

Tallaght Community National School

Code of Behaviour

Introduction

Tallaght Community National School promotes core values of Excellence in Education, Care, Equality, Community and Respect. It seeks to do this by promoting attitudes and behaviours which will help children contribute positively to their own personal development and to the school community.

Standards of Behaviour

The standard of behaviour we aspire to for our entire school community reflects our core values. It is underpinned by the following concepts;

- Love, care and empathy for others help us to understand, plan and make choices.
- Positive, respectful relationships create the opportunity for positive, respectful behaviour.
- Everyone is responsible for their own choices and actions. We can only control ourselves.
- Rules, routine and discipline are a form of care.

This policy has four elements;

Expectations – What we expect from each other as members of the school community.

Rules – These are relevant, clear, and concise.

Rewards – Our system of rewards is in place to encourage the children to follow the rules.

Consequences – Children who do not follow the rules must take responsibility for their choices.

When and where child behaviour will be subject to the Code of Behaviour

The Code of Behaviour applies at all times during the school day both on school premises and outside. The standards and rules apply to all trips outside of school irrespective of the location and duration, when the child is still the responsibility of the school.

Where a child is alleged to have engaged in serious misbehaviour outside of school, when not under the care or responsibility of the school, a judgement would have to be made whether there is a clear connection with the school and a demonstrable impact on its work, before the Code of Behaviour applies (eg. perhaps the child was wearing the school uniform). The school authorities may need to get legal advice were the situation complex.

Expectations

Setting expectations for staff, children and parents gives everyone in the school community a shared understanding of our ultimate goals.

Setting expectations will help to us foster our values of Excellence in Education, Care, Equality, Community and Respect.

Staff

- Internalise and apply the four concepts outlined in our *Standards of Behaviour*.
- Communicate clearly with other staff, children and parents.
- Model good behaviour.
- Teach and revise school expectations, rules, rewards and consequences with children.
- Consistently implement school reward and consequence system.
- Curriculum Planning
 - o Use of variety of methodologies.
 - o Differentiation.
 - o Applying Tallaght CNS Additional Needs Policy.
- Manage classroom and yard using whole school approaches including;
 - o Morning Check In
 - o Establishment of routine.
 - o Developing positive, respectful relationships.
 - o Chill out zone.
 - o Assembly weekly awards.
 - o Visual timetable.
 - o Movement breaks.
 - o Record Keeping.

Children

- Follow the classroom and yard rules.
- Respect everyone in our school community.
- Talk to adults and try to explain your issue.
- Take responsibility for your own choices.

Parents

- Maintain good two way communication with the school.
- Ensure their child comes to school on time and prepared for the day.
- Ensure their child wears the school uniform.
- Inform the teacher, in confidence, of issues that might impact on their child's behaviour in school.
- Inform the school if their child is absent.
- Model the standards that children are asked to respect.
- Ensure that contact numbers and addresses are kept up to date.
- Attend school events and parent/teacher meetings

Rules

Classroom Rules

- Be kind.
- Work hard, try your best and let others do the same.
- Stay in your seat.
- Listen to the person speaking.
- Follow instructions.

Yard Rules

- Be kind.
- Line up quietly.
- Respect school property.
- Follow instructions.

Rewards

Incentives, motivators and rewards can play an important role in encouraging children to reach their full potential. In the first instance, building a positive and lasting relationship will always incentivise children to behave positively with others.

The emphasis in Tallaght CNS will be on motivating children to do the right thing because it is the right thing to do and because of the feelings of achievement and self-worth. Intrinsic motivators are ones which instill a sense of self-worth and feeling within the child that they have achieved something without being given something physical to reward behaviour. This in turn will increase motivation to complete work to the best of their ability.

However, we also acknowledge the need for more extrinsic, physical and tangible motivators (e.g stickers, certificates) and rewards for groups and individual children.

In general, teachers will adhere to using the more intrinsic incentives, instilling a sense of respect and responsibility for positive behaviours in the first instance. Where tangible rewards and prizes are used for exhibiting positive behaviours, such rewards and prizes should not be deducted for undesirable behaviours.

Examples of intrinsic/extrinsic rewards

<u>Intrinsic</u>	<u>Extrinsic</u>
- Verbal praise	- Stickers
- Table ready first, goes out first	- Reward chart
- Good note home	- Table points
- Quiet word of recognition	- Dojo points
- Good relationships	- Student of the Week
- Enjoyable and engaging lessons	- Value Awards
- Race to get tables tidied	- Certificates
- Extra responsibilities in class/school	- Lucky dip
- Assembly	- Group marbles
- Phone call home	- Whole class working towards something

Teachers strive to draw attention to appropriate behaviour before commenting on inappropriate behaviour. This strategy often has the desired effect of achieving appropriate behaviour.

Assembly

Assembly is a forum for recognising good behaviour and good work ethic among children. All teachers are asked to focus on the 'positive' – in terms of work and to promote positive behaviour. During assembly awards are given out for 'working hard' and 'being kind'.

Consequences

The objective of a sanction is to help the child to understand the consequences of their behaviour and take responsibility for changing it. Even minor breaches of the Code of Behaviour can be disruptive particularly if they are persistent. Serious misbehaviour can have damaging and long-lasting effects including the disruption of the child's own learning and the learning of others. It can cause distress and anxiety or even pose a threat to the safety of children and teachers. The system of consequences is taught to all children. They are clearly understood and consistently applied.

The consequences are:

- Immediate
- Focus on behaviour, not on the child as a person
- Are perceived as fair.
- Geared to give an opportunity for putting things right.

Afterwards:

- Every day is a fresh start.
- The slate is wiped clean.

Escalation of consequences

- Verbal warning
- Written Warning
 - o Yellow Card
- Time – out in class
 - o Child given reflection sheet
- Time out in another class
 - o Red Card
 - o Red Card sent home to be signed
- Principal
- Referral to Board of Management

Example of yellow card behaviour	Example of red card behaviour
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Not following instructions- Interruptions- Out of seat on wet days- Breaking class rules- Not lining up- Bad language Body language (Verbal or physical)- Distracting others.- Leaving place without permission.- Leaving play area without permission.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a pupil or member of staff, (which may include kicking, fighting, punching, deliberate tripping or spitting at someone)- Possession of a dangerous weapon.- Leaving the classroom/ school building without permission- Repeated incidences of bullying.- Serious damage to property / vandalism.- Verbal abuse, insulting another child, name – calling, jeering another's background or parents, sexual orientation, slurs etc.- Racial / cultural / sexual remarks.- Defiance to a staff member.- Refusing to co – operate / disobeying instructions.- Inciting others to fight- Repeated incidences of minor misbehaviour

Incidents on yard

Teachers can send children to the time-out area in the yard for misbehaving and report such to the class teacher. The class teacher can then make a decision on the consequence for the choice made by the child.

Principal

- Step 1;
 - o The child is sent to the Principal, having received a report from relevant staff member and child's name is logged in the Principal's book. The child may then be put on report. This is a system whereby the child's progress is monitored for 1 week. The principal will communicate with the child's teacher each day, the teacher will keep a written record of the child's progress.
- Step 2;
 - o If no progress is made the Principal will call the child's parents and discuss the child's behaviour. The child is then put on report for a further week.
- Step 3
 - o If no improvements are made the child's parents are called into the school for a meeting with the child's teacher and principal. At this point records and reports are shown to parents. Interventions and possible consequences such as in school or full suspension will be discussed.

Children with Individual Needs

All children are subject to the Code of Behaviour. However, the school recognises that individual children, due to known or unknown reasons and diagnosis, may need additional support in regulating their emotions and their own behaviours.

Tallaght CNS recognises that there may be children in both mainstream and autism classes with social, emotional and other needs which may manifest themselves as Behaviours of Concern. Not all additional needs are visible or immediately obvious. The Code of Positive Behaviour will ensure that individuality, additional needs and equality are accommodated, while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption free environment. The needs of pupils are treated in strictest confidence when discussing with parents and guardians.

Behaviours of Concern

In the case of serious Behaviours of Concern where it is deemed that there is a Health and Safety risk to staff or students' Parents/Guardians will be contacted to collect the child from school.

The school may choose to take the following actions;

- School staff will complete an incident report
- School staff will reflect on the incident using the ABC model
- A risk assessment will be carried out in case of the Behaviour of Concern reoccurs
- An Individual Behaviour Plan may be devised and implemented
- The school may choose to seek the advice/support of the NCSE, NEPS, Tusla, the HSE and any other outside agencies which may be involved with the child
- The schools Care Team (including SET, HSCL and SCP) may become involved with the child

In-School Suspension

On occasion, if it is felt beneficial, a child, at the discretion of the Deputy or Principal, a child may be put on an 'in-school suspension' for up to 3 days. This involves the child being sent to another class for the duration of his/her suspension with work. This system may be used if the child needs to be removed from class. In this instance the in-school suspension may begin after a serious misbehaviour/offence or repeated minor misbehaviour. It may also be used if it is felt that the child would not benefit from a full suspension for example if there was a known lack of supervision at home or if the child wants to be suspended. Parents/Guardians will be informed of the house suspension and asked to come in to discuss the seriousness of the offence.

Child goes straight to appropriate class when they arrive in school the next day. A folder of work that they can do with little/no help, along with pencils etc. should be sent to the class by the class teacher who will be ready for their arrival. They should remain with that class and have no contact with their own class for the remainder of the day.

If the child is in the senior end of the school, they will be placed on in school suspension with a junior class, therefore will be on junior yard. In exceptional circumstances a child may be kept off yard. In this event they will be brought to the yard at a different time for some movement breaks with an SNA in lieu of yard time.

The child should be sitting on a table on his/her own. He/she will be treated by the class teacher in the same manner as child on a sanction i.e. given very little attention. Other children should also be discouraged from giving them attention. The child is not given jobs or allowed engage in fun activities with the class.

Resource teachers should continue to take the child for any 1:1 support but refrain from taking the child for resource groups if their presence would be disruptive or counterproductive i.e. a child who has done something serious should not be participate in rewarding activities in a resource group during this suspension.

Reduced Timetable

Any use of a reduced timetable will follow the procedures set out in Circular: 0047/2021: Guidelines for the use of Reduced School Days in Schools.

A reduced timetable may be put in place temporarily to help support a child to get to a point where they are settled and calm in school and in a better position for learning to occur. A reduced timetable in this instance means the child's day will be built up gradually – e.g. in increments of half an hour –with the intention being the child would return to a full day at school.

A reduced timetable may also be used as an alternative to expulsion, where a child's behaviour is also posing a disruption or danger to others but where suspension has proved ineffective yet full expulsion would not benefit the child. In this instance – perhaps a child at the end of 6th class – the aim is to maximize the child's learning during this shorter day – resource teachers may change timetables to facilitate, etc.

Suspension

In the event of seriously violent or threatening behaviour causing a risk to the safety of the child himself/herself or the safety of other children or staff or if the child's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other children or the child has been responsible for serious damage to property full immediate suspension can be enforced by the principal.

Suspension may vary from a minor fixed period (one or two days) or a major fixed period (three to five days), depending on the severity of the misdemeanour.

Examples of possible suspendable offences;

- Leaving the school building or the group when out on school trips
- Violent, aggressive or threatening behaviour towards staff or children
- Throwing furniture
- Physically attacking other children/adults
- Serious damage to children's/staff/school property
- Use of abusive language to staff
- Continuous defiance/ refusal to follow staff instruction
- Persistent bullying
- Bringing penknives/other dangerous objects into school
- Causing injury in yard to children/staff through rough play
- Theft of a serious nature
- Bringing illegal or controlled substances into school
- Any behaviour which endangers the child himself/herself, other children or adults

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension

Fair Procedures

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures when proposing a suspension. The right to be heard means the child/parent or guardian has the right to:

- Know that the alleged misbehaviour is being investigated
- Know the details of the allegations being made and any other information that will be taken into account
- Know how the issue will be decided
- Respond to the allegations
- Be heard by the decision making body if the sanction is of a serious nature
- Ask questions of the other party or witnesses where there is a dispute about facts if the sanction is of a serious nature.

The right to impartiality means the child has the right to:

- An absence of bias in the decision-maker
- Impartiality in the investigation and the decision-making
- Fair procedures apply to the investigation of alleged misbehaviour & the process of decision making as to whether the child did engage in the misbehaviour
- Fair procedures take into account the seriousness of the alleged misbehaviour & have regard to what is reasonable in the context of the school
- The degree of formality required depends on the gravity of the misbehaviour & the seriousness of the possible sanction
- Children & their parents must be fully informed about an allegation & the processes used to investigate & decide the matter
- Children & their parents must be given an opportunity to respond to an allegation before a decision is made and before a serious sanction is imposed

- Suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing the concern

Factors considered before suspending a child:

- What is the precise description of the behaviour?
- How persistent has the unacceptable behaviour been?
- Has the problem escalated, in spite of interventions tried?
- What are the circumstances of the incidents of serious misbehaviour?
- What factors may have triggered the incidents of serious misbehaviour?
- What is the age, stage of development and cognitive ability of the child?
- Are there any factors that may be associated with the behaviour? (i.e.: provocation or special educational needs).
- How are other children and staff affected by the behaviour?
- What impact has this behaviour on the teaching and learning of the class?
- Does the behaviour have a particular or greater impact on some children or teachers?
- Does the child understand the impact of their behaviour on others?
- What interventions have been tried? Over what period?
- How have the interventions been recorded and monitored?
- What have been the results of these interventions?
- Have the parents been involved in finding a solution to the problematic behaviour?
- Have the interventions of NEPS or other psychological assessment or counselling been sought, where appropriate?
- Any other interventions?
- Any other agencies asked for assistance?
- Does the child'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 child?
- Will suspension allow additional or alternative interventions to be made?
- Will the suspension help the child to change the inappropriate behaviour?
- How will suspension help teachers or other children affected by the behaviour?
- Will suspension exacerbate any educational vulnerability of the child?

Suspension should

- Enable the school to set behavioural goals with the child and their parents.
- Give the school staff an opportunity to plan other interventions.
- Impress on the child, their peers in school and their parents the seriousness of the behaviour

In the event of suspension the school will:

- Inform the children and their parents about the suspension. The principal (or deputy in the event of her absence) will contact parents by telephone to inform them of their child's suspension. Depending on the timeframe and time of day of the incident, parents may be invited into the school in advance of the suspension to speak to the principal
- A letter will be given to the child's parents informing them of the reason for and duration of the suspension and arrangements for their return to school

Parents will be required to accompany the child upon their return to school to meet the principal to reaffirm the child's commitment to the school Code of Behaviour.

In the case of immediate suspension, parents will be notified and arrangements made for the child to be collected. If parents /guardians cannot be contacted and the welfare of the child or other children is a concern TUSLA may be contacted for advice.

Except in exceptional circumstances a child will not be suspended for more than three days. If it is considered necessary to suspend for longer than three days to achieve a particular objective, the

matter will be referred to the Board of Management.

A suspension of up to five days can be imposed by the Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson, where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion. Where parents do not agree or are unavailable to meet with the Principal, written notification will serve as notice to impose a suspension.

Written notification of implementing a suspension;

The Principal will notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the child 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 (teacher will assign work to avoid falling behind class work).
- The arrangements for returning to school, including their commitment to the Code of Behaviour.
- The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management/ETB.
- The right to appeal to the Secretary of the Department of Education and Science (*Education Act, 1998, section 29*)

It will maximise the impact and value of the suspension if the Principal or another delegated staff member meets with the parents to emphasise their role and responsibility in helping the child to behave well when the child returns to school and to offer help, support and guidance in this.

The Board would normally place a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension. The Board will formally review any proposal to suspend a child where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the child has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days or more. These procedures enable the school to give the child a reasonable time to reflect on his/her 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 ultimate responsibility for sanctions of significant length, especially where such suspensions might reach twenty days in one school year.

TUSLA, the Child and Family Agency, must also be informed where suspensions have reached over 20 days cumulatively

Appeals:

Where a total number of days for which the child has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days, the parents, or a child aged over eighteen years, 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 the parents are formally notified of such a suspension, they and the child will be told of 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 on how to appeal.

Grounds for removing a suspension:

A suspension will 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:

The school has a plan to help the child to take responsibility for catching up on the work missed, thus avoiding a possibility of academic failure. However successful reintegration goes beyond academic work. A member of the care team will provide support for the child during the reintegration process to discuss and help deal with any feelings of anger or resentment about their suspension.

As with any sanction, when completed a child has a fresh start. Although a record is kept of the behaviour and any sanction imposed, once the sanction has been completed, the school will expect the same behaviour of this child as of all other children.

Records and Reports:

Formal written records will be kept of:

- The investigation (including notes of all interviews held.)
- The decision making process.
- The decision and 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. The Principal will report suspensions in accordance with the new NEWB reporting guidelines (Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, section 21(4)(a))- if a child is suspended for 6 days or more in a school year or if a child is absent for an aggregate of 20 days in a school year.

Review of use of suspension:

The Board of Management will review the use of suspension in the school at regular intervals to ensure that it 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 the use of suspension is appropriate and effective.

Expulsion:

A child is expelled from school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him / her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000. The Board of Management has the authority to expel a child. This authority is reserved to the Board of Management and should not be delegated.

Expulsion is a very serious step and is only taken by a Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. The school will take significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a child including, as appropriate:

- Meeting with the parents and the child to try to find ways of helping the child change their behaviour.
- Making sure the child understands the possible consequences of their behaviour, if it should persist.
- Ensure that all other possible options have been tried.
- Contact the SENO (Special Educational Needs Organiser) and the EWO (Education Welfare Officer) to see if they can provide supports/advice
- Seeking the assistance of support services (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 child requires serious grounds such as that:

- The child's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or the teaching process.
- The child's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety.
- The child 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, the school authorities have tried a series of interventions, and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the child's behaviour.

Automatic Expulsion:

The Board of Management may decide that particular named behaviours incur expulsion as a sanction. Due process and fair procedures still apply.

Expulsion for a first offence:

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

- A serious threat of violence against another child or member of staff.
- Actual violence or physical assault.
- Supplying illegal drugs to other children in the school.
- Sexual assault.

Factors considered before proposing to expel a child:

- What is the precise nature of the behaviour?
- How persistent has the unacceptable behaviour been and over what period of time?
- Has the problem escalated, in spite of the interventions tried?
- What are the circumstances of the incidents of serious behaviour (e.g. in class, in the yard or 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 which may be associated with the behaviour (e.g. particular home circumstances, special educational needs?)
- How are other children and staff affected by the child's behaviour?
- What is the impact of the behaviour on the teaching and learning in the class?
- What interventions have been tried? Over what period?
- How have the interventions been recorded and monitored?
- What have been the results of these interventions?
- Have the parents been involved in finding a solution to the problem behaviour?
- Have the intervention of NEPS or other psychological assessment or counselling been sought, where appropriate?
- Is the child of 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 Mental Health Services?)
- Is the Board satisfied that no other intervention can be tried or is likely to help the child to change their behaviour?
- Is the child'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 child?
- To what extent may expulsion exacerbate any social or educational vulnerability of the child?
- Will the child be able to take part in, and benefit from, education with their peers?
- In the case of a child who is in care, what might be the implications of expulsion for the care arrangements?

Procedures in respect of expulsion:

Fair procedures are followed as well as procedures prescribed under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, when proposing to expel a child.

When a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include:

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

It is a matter for each Board of Management to decide which of the tasks involved in these procedural steps requires separate meetings and which of the 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.

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 parents and the child about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
- Give parents and the child every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made and before a sanction is imposed.

The 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/ 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.

The parents will be given every opportunity to respond to a complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made about the veracity of the allegation, and before a sanction is imposed. A meeting with the child and 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 give their case for lessening the sanction, and for the school to explore with parents how best to address the child's behaviour.

If a child 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.

A recommendation by the Board of Management by the Principal. Where the Principal forms the view, based on the alleged behaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal will make a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion. The Principal will:

- Inform the parents and the children that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion.
- Ensure that the parents have records of: The allegations against the child, 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 the 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.
- Ensure that the parents have enough notice to allow them for the hearing.

Consideration by the board of Management of the Principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing:

It is the responsibility of the Board of Management 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 deliberation (for example, a member of the Board who may have made an allegation about the child.)

Where a Board of Management decides to consider expelling a child, 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, or a child aged 18 years or over, put their case to the Board in each other's presence. Each party should 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 must take care to ensure that they are, and are seen to be, impartial as between the Principal and the child. Parents may wish to be accompanied at hearings and the Board should 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.

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 child should be expelled, the Board will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion. (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24(1)). The Board of Management will refer to National Educational Welfare Board reporting procedures for purposed expulsions. The child cannot be expelled before the passage of twenty school days from the date on which the EWO receives this written notification (Education (Welfare) Act 2000,s24(1)).

The Board will inform the parents in writing about its consultations 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.

Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer:

Within twenty days of the receipt of a notification from the Board of Management of its opinion that a child should be expelled, the Educational Welfare Officer must:

- Make all reasonable effort to hold individual consultations with the Principal, the parents and the child, and anyone else who may be of assistance.
- Convene a meeting of those parties who agree to attend (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, section 24).

The purpose of the consultations and meetings is to ensure that arrangements are made for the child to continue in education. These consultations may result in 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 interest of the educational welfare of the child, those concerned should come together with the Educational Welfare Officer to plan for the child's future education.

Pending these consultations about the child's continued education, a Board of Management may take steps to ensure that good order is maintained and that the safety of children is secured (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24(5)). The Board may consider it appropriate to suspend a child during this time. Suspension will only be considered where there is likelihood that the continued presence of the child during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other children or staff.

Confirmation of the decision to expel:

Where the twenty day period following notification to the educational Welfare Officer has elapsed and the Board of Management remains of the view that the child 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 children will be told of the right to appeal and supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal. A formal record is made of the decision to expel the child.

Appeals:

A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998 section 29). An appeal may also be brought by the National Welfare Board on behalf of the child. The appeals process under section 29 of the Education Act 1998 begins with the provision of mediation by a mediator nominated by the Appeals Committee (Department of Education and Science). For further details about the Appeals process, including requirements for documentation, and the steps in the process, refer to current DES guidance.

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.

Dated: _____

Principal: _____

Chairperson: _____