

ST. KEVIN'S COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SUSPENSIONS AND EXCLUSIONS POLICY



	DATE.
RATIFIED BY THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT:	DAY OF 201 .
REVIEW DATE:	DAY OF 201 .

SUSPENSIONS AND EXCLUSIONS

Exclusion from school, on a temporary or permanent basis, is the most serious sanction. The school will endeavour at all times to utilise less serious sanctions.

A suspension may be defined as requiring a student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specific period of days or part of a school day.

If an individual student's serious misbehaviour impinges upon the learning opportunity of his/her peers or affects the Health & Safety of any member of the school he/she will be excluded from St. Kevin's Community College either temporarily through suspension or permanent permanently through exclusion.

Suspension

St. Kevin's Community College is under the auspices of the Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board; it is Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board Committee that holds the authority to suspend a student.

This authority has been devolved to the Board of Management of the college and this then delegated to the Principal/Deputy.

Serious Misbehaviour

- Consistent and persistent noncompliance with the rules of St. Kevin's Community College or a single serious incident of noncompliance.
- Persistent noncompliance with rules which raises Health & Safety concerns or a single serious incident of noncompliance, which raises Health & Safety concerns.
- Sexual Harassment
- Making blatant racist comments to another.
- Deliberate damage to college property or the property of another.
- Stealing college property or the property of another.
- Smoking in the school building.
- Verbal abuse of a staff member.
- Inappropriate use of mobile phones for the purpose of recording students or staff.

- Aggressive and threatening behaviour towards another.
- Bullying.
- Making a serious false allegation(s) against a staff member.
- Physical Violence
- Bringing weapons/s or illegal substance/s to college.
- Supplying illegal substances to other students.

This list is not exhaustive and although each of the above occasions of serious misbehaviour will be assessed on a case by case basis in terms of the number of days of suspension, the Board of Management holds the view that each of the above may incur a suspension. The decision to suspend is within the powers of the Principal/Deputy of St. Kevin's Community College (or in his/her absence the Deputy Principal/Deputy); where possible, the relevant Year Head will be consulted.

If the continued presence of a student in the college could, in the opinion of the Principal/Deputy, represent a serious threat to the Health & Safety of another/others, an **"Immediate Suspension"** may be imposed by the Principal/Deputy. Contact will be made with the parent(s) or guardian(s) as they will be requested to collect the student from school.

Procedures for Suspension

Steps:

In all cases of the suspension the Principal/Deputy, on behalf of the Board of Management will ensure that the student and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) have the right to be heard.

If an incident of serious misbehaviour occurs which may warrant a suspension from the school, the following procedures will be followed:

- An investigation of the incident will be carried out by the relevant Year Head, on behalf of the Principal/Deputy.
- The Year Head will discuss the issue with the Principal/Deputy and suspension will only be imposed with the latter's authority.
- The student's Parents/guardians are contacted by telephone (when possible) and always by letter. When appropriate and possible, the student and his/her parents/guardians are given the opportunity to respond to the complaint and the possible sanctions.

- If a suspension is to be invoked, then the seriousness and nature of the incident(s) and the student's discipline record in the college will be taken into consideration.
- A student facing a suspension will not be dismissed from the college until arrangements are made for his/her safe return to the care of his/her parents/guardians. However, if such arrangements cannot be made during the college day, the application of a suspension will occur at the end of the college day.
- A letter detailing the length of the suspension, the reason for the suspension and the date of return, will be forwarded to the parents/guardians.
- During any period of suspension, a student is not allowed on the college grounds or in the buildings, unless sanctioned by the Principal/Deputy for a specific reason, e.g. counselling.

Duration

- When the Principal/Deputy has made the decision to impose a suspension, the duration of the suspension will be determined by the seriousness of the incident and the student's discipline record in the college. This may range from a half-day to a period of 3 days. In exceptional circumstances the Principal/Deputy may suspend for a period of up to 5 days.
- The Principal/Deputy will inform the Board of Management, at each Board Meeting, of any and all incidents of serious misbehaviour which he/she deemed to warrant the need for any suspension of 2 days or more.
- The Board of Management takes ultimate responsibility for suspensions of significant length and will convene if the Principal/Deputy deems it necessary for the Board to consider imposing a suspension of more than 5 days.
- For periods of six (6) days, or more the relevant Education Officer of the Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board Committee and the relevant Education Welfare Officer will be formally notified.

Cumulative Days:

- As Secretary to the Board of Management the Principal/Deputy will convene an Emergency Board Meeting, should he/she consider that an individual's serious misbehaviour/s may incur days of suspension beyond a cumulative twenty (20) days.
- The student, his/her parents/guardians and another will be invited by the Secretary of the Board to attend the Emergency Meeting/Hearing. The parents/guardians and the members of the Board of Management will receive a written account of the serious misbehaviour of the student prior to the Board Meeting.
- Prior to any Emergency Meeting by the Board, for a hearing of extension between twenty (20) days of suspension, the Principal/Deputy (on their behalf) will inform the appropriate Education Officer of the Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board Committee and the Education Welfare Officer of the meeting.
- At the Board of Management Meeting/Hearing, the Principal/Deputy and the parents/guardians (or the student his/her self, is over 18 years of age) will state their case to the Board in each others presence. Each party is allowed to question the evidence of the other party in the presence of the Board. Parents/Guardians and/or the student may also make a case for lessening the sanction.
- After both parties have been heard, the Principal/Deputy, the student and his/her parents/guardian leave the hearing to allow the Board to make its deliberations.
- If the Board of Management is of the opinion that the suspension for the student should be extended, the Board must inform the parents/guardians of the student and the relevant Education Officer of the Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board Committee and the Education Welfare Officer in writing of its conclusions.
- The parents/guardians of the student will be informed of their right to appeal the Board's decision to the Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board Committee within the twenty (20) college days from the date the Education Welfare Officer receives the written notification.
- The Secretary to the Board will issue them with an "Appeals Application Form". Should the student and the parents/guardians need further clarification re: "Right of Appeal", this information should be sought from the Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board Committee and/or the National Education Welfare Board.

The Board of Management will review the use of suspension at regular intervals to ensure that it is consistent with school policy. The Board will also examine patterns of suspension to identify circumstances that might be influencing behaviour/s in the college and to ensure that suspension continues to be used as a last resort.

Exclusion

Permanent exclusion is the most severe sanction. It may be necessary in certain circumstances such as:

- Where the rights of the majority of students is being denied by the continuous serious misbehaviour of an individual student.
- Physical attack
- Sexual harassment
- Serious threat of violence to a member of the college community
- Supply of illegal drugs to other students of the college community

This list is not exhaustive.

Any allegation of serious misbehaviour/s, deemed by the Principal/Deputy to be of a criminal nature, will be referred to the Gardaí.

In exceptional circumstances, exclusion may be sought by the Principal/Deputy based on a single incident.

Procedures:

- Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms a serious misbehaviour that could warrant exclusion, a detailed investigation will be carried out by the Principal/Deputy/Deputy.
- The Principal/Deputy/Deputy will inform the student's parents/guardians in writing of the alleged serious misbehaviour and invite them to a meeting, to respond to the complaint.
- Should the parents/guardians fail to attend the meeting; an alternative meeting will be rescheduled and notified to the parents/guardians in writing.
- Should the Principal/Deputy/Deputy be of the view following the investigation and meeting that expulsion is warranted, the Principal/Deputy/Deputy will then convene an "Emergency Meeting of the Board of Management" to consider expulsion.
- The student may be suspended from college until the Board of Management Meeting/Hearing can be convened.
- The members of the Board of Management and the parents/guardians (the latter by registered post at least five working days prior to the meeting), will receive a written account of the misbehaviour(s) of the student and all interventions and assistance given by the college to the student and his/her parents/guardians in an effort to enable him/her to participate in the day-to-day life of the college. This account will also include a report by the Principal/Deputy and any other relevant members of the staff of the college, who have attempted to redress the serious misbehaviour(s) of the student.
- The student, his/her parents/guardians and another will be invited by the Secretary to the Board to attend the emergency meeting.
- Prior to any emergency meeting by the Board for the hearing of exclusion, the Principal/Deputy, (on their behalf), will inform the appropriate Education Officer of the Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board and the Education Welfare Officer of the impending meeting.
- At the Board Management Hearing, the Principal/Deputy of the college and the parents/guardians of the student his/her self; he/she is over eighteen (18) years of age will state their case to the Board in each other's presence. Each party is allowed to question directly the evidence of the other party in the presence of the Board. Parents/Guardians and /or student may also make a case for lessening the sanction. The Board must ensure that they are impartial.
- After both parties have been heard, the Principal/Deputy of the college, the student and his/her parents/guardians and another, (if present), leave the hearing to allow the Board to make its deliberations.

- If the Board of Management is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board will inform the parents/guardian of the student and the relevant Educational Officer of the Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board Committee and the Education Welfare Officer of its conclusions.
- Furthermore, following the decision of the Board of Management to exclude a student, the student may be suspended from the college on Health & Safety grounds and/or because the presence of the student will seriously disrupt the learning of his/her peers, for the following twenty (20) college days of the received notification by the Education Welfare Officer, and/or until the “Right of Appeal” has been heard by the Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board Committee.
- The parents/guardians of that student will be informed of their right to appeal the Board's decision to the Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board Committee within the twenty (20) college days from the date the Education Welfare Officer receives the written notification. The Secretary to the Board will issue them with an “Appeals Application Form”. Should the student and their parents./guardians need further clarification re: “Right of Appeal”, this information should be sought from the Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board Committee and/or the National Education Welfare Board.
- Where the twenty (20) day period has elapsed and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled from the college, the Board will formally confirm the decision to expel. The Board of Management of the college will delegate to the Chairperson and the Principal/Deputy the above task.
- Parents/Guardians will be notified immediately that the expulsion will now proceed.

The Board of Management will review the use of expulsion in the college at regular intervals to ensure that its use is consistent with the college policies, that patterns of use are examined to identify causes that may be influencing behaviour in the college and to guarantee that exclusion is used only in very exceptional circumstances.

Appendix I
[Will be issued on headed paper]

To: _____

Date: _____

Address: _____

This is to notify you that your son / daughter _____ has been suspended from the college for _____ day(s).

Reason for suspension:

Your son/daughter _____ is to return to the school on _____.
During suspension the student is not allowed in the vicinity of the school unless otherwise arranged. All suspensions may be appealed to the Board of Management.

Principal/Deputy