

St. Nathy's School Policies - Effective: September 2010

SUSPENSION & EXPULSION POLICY

The following policy must be read in conjunction with the *school's Code of Behaviour*.

1. Suspension:

1.1 Collaboration between the Board of Management, school staff, students and parents is an important feature of behaviour management in schools. All should be fully aware of the suspension procedure and its place in the context of this school's Code of Behaviour. In this regard, all concerned should be aware that a suspension can only be imposed for a breach of the school's Code of Behaviour.

1.2 Suspension is only one strategy within a school's Code of Behaviour. St. Nathy's College will work with parents with a view to assisting a suspended student to rejoin the school community as quickly as possible.

1.3 When all other strategies have been exhausted, suspension can allow students time to reflect on their behaviour, to acknowledge and accept responsibility for the behaviour which led to the suspension in the first instance and to accept responsibility for changing their behaviour to meet the school's expectations in the future. It can also allow time for school personnel to plan appropriate support for the student to assist with successful re-entry.

1.4 Suspensions may occur after the Principal has:

- a)** ensured all discipline options under the Code of Behaviour have been applied and documented.
- b)** ensured that all appropriate support personnel have been involved.
- c)** ensured that the opportunity for discussion has been afforded the student and parent(s) regarding specific misbehaviour which the school considered unacceptable, and which may lead to suspension.
- d)** provided a warning (if appropriate) detailing these misbehaviours, as well as clear expectations of what is required of the student in the future and the consequences of non-compliance.
- e)** recording all actions taken.

1.5 Students may be suspended as follows pending investigation and /or discussion with parents.

This list is not exhaustive:

- a)** For serious misbehaviour.
- b)** For an unacceptable level of repeated misdemeanours.
- c)** For bullying, insulting, aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards others in the school, or when identifiable with the school.
- d)** For the supply/possession/use of alcohol and or illegal drugs.
- e)** For the supply/possession/use of weapons/dangerous materials/ substances.
- f)** For behaviour that may be a danger to self or others, under the terms of the Health and Safety Act 1989.
- g)** For refusal to take direction from members of staff which may result in the student being a danger to self or others.
- h)** For racist behaviour and/or the supply/possession/use of racist material.
- i)** For behaviour that is contrary to the terms of the Equal Status Act 2000.
- j)** For sexual harassment and/or the possession/supply/use of pornographic material.

1.6 Pursuant to subsection 1.1 above St. Nathy's College, through its Board of Management, affirms the right of the Principal to suspend a student or students with immediate effect.

1.7 The Principal has the right to suspend a student or students for breaches of the school's Code of Behaviour for a maximum of five consecutive school days without recourse to the Board of Management.

1.8 All suspensions will be notified to the Board of Management at the earliest opportunity.

1.9 Where there are repeated instances of misbehaviour, the parents shall be requested to attend the school, or other suitable location, for discussion. If the parents and/or the students do not give an undertaking that the student will behave in an acceptable way in the future, the student may be suspended for a period to be determined by the Principal or by the Board of Management, as appropriate.

1.10 Parents of students enrolled at the school shall be informed of their right to appeal suspensions to the Board of Management.

1.11 The formal letter of notification of suspension to parents should be understandable to the

student and to the parent(s) and should include:

- a)** Notice of suspension
- b)** Effective date of suspension
- c)** Duration of suspension
- d)** Reasons for suspension
- e)** Expectations of student while on suspension (study programme may be attached)
- f)** Importance of parental assistance in resolving the matter
- g)** A statement that the student is under the care and responsibility of the parent(s) while on suspension.
- h)** A statement that the Educational Welfare Board has been informed (if the suspension is of six days or more duration, or if the student has been suspended for more than 20 days during the school year to date).
- i)** Information on appeal rights.
- j)** Requirements which need to be in place when the student returns.
- k)** If consideration is being given to proceedings to expulsion.

1.12 The Educational Welfare Officer will be informed of suspensions as follows:-

- a)** Where the period of suspension is for 6 or more consecutive school days.
- b)** Where the aggregate number of days on which a student has been suspended/absent in any school year is 20 or more days.

1.13 St. Nathy's College will comply with Section 23(2) d of the Education Act 1998 by informing parents and students of the grounds for removing a suspension.

Such grounds include:

- a)** Successful appeal.
- b)** The Principal/Board of Management may agree that another sanction may be applied after discussion with the parents(s).
- c)** When, and if, new circumstances come to light.
- d)** Other relevant factors.