



The Board of Management recognises its duties to provide a safe place of work and a safe system of work for its employees and for students. The Board is committed to ensuring that good order and discipline is maintained in the school and that the safety of all employees and students is safeguarded. This policy statement is to be considered in conjunction with the Code of Behaviour and other relevant policy statements. *All references to Parents in this document, apply also to Guardians where relevant.*

Authority to Suspend

Under the Articles of Management for Secondary Schools the Principal has the authority to suspend any student for a limited period of time. The Board has delegated to the Principal the authority to suspend a student for a maximum of 5 consecutive days. The school considers suspension to be a serious sanction and the Board of Management will be informed of all suspensions. Suspension may, at the discretion of the Principal, be deferred until the outcome of an investigation is completed.

Principles governing Suspension

The process of suspension is governed by fair procedures:

- a) the right to be heard
- b) the right to impartiality

Procedure relating to a Suspension

1. In the event of a student being in serious breach of the Code of Behaviour a suspension may be imposed. An investigation of the incident will be carried out. The Principal, or Principal's delegate, will inform the parents of the offence. The student and parents will be invited to a meeting and given an opportunity to respond.
2. If a student is being suspended the Principal will notify the parents and the student in writing about this decision, including details as follows:
 - Date(s) and length of suspension
 - Reason(s) for the suspension
 - Work the student may do during the period of suspension
 - Provision for appeal
3. A copy of this letter will be retained in the student's file. The letter may, in addition, outline behaviour expected on the student's return to school, as well as conditions which the student will be bound to, on their return to school. These conditions may include the removal of privileges in relation to any or all school outings.
4. Should the parents decide to appeal the decision to the Board of Management a date and time for the Appeal Hearing is arranged
5. All appeals, stating the reason for such appeal, must be lodged in writing with the Secretary of the Board of Management, within 7 days of the date of the suspension letter.
6. Parents have the right to be present at the Appeal Hearing
7. If attending, they must inform the Secretary of the Board of Management within 2 days of the meeting
8. Parents are required to meet the Principal, or the Principal's delegate, on the student's return to school after a suspension.

Immediate Suspension

In exceptional circumstances immediate suspension may be required if the incident is of a serious nature and/or the student's continuing presence in the school may pose a risk to health and safety, school discipline or the effective running of the school. In such a case Parents will be contacted at the earliest opportunity and asked to remove the student from the school premises. A suspension may be considered for any other reason as deemed relevant by the Principal at the time including misbehaviour of any nature in the run up to the State Examinations that may disrupt the education of examination students.



Suspension during State Examinations

Suspension during state examinations may be considered where there is;

- a threat to the good order of conduct of the examination,
- a threat to the safety of other students and personnel,
- a threat to the right of other students to do their examination in a calm atmosphere.

Duration and Severity of Suspension

In deciding the duration of the suspension the Principal shall take into account the student's previous record. The Principal may decide that a longer period of suspension is warranted due to behaviour determined by the Principal to be serious. In this instance the suspension of a student pending a Board of Management meeting may be imposed.

The Education Welfare Officer will be informed of suspensions

- where the period of suspension is for 6 or more consecutive days
- where the aggregate number of days on which a student who is less than 16 years of age or has not completed three years of post-primary education has been suspended in any school year is 20 or more days.

Right to Appeal

When a suspension is being imposed parents will be informed of the right to appeal. An appeal will automatically put the suspension on hold until the Board of Management considers the matter and makes a decision, unless the Principal decides that an immediate suspension is warranted. Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, where a suspension(s) imposed on a student, in any one school year, exceeds 20 days the parents of the student, or the student if aged eighteen years of over, have a right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills. Parents and students over 18 years of age will be advised on this right and given information on how to appeal. An Appeal Form may be obtained from Section 29 Appeals Administrative Unit, Friar's Mill Road, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath.

The National Educational Welfare Board may also bring an appeal, on behalf of a student. An appeal must be lodged within 42 calendar days to the Department of Education and Skills.

Return to school following Suspension

The student and parents will meet with the Principal or the Principal's delegate on the day of return to discuss behaviour expected and plans for catching up on missed work. To support the reintegration, the student will meet with their Year Head and/or Guidance Counsellor and/or school Chaplain. The meeting may address steps the student should take in order to correct their behaviour and to promote positive behaviour in the future. Students on return from suspension are required to undergo a period of monitoring ('On Report'). This support structure allows the student a fresh start with the opportunity to demonstrate positive and co-operative behaviour.

Contract of Good Behaviour

Where a student has accumulated more than one suspension, or has been suspended for a serious offence as determined by the Principal, the student may be required to sign a Contract of Good Behaviour. This contract will lay down conditions specifically deemed necessary by the Board of Management for the continued attendance of the student in the school and the consequences to be faced should these conditions be broken.

Signed: Eileen Mannon Date: October 22nd 2020
Chairperson, Board of Management