student and their parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal will write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and, failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the inappropriate behaviour. The school will record the invitation issued to parents and their response.

Step 2: A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal

Where the Principal forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion. The Principal will:

- inform the parents and the student that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- ensure that parents have records of: the allegations against the student; the investigation; and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parents
- notify the parents of the date of the hearing by the Board of Management and invite them to that hearing
- advise the parents that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management

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- ensure that parents have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

Step 3: Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing It is the responsibility of the Board to review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures. The Board will undertake its own review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case. It will ensure that no party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the Board's deliberations (for example, a member of the Board who may have made an allegation about the student).

Where the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student, it will hold a hearing. The Board meeting for the purpose of the hearing will be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures. At the hearing, the Principal and the parents, put their case to the Board in each other's presence. Each party will be allowed to question the evidence of the other party directly. The meeting may also be an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction. In the conduct of the hearing, the Board will take care to ensure that they are, and are seen to be, impartial as between the Principal and the student. Parents may wish to be accompanied at hearings and the Board will facilitate this, in line with good practice and Board procedures. After both sides have been heard, the Board will ensure that the Principal and parents are not present for the Board's deliberations.

Step 4: Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing Having heard from all the parties, it is the responsibility of the Board to decide whether or not the allegation is substantiated and, if so, whether or not expulsion is the appropriate sanction. Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion. The Board of Management will refer to National Educational Welfare Board reporting procedures for proposed expulsions. The student will not be expelled before the passage of twenty school days from the date on which the EWO receives this written notification.

The Board will inform the parents in writing about its conclusions and the next steps in the process. Where expulsion is proposed, the parents will be told that the Board of Management will now inform the Educational Welfare Officer.

Step 5: Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer within twenty days of receipt of a notification from a Board of Management of its opinion that a student should be expelled, the Educational Welfare Officer must:

- make all reasonable efforts to hold individual consultations with the Principal, the parents and the student, and anyone else who may be of assistance
- convene a meeting of those parties who agree to attend
- The purpose of the consultations and the meeting is to ensure that arrangements are made for the student to continue in education. These consultations may result in an agreement about an alternative intervention that would avoid expulsion. However, where the possibility of continuing in the school is not an option, at least in the short term, the consultation should focus on alternative educational possibilities.

In the interests of the educational welfare of the student, those concerned should come together with the Educational Welfare Officer to plan for the student's future education. Pending these consultations about the student's continued education, a Board of Management may take steps to ensure that good order is maintained and that the safety of students is secured. The Board may consider it appropriate to suspend a student during this time. Suspension will only be considered where there is a likelihood that the continued presence of the student during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other students or staff.

Step 6: Confirmation of the decision to expel

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Where the twenty-day period following notification to the Educational Welfare Officer has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management will formally confirm the decision to expel (this task might be delegated to the Chairperson and the Principal). Parents will be notified immediately that the expulsion will now proceed. Parents and the student will be told about the right to appeal and supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal. A formal record will be made of the decision to expel the student.

Appeals

A parent, may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science. An appeal may also be brought by the National Educational Welfare Board on behalf of a student.

Review of use of expulsion

The Board of Management will review the use of expulsion in the school at regular intervals to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies, that patterns of use are examined to identify factors that may be influencing behaviour in the school, and to ensure that expulsion is used appropriately.

Performance Criteria:

- (a) School Code of Behaviour is adhered to.
- (b) Parents, pupils and teachers are satisfied and attend school in a safe and happy environment.
- (c) Children show respect for each other and all staff members and visitors.
- (d) Children are confident in approaching / confiding in a teacher when they have a problem.

Person/s or Group responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy:

- (a) Teachers
- (b) Principal
- (c) Parents
- (d) B.O.M.

Person/s or Group responsible for reviewing this policy:

Same as point 9.

Review of Policy:

Signed by: _____ Chairperson of Board of Management

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Complaints Procedure

Introduction

Only those complaints about teachers which are written and signed by parents/guardians of pupils may be investigated formally by the Board of Management, except where those complaints are deemed by the Board to be:

- (i) on matters of professional competence and which are to be referred to the Department of Education;
- (ii) frivolous or vexatious complaints and complaints which do not impinge on the work of a teacher in a school;
- (iii) complaints in which either party has recourse to law or to another existing procedure. Unwritten complaints not in the above categories may be processed informally as set out in Stage 1 of this procedure.

Stage 1

- 1.1 A parent/guardian who wishes to make a complaint should, unless there are local arrangements to the contrary, approach the class teacher with a view to resolving the complaint.
- 1.2 Where the parent/guardian is unable to resolve the complaint with the class teacher she/he should approach the Principal Teacher with a view to resolving it.
- 1.3 If the complaint is still unresolved the parent/guardian should raise the matter with the Chairperson of the Board of Management with a view to resolving it.

Stage 2

- 2.1 If the complaint is still unresolved and the parent/guardian wishes to pursue the matter further she/he should lodge the complaint in writing with the Chairperson of the Board of Management.
- 2.2 The Chairperson should bring the precise nature of the written complaint to the notice of the teacher and seek to resolve the matter between the parties within 5 days of receipt of the written complaint.

Stage 3

- 3.1 If the complaint is not resolved informally, the Chairperson should, subject to the general authorisation of the Board and except in those cases where the chairperson deems the particular authorisation of the Board to be required:
 - (a) supply the teacher with a copy of the written complaint; *and*
 - (b) arrange a meeting with the teacher and, where applicable, the Principal Teacher with a view to resolving the complaint. Such a meeting should take place within 10 days of receipt of the written complaint.

Stage 4

- 4.1 If the complaint is still not resolved the Chairperson should make a formal report to the Board within 10 days of the meeting referred to in 3.2 (b).
- 4.2 If the Board considers that the complaint is not substantiated the teacher and the complainant should be so informed within 3 days of the Board meeting.
- 4.3 If the Board considers that the complaint is substantiated or that it warrants further investigation it proceeds as follows:
 - (a) The teacher should be informed that the investigation is proceeding to the next stage;
 - (b) The teacher should be supplied with a copy of any written evidence in support of the complaint;
 - (c) The teacher should be requested to supply a written statement to the Board in response to the complaint;
 - (d) The teacher should be afforded an opportunity to make a presentation of case to the Board. The teacher would be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting;
 - (e) The Board may arrange a meeting with the complainant if it considers such to be required. The complainant would be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a friend at any such meeting;
 - (f) The meeting of the Board of Management referred to in (d) and (e) will take place within 10 days of the meeting referred to in 3.1 (b).

Stage 5

- 5.1 When the Board has completed its investigation, the Chairperson should convey the decision of the Board in writing to the teacher and the complainant within 5 days of the meeting of the Board.

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5.2 The decision of the Board shall be final.

5.3 This Complaints Procedure shall be reviewed after three years;

5.4 CPSMA or INTO may withdraw from this agreement having given the other party 3 months' notice of intention to do so.

In this agreement 'days' means school days.