

STRATHEARN SCHOOL BELFAST

THE SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION OF PUPILS

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This following statement which also sets out the procedure to be followed in relation to the suspension and expulsion of pupils, has been prepared in accordance with

- (1) Article 49 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986, as substituted by Article 39 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1993;
- (2) Schools (Suspension and Expulsion of Pupils) Regulations (NI) 1995 (SR 1995 No 99); and
- (3) Schools (Expulsion of Pupils) (Appeal Tribunals) Regulations (NI) 1994 (SR 1994 No 13).

1.2 In this scheme:

- (1) “board” means the Belfast Education and Library Board;
- (2) “Chairman of the Board of Governors” includes, where the Chairman is absent or otherwise unavailable, the member of the Board of Governors for the time being performing the duties of Chairman;
- (3) “the 1986 Order” means the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986;
- (4) “a school day” means a day on which the School is in operation;
- (5) “Principal” includes, where the Principal is absent or otherwise unavailable, the Vice-Principal or other person for the time being performing the duties of Principal;
- (6) “parent” has the meaning given to it by Article 2 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986 as amended by Article 128 of Schedule 9 of the Children (NI) Order 1995.

1.3 In this scheme any reference to the parent of a pupil shall include, in the case of a pupil who has attained the age of eighteen years, the pupil herself.

2 SUSPENSION

- 2.1 A pupil may be suspended from School only by the Principal.
- 2.2 An initial period of such suspension shall not exceed five school days in any one school term.
- 2.3 A pupil may be suspended from school for not more than fifteen school days in any one school term.
- 2.4 Where a pupil has been suspended from school, the Principal shall immediately:
 - (1) give written notification of the reasons for the suspension and the period of suspension to:
 - (i) the parent of the pupil;
 - (ii) the board; and
 - (iii) the Chairman of the Board of Governors;
 - (2) invite the parent of the pupil to visit the School to discuss the suspension and warn the parent that if the visit does not take place, whether by neglect or refusal, within three days of receipt of the letter, the Principal will, in the absence of the parent, decide whether to end the suspension or to impose a further period of suspension (subject to 2.8).
- 2.5 Where the parent has visited the School, the Principal must immediately after the visit, inform the parent in writing either that:
 - (1) the period of suspension has been concluded, stating the agreement reached with the parent if any, and that the pupil must return to School forthwith; or
 - (2) the period of suspension is extended, the reasons for the extension, and that the pupil must return to School at the end of the stated time.
- 2.6 Where the parent has not visited the School within a period of three days, the Principal must inform the parent in writing of his/her decision in terms of the alternatives set out in 2.5.
- 2.7 The Principal shall not extend a period of suspension except with the prior approval of the Chairman of the Board of Governors and shall in every such case give written notification of the reasons for the extension and the period of extension to:
 - (1) the parent of the pupil; and
 - (2) the board.

- 2.8 Acceptable reasons for extending a period of suspension would include:
- (1) to facilitate further investigation of the matter;
 - (2) if expulsion is being considered;
 - (3) where the return of the pupil concerned would pose immediate serious problems of organisation and discipline within the school.
- 2.9 The Principal shall keep the Chairman of the Board of Governors informed of suspensions and their outcome.

3 EXPULSION

3.1 General

- (1) The permanent expulsion of a pupil from the School is an event which should happen very rarely and as a result of the most serious breaches of reasonable School discipline.
- (2) A pupil may only be expelled from the School by the Board of Governors.
- (3) A pupil may be expelled from the School only after serving a period of suspension.
- (4) In cases where there has been a history of serious misconduct, it is important for the Principal to create and maintain a written summary, including copies of all correspondence between the home and the School, showing the nature of the misconduct and the steps which were taken by the School at each stage.

3.2 Procedure

- (1) A pupil may be expelled from the School only after consultation about her possible expulsion has taken place between the Principal, the parent of the pupil, the chief executive of the board, or another officer of the board duly authorised by him, and the Chairman of the Board of Governors.

Such consultation should take place at a meeting of all the named parties which has been convened for that purpose.

The notice of the meeting must make clear to the parent that any neglect or refusal on the part of a parent or pupil to take part in such consultations shall not prevent a pupil being expelled from the School.

The details and outcome of that meeting should be included in the School's written summary.

- (2) Where the pupil in question has previously attended other schools, the comments of the principals of those schools in relation to the pupil's conduct and behaviour may be sought; and considered by the Board of Governors.
- (3) All consultations and meetings to consider this matter shall include consultations about the future provision of suitable education of the pupil concerned. In doing so the wishes and feelings of the pupil shall be taken into account as to the action to be taken and also in relation to the pupil's future education.
- (4) The Board of Governors of the School having consulted with the board will then reach a decision, and if the decision is to expel shall immediately inform the board and confirm the Board's arrangements for lodgement of an appeal.
- (5) Where the Board of Governors has expelled a pupil from the School, the Principal shall immediately give written notification to the parent of that pupil of her right to appeal the decision to expel, of the time limit set by the board for lodging the appeal and of where an appeal may be lodged.
- (6) Where an appeal is allowed and direction is given that the pupil be re-admitted to the School, it shall be the duty of the Board of Governors to comply with any such direction.

4 APPOINTMENT OF EXPULSION OF PUPILS APPEAL TRIBUNALS

The board is required to make arrangements to enable a parent of a pupil at a voluntary grammar school to appeal against the decision of the Board of Governors to expel the pupil from the school. Such an appeal will be considered by a tribunal constituted in accordance with the Schools (Expulsion of Pupils) (Appeal Tribunals) Regulation (Northern Ireland) 1994.

Signed	_____	_____	_____
	Chairman	Principal	Date