

SUSPENSION POLICY

The Board of Management of Pobalscoil Chorca Dhuibhne has agreed the following procedures in relation to the suspension of a student.

1. The purpose of suspending a student from school is to provide the student with time for reflection, to emphasise the seriousness of specific misbehaviours and to give staff time to plan ways of helping the student to change unacceptable behaviour.
2. The Board of Management has delegated authority to the Principal to suspend a student for a period up to and including three days. If a suspension for longer than three days is being proposed the matter must be referred to the Board. In such a case, having sought approval from the Chairperson of the Board, the Principal may suspend for up to five days to allow for time to convene a Board meeting. The Board will not normally impose a suspension of more than 10 consecutive school days.
3. Suspension will be imposed for any serious breaches of the Code of Behaviour. Such misbehaviour may include:
 - A threat to the safety of others.
 - Disruption of teaching and learning
 - Deliberate damage to property
 - Misuse of technology
 - Substance abuse
 - Persistent breaches of the Code of Behaviour which have not been rectified by the normal school interventions.
4. Before a suspension is imposed the Principal will have considered the seriousness and context of the behaviour; the impact of the behaviour on the other members of the school community; the interventions that have already been tried with the student involved; the likely impact of the suspension on the particular student. Care will be taken to ensure that the academic progress of the student will not be adversely affected by the suspension.
5. Suspension Procedures:
Following a thorough investigation of the incident, if the Principal decides it is appropriate to suspend a student, the following procedure will be used:
 - The student will be informed and given an opportunity to respond.
 - The student's parents/guardians will be contacted and the matter will be explained. The suspension will not be implemented until the parents /guardians have been fully informed both of the circumstances of the incident and of their right to appeal the decision to suspend to the Board of Management.
 - The parents will also receive notification of the details of the suspension in writing.
 - If the suspension is to take immediate effect, as in cases involving health and safety, parents may be asked to collect the student from school. The student will remain in a supervised area of the school until collected.

- All suspension decisions will be notified to the Board of Management and suspensions of more than 5 days duration will be notified to the NEWB.

6. Returning to school after a suspension:

- Schools will ensure that a student returning to school following a suspension will be supported in catching up on work and in developing an understanding of the initial reasons for the suspension.
- In all instances the school requires a parent/guardian to accompany the student to school on the day of return in order to meet with the Deputy Principal /Principal . Discussion of Form 4 will take place prior to attendance at class .

7. Appeals:

A suspension imposed by the Principal can be appealed to the Board of Management as follows:

- An appeal should be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the Board of Management within 5 school days of the imposition of the suspension and should set out the parent's case against the suspension.
- At its next meeting the Board will nominate two members, neither of whom should have any involvement in the case, to investigate the issue and report back to the Board with its findings and recommendations.
- If this investigation recommends that the Board remove the suspension, the record of the suspension will be removed from the student's file. If the investigation approves the suspension then the suspension will stand.
- There is no further right to appeal unless the student's cumulative suspensions in any one year exceed 20 days, in which case there is a right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Dept. of Education and Science. The Principal must inform the parents /guardians and the NEWB if this 20 day limit has been reached.

8. Review:

The Board will monitor the frequency of the use of suspension as a disciplinary measure and will regularly review the procedures to ensure that it is being used fairly and appropriately and in the best interests of the entire school community.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on the ----- and will be reviewed in the academic year beginning Sept. 1st 2013.

This policy is informed by and compliant with the following legislation:

Education Act 1998

Education Welfare Act 2000

Education (Miscellaneous) Provisions Act 2007

Equal Status Act 2000

Education for Persons with Special Education Needs 2004

It is also guided by the NEWB Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools.