



Bord Oideachais & Oiliúna
LUIMNIGH & AN CHLÁIR

LIMERICK & CLARE
Education & Training Board

Fedamore CNS

Code of Behaviour

2024-2025



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Approval	Director of Schools

1. Introduction

Fedamore Community National School is a co-educational, multi denominational national school which is underpinned by the core values of excellence in education, care, equality, community and respect. In Fedamore Community National School, we are dedicated to helping each student to achieve their individual potential. The school policies are central to ensuring the provision of quality education in a holistic manner.

This Code of Behaviour is drawn up to ensure compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in “Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools” (NEWB 2008). The school will provide parent(s)/guardian(s) with a copy of the Code of Behaviour before enrolment of their child into the school. Parents/Guardians will be asked to confirm in writing that the code is acceptable to them prior to enrolment of their child into the school.

2. School Ethos and Characteristic Spirit

Fedamore CNS is a state, co-educational, multi denominational schools underpinned by the core values of:

- Excellence in Education
- Care
- Equality
- Community
- Respect.



As the state provider of education, the ETB sector defines a 'multi c in the following way:

In ETB schools, all students are given equal opportunities for enrolment in line with the Education (Admissions to School) Act 2018. Once enrolled, our schools strive to provide all students with equal opportunities to engage with the curriculum and school life. In all aspects of school life all members of our school communities are treated equitably regardless of their race, gender, religion/belief, age, family status, civil status, membership of the Traveller community, sexual orientation, ability or socio-economic status.

Our schools provide a safe physical and social environment that reinforces a sense of belonging to the school community and wider society. They strive to enable every student to realise their full potential regardless of any aspect of their identity or background. Our schools promote a fully inclusive education that recognizes the plurality of identities, beliefs and values held by students, parents and staff. We prepare open-minded, culturally sensitive and responsible citizens with a strong sense of shared values.

In ETB schools, students of all religions and beliefs are treated equally. The school environment and activities do not privilege any particular group over another whilst at the same time acknowledging and facilitating students of all religions and beliefs.

3. Rationale

This policy was developed to ensure:

- A positive, non-confrontational, person centred, calm and friendly learning environment for our students.
- That every effort is made to create a low arousal environment where our students and the school community are safe in the school.
- That best practice in relation to promoting positive behaviour is maintained throughout the school.
- That the school functions in an orderly and harmonious way.

4. A Partnership Approach

This policy has been developed in line with the ethos of Fedamore CNS. The objective of our policy is to create a positive, non-confrontational, person centred, calm and friendly, respectful and tolerant environment, in which every individual is given the best possible opportunity to grow and develop in a safe and positive environment. The Code of Behaviour applies in school and at school events or activities.

In the school year 24/25 Parents and Staff will be partners in reviewing and updating on this code of behaviour within the school's context.

5. Aims of the Code of Behaviour

- To promote a positive and a safe learning and working environment for all students, staff and visitors.
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community.
- To support the delivery of teaching and learning.
- To work in partnership to create a positive atmosphere and culture in the school where each student and staff member feels valued.
- To encourage high expectations of all students in learning and in behaviour.
- To create a low arousal approach to behaviour.
- To understand behaviour as a form of communication.
- To gain an understanding of our behaviour and how reactions can have a calming effect.
- We will endeavour to do this by providing a predictable and consistent environment using visual supports. This will encourage student success, building their self-esteem.
- To respect and to safeguard the rights and the dignity of every member of the school community.
- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where students can make progress in all aspects of their development.
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration of others.
- To assist staff, parents/guardians and students in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of this Code of Behaviour and to seek the cooperation of all in the application of these procedures.

6. School Context

Fedamore CNS is a mainstream national school that provides an appropriate education for students aged 4 to 12 years old. The management of student behaviour in our school takes into account any difficulties that children presenting with Special Educational Needs may have in relation to their ability to communicate, express themselves and adhere to the school's code of behaviour. This will be taken into account and decisions will be made in this context.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

All school staff have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with students and with each other.

The Board of Management

- Is responsible for ensuring that Code of Behaviour is prepared, reviewed, ratified and implemented in the school.
- Has a duty of care to provide a safe environment for students and staff in Fedamore CNS.
- Supports the Principal and staff in implementing this policy.
- Is responsible for fulfilling responsibilities in terms of applying the sanctions of suspension and expulsion when necessary.

The Principal

- Has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Code of Behaviour in a fair and consistent manner.
- Creates and promotes a positive behaviour culture within Fedamore CNS.
- Provides opportunities for and supports appropriate staff professional development.
- Ensures that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- Arranges for the review of the Code as required.

Teachers

- Promote and contribute to the development and maintenance of a positive and calm climate in the classroom and in the school community.
- Develop a consistent and predictable structure to the day using visual supports.
- Plan activities to minimise opportunities for disruptive behaviour based on their students' sensory profile.
- Develops a good relationship with students.
- Speak to the students calmly, firmly and positively.
- Praise positive behaviour at all times.
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among students.
- Recognise and affirm good work.
- Be courteous, consistent and fair.
- Respect the students' dignity.
- Observes students along with SNAs informally to over time gain an understanding of strengths/areas of interest, areas of weakness, sensory profile and arousal behaviours and triggers.
- Seek to understand how their own verbal and non verbal responses can improve, shorten or stop challenging behaviour.
- Implement the Code of Behaviour in a fair, consistent, appropriate and reasonable manner.
- Write/update Behaviour Support Plans in consultation with parents/guardians, SNAs and appropriate outside agencies using a solution focused approach where appropriate.
- Keep appropriate records of instances of unwanted behaviours / behaviours of concerns
- Communicate with parents/guardians, in accordance with the school policy on communicating with parents/guardians on matters of concern in a timely manner.
- Complete appropriate professional development and participate in any mandatory training as required by the principal/LCETB

Special Needs Assistants and other school staff

- Promote a positive and calm climate in the classroom and in the school community.
- Implement the teacher's consistent and predictable structure to the school day using visual supports.
- Implement the planned activities to minimise opportunities for disruptive behaviour based on their sensory profile.
- Develops a good relationship with students.
- Speak to the students calmly, firmly and positively.
- Praise positive behaviour at all times.
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among students.
- Recognise and affirm good work.

- Be courteous, consistent and fair.
- Respect the students' dignity.
- Observes students along with teachers informally to over time gain an understanding of strengths/areas of interest, areas of weakness, sensory profile and arousal behaviours and triggers.
- Seek to understand how their own verbal and non verbal responses can improve, shorten or stop challenging behaviour.
- Is aware of their role within the school in relation to student behaviour.
- Complete appropriate professional development and participate in any mandatory training as required by the principal/LCETB.

Students

- Are responsible for doing their best to adhere to the Code of Behaviour.
- Are encouraged to assist staff in the maintenance of a positive and a safe environment for learning.
- Are encouraged to self regulate as required and to advocate for themselves for preferred regulation activities.
- Do their best to understand and practice school rules.
- Do their best to cooperate with staff.
- Do their best to treat other students and staff with respect.

Parents/Guardians

- Support their child in the understanding and the implementation of the Code of Behaviour.
- Communicate with the school in relation to any issues which may affect their child's behaviour or general well-being. This would include strengths/areas of interest, areas of weakness and arousal triggers. Also changes to medication, sleep and any medical conditions which may impact their behaviour.
- Work collaboratively with the school staff on the implementation of an individual behaviour plan as required and its consistency between home and school. Treat all members of the school community with respect.
- Ensure that their children attend regularly and punctually. The school will comply with the statutory requirements regarding the notification of student absences.
- Attend and participate in meetings as requested by the teacher/management of Fedamore CNS.

8. Communication with Parents/Guardians

- Communication with Parents/Guardians is central to maintaining a positive approach to issues concerning their child's wellbeing and education. A high level of cooperation and open communication is seen as an important factor encouraging positive behaviour in the school. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to talk in confidence to the principal and/or teachers about any significant developments in their child's life which may affect the child's behaviour.

The methods of parent/guardian-teacher communication used include:

- Student Support file meetings/review meetings

- Parent/Teacher Meetings
- Text messages from the school to the parent(s)/guardian(s).
- Phone calls from school to parent(s)/guardian(s) and from parent(s)/guardian(s) to school.
- Notes from school to parent(s)/guardian(s) and from parent(s)/guardian(s) to school.
- Letters and emails from school to parent(s)/guardian(s) and from parent(s)/guardian(s) to school.
- Communication via the school website.
- Communication via a communication journal.
- Communications via approved school software platforms that may be used by the school ie Class Dojo.
- All communication between parents/guardians and school staff should be respectful and considerate of normal working hours.

9. School Rules

Together we work towards standards of behaviour that are based on four general principles:

- Safety: Everyone has a right to be safe and to feel safe.
- Teaching and Learning: All students have a right to learn and all teachers have a right to teach.
- Communication: Everyone has a right to be heard and contribute to the school.
- Respect: School property and personal space is respected at all times.

10. Students Responsibilities

Each student to the best of their ability will be encouraged to try to:

- Sit and work for short periods of time
- Always try to do your best
- Share with others
- Take your turn
- Listen to others
- Follow simple instructions
- Be kind and polite
- Be cooperative at all times

The school rules will be presented and reinforced with students in language appropriate to their individual needs, such as

- Safety: We never hurt anyone or any living thing.
- Communication: We use nice voices and listening ears when communicating.
- Learning: We do our best for ourselves and others in our learning journey.
- Respect: We look after our things, our bodies and our personal space at school.

Activities to encourage positive behaviour include

- Circle time in the classroom
- Role play and social stories
- Revising class/school/playground rules
- School assembly
- Providing individualised and necessary supports to support students to participate in the school community.

11. School Incentives

Good behaviour is acknowledged, encouraged and rewarded. There is a whole school approach to affirming and promoting good behaviour. A system of incentives and awards will be used to encourage students to follow the school rules.

Examples of some incentives that are regularly used include:

- Verbal praise, non verbal praise and encouragement of positive behaviour.
- Displays of student work.
- Reward systems such as tokens, scoreboards, certificates of achievement/effort, visual charts or choosing a preferred activity.
- Giving the student the responsibility of important jobs in the classroom or in the school.
- A positive comment sent home in a student's communication journal.
- Giving the student extra time on preferred activity.
- The use of positive stickers, certificates or postcards home.
- The use of restorative practices.

12. Limitations

This policy is not designed to list all the possible violations which may arise or to state all of the possible consequences of all unacceptable behaviour, but to serve as a general guide to the student, the teacher, the SNAs, the principal and parent/guardians of students to be used to solve individual problems as they occur.

13. Minimising Inappropriate Behaviours

As each child is unique, so too are their needs. Different strategies will be effective with different students. Teachers and staff confer with their colleagues, the principal and/or parent/guardian when behavioural issues arise.

When approaches/guidelines are identified to address the behavioural needs of students, it is important that all members of the school community, including parents/guardians work in a consistent manner, so as to minimise inappropriate behaviours and to enable the student to have a clear understanding of school staff/parents/guardians expectations of their behaviour.

Effective management of behaviour involves adherence to some basic strategies including

- Low arousal – quiet/calm approaches
- Clear communication
- Consistent responses
- Appropriate programmes which consider the specific and common needs of all students e.g., sensory needs etc.
- Positive, trusting relationships.
- Having extensive knowledge of each student's personality.
- Be able to read individual student's moods and act accordingly.
- Distract the student to prevent the situation from escalating.
- Creating a safe class environment to protect staff and students.
- Collaboration with parents and visiting professionals on causes of challenging

behaviour.

Misbehaviour is divided into two categories - minor misbehaviour and major misbehaviour.

14. Minor Misbehaviour

- Outbursts of shouting.
- Physical contact i.e., pushing, slapping to gain attention.
- Un-cooperative on a one-to-one basis.

Strategies for dealing with a minor misbehaviour

- If the student has a Positive Behaviour Support Plan it should be followed
- Reminder of the school rules
- Redirect the student to another activity
- Adapt the sensory environment to meet the students needs and within school limits
- Verbal reprimand the student – advising them not to repeat the behaviour
- Time in a quiet place to allow the student regulate their behaviour
- Temporary separation from peers for a maximum of 5 minutes. Staff will then reassess the situation.
- Loss of privileges depending on the students ability to understand delayed gratification i.e., loss of music, loss of a reward token, loss of a sweet etc.
- Referral to deputy principal or principal teacher in particular if staff/student is injured or there is property damaged.
- Communication with parents/guardians to inform of the behaviour and to seek support.

15. Major Misbehaviour

- Un-cooperative i.e., a group situation where the behaviour is a danger to and disrupts the rest of the class.
- Intentional physical destruction of class property i.e., deliberate throwing of objects.
- Any behaviour that poses a risk to the welfare of another student or staff member.
- Threatening, aggressive, intimidatory or violent behaviour towards staff or other students.
- Causing physical hurt to others by pushing, kicking, biting, spitting, punching or any form of assault.
- Possession of a dangerous weapon or an object which may be classified as a weapon.
- Continuous disruption of the learning environment.
- Leaving the school/school grounds without permission from staff.
- Bullying. Instances of bullying will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy. Full parental cooperation will be expected when dealing with instances of bullying.
- Smoking/vaping on school property

- Possession or using illegal substances including alcohol, drugs or other contraband substances within the school grounds.
- A serious breach of the schools Acceptable Use Policy (ICT)
- Theft
- Truancy/ Unapproved absences.
- Damage to school property that disrupts normal school activities.
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour/sexual assault.

Managing aggressive or violent behaviour

- Have knowledge of the student's personality.
- Remove other students out of the situation for their own safety.
- Give the student space and time to calm down.
- At all times remain calm but firm.
- Seek assistance if necessary.
- Removal of demands and requests to reduce potential points of conflict around a student.
- Avoidance of potentially arousing triggers e.g. direct eye contact, touch and removal of other students to the incident.
- Avoidance of non-verbal behaviours that may lead to conflict e.g. proximity, postures and stances.
- Allow time to regulate
- Temporary separation from peers for 5 minutes. Staff will then reassess the situation and repeat as necessary.
- Loss of privileges depending on the student's ability to understand delayed gratification i.e., loss of music, loss of reward token.
- Referral to principal in particular if staff/student is injured or there is property damaged. Where there is serious damage i.e., window broken or a staff member requires medical attention then the student will be sent home until all appropriate repairs/staff are available
- Communication with parents/guardians. Parents/guardians to be contacted about a serious incident with intent. Accident/Incident forms to be completed.

When the usual strategies are not effective then the staff will look at the antecedent-behaviour-consequences (ABC) checklist which examines:

- Possible causes/reasons for the behaviour
- The nature and frequency of the behaviour – relevant tick charts to be filled in
- What happens as a result of the behaviour?
- Where a student displays continuous misbehaviour a behaviour plan will be devised in their IEP. Relevant professional support may be sought.

This type of assessment enables staff to make adjustments to the class environment and to the student's daily school routine. In exceptional circumstances, a shorter school day may be introduced to allow the student to become accustomed to the school routine and expectations. The plan will be shared with all school staff, parents/guardians to safeguard consistent implementation. The plan will be monitored by the principal and the class team. This plan will be reported on at every Board of Management meeting.

Loss of privileges for a student for unacceptable behaviour cannot include a curricular area, i.e., swimming, art, music or educational outing except on the grounds of health and safety. For this a Risk Assessment must be filled out.

Involving Parents in management of problem behaviour

- Parents shall be contacted about a serious incident involving their child.
- The principal shall contact the parents initially by phone.
- If parents have any queries or concerns, they can contact the school or make an appointment to meet the principal or class teacher.
- All parents shall receive a copy of the Code of Discipline policy.
- A copy of the accident/incident form will be sent to the parent.

Possible Sanctions for Major Misbehaviours

In the case of major misbehaviour all sanctions up to and including suspension and expulsion will be considered depending on the specific circumstances involved in the behaviour. In consultation with the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) an Individualised Behaviour Plan will be put in place where a student is suspended due to exhibiting persistent serious misbehaviours or due to an instance of major misbehaviour.

Expulsion may be considered for a stand-alone incident of major misbehaviours. The kinds of behaviour that might result in a proposal to expel include, but are not limited to:

- A series act of violence towards another person/ physical assault
- Possession of/ supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school
- Sexual assault

17. Procedures for dealing with a Suspension or Expulsion

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parent(s)/guardian(s) will be utilised. Suspension and expulsion will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

Full details of the policy and procedures for suspension are provided in Appendix A which forms part of this Code of Behaviour.

Full details of the policy and procedures for suspension are provided in Appendix B which forms part of this Code of Behaviour.

18. Record Keeping

A standardised system of record keeping for the recording of behaviours of concern will be implemented throughout the school. This will be in line with the school's Records Retention Schedule.

A standardised recording system will allow the school to track each student's behaviour and affirm positive behaviour and to check whether efforts to change negative behaviours are working.

A written record of behaviour may be kept in relation to a student's behaviour in the classroom or when engaging in any other school activity.

19. Notification of a Child's absence from School

A Code of Behaviour must describe the procedures to be followed by parents when they are notifying the school about a child's absence. The procedures to be followed by parents in relation to a child's absence are:

- Students are expected to attend school on all official school days.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) must inform the school of their child's absence for any reason.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) must inform the school on the first day of absence by phoning the school and on the child's return to school by means of a written explanation for the absence.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) can inform the school if they know in advance of the absence.

- Parent(s)/guardian(s) need to inform the school about the reasons for absence following a period of absence.
- Failure to notify the school about a student's absence will be followed up by phone call/text message/email from the teacher.
- Parents will be notified when their child's attendance is a cause of concern (15 days).
- TUSLA will be notified when a child has been absent for 20 days.

20. Ratification and review

This policy was ratified by the Single Manager/ Board of Management on 06-01-2025. The next review of the policy will be in the 2025/2026 school year when consultation from staff and parents would be considered.

Signed:

Director of schools

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joanne Mullins', written over a horizontal line.

Principal

Date: 06-01-2025

Appendix A: Suspension Policy and Procedure

Suspension is defined as requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school and school grounds for a specified, limited period of school days. During the period of suspension, the student retains their place in the school.

Suspension is designed to address the student's behaviour. It is envisaged that any period of suspension:

- enables the school to set behavioural goals with the student and their parents
- gives school staff an opportunity to plan other interventions
- impresses on a student and their parents the seriousness of the behaviour.

The grounds for suspension

Suspension is used as a proportionate response to behaviour that is causing concern.

Normally, other interventions will have been tried before suspension, and school staff will have reviewed the reasons why these have not worked. The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- the student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students,
- the student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety,
- the student is responsible for serious damage to property.

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

Factors that will be considered before suspending a student

1. *The nature, seriousness and persistency of the behaviour*
2. *The context of the behaviour*
3. *The impact of the behaviour on other students and staff, teaching and learning in the class group and the student concerned.*
4. *The interventions tried to date, including involvement of internal supports and supports from external agencies and services.*
5. *Whether suspension is a proportionate response to the behaviour.*
6. *The possible impact of suspension.*

Immediate suspension

In exceptional circumstances, the principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of students or staff of the school, or any other person. Fair procedures must still be applied.

The Board of Management/Single Manager of Fedamore CNS has decided that, as part of the school policy on sanctions, that the incidents of gross behaviours of concerns as listed in the Code of Behaviour incur suspension as a sanction. The decision to impose suspension for these named behaviours does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures in each case.

Any behaviour that is persistently disruptive to learning or potentially dangerous can be a serious matter. Behaviour must be examined in context to understand both the behaviour itself and the response or sanction that is most appropriate.

Procedures in respect of suspension

The school is committed to following fair procedures when proposing to suspend a student in line with relevant legislation. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious behaviours of concern that could warrant suspension, the school will:

1. Inform the student and their parents/guardians about the issue, how it will be investigated, and that it could result in suspension. Parents may be informed by phone and/or in writing, depending on the seriousness of the matter.
2. Give parents/guardians an opportunity to respond by phone, in writing or by attending a meeting, whichever is deemed most appropriate in the circumstances.

Procedures in relation to immediate suspension

In the case of an immediate suspension, parents/guardians will be notified, and arrangements made with them for the student to be collected, brought home or sent home with the agreement of parents/guardians. The school has regard to its duty of care for the student. In no circumstances will a student be sent home from school without first notifying parents.

Implementing the suspension

The principal will notify the parents and the student 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
- the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents (for example, parents might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the code of behaviour)
- the provision for an appeal to the Department of Education, if appropriate

Records and reports

Written records will be kept of:

- the investigation
- the decision-making process
- the decision and the rationale for the decision
- the duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension

The principal will report all suspensions to the Board of Management, with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension.

The principal is required to report suspensions in accordance with the NEWB reporting guidelines (Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, section 21(4)(a)).

Authority to suspend and the period of suspension

A student will not be suspended for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the principal considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is needed to achieve a particular objective.

The Board of Management/Single Manager of Fedamore CNS has delegated to the principal, the authority to suspend a student for a maximum period of three days.

Students may be referred to The Board of Management for a review of their behaviour. The Board of Management may decide to suspend a student for a longer period of time. This will normally be a maximum period of ten days, except in circumstances where the Board of Management considers that a longer period of suspension is needed.

The Board will formally review any proposal to suspend a student, where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days or more. Any such suspension is subject to appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. 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 and therefore might lead to an appeal.

After the suspension ends

A period of suspension will end on the date given in the letter of notification to the parents about the suspension. Students may be readmitted on a phased basis should this be considered necessary.

Appeals

Where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days, the parents, or a student 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 parents are being formally notified of such a suspension, they and the student will be told about their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education.

Grounds for removing a suspension

A suspension may be removed if the Secretary General of the Department of Education directs that it be removed following an appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Review of use of suspension

The Board of Management will review the use of suspension 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 use of suspension is appropriate and effective.

Appendix B: Expulsion Policy & Procedure

A student is expelled from the school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school, having complied with the provisions of Section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

The Board of Management of Fedamore CNS has the authority to expel a student as devolved by Waterford & Wexford ETB.

The grounds for expulsion

Fedamore CNS considers that the expulsion of a student is a very serious step, and one that shall only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour.

The school will endeavour to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a student including, as appropriate:

- meeting with parents and the student to try to find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour
- making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of their behaviour, if it should persist
- ensuring that all other possible options have been tried seeking the assistance of support agencies

A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as that:

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

The Board of Management of Fedamore CNS has decided that, as part of the school's policy on sanctions, that the incidents of gross misbehaviours as listed in the Code of Behaviour may incur expulsion as a sanction.

Expulsion for a first offence

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

- a serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff

- actual violence or physical assault
- supplying illegal drugs to others in the school
- sexual assault.

Determining the appropriateness of expelling a student

Given the seriousness of expulsion as a sanction the Board of Management will undertake a very detailed review of the following factors in deciding whether to expel a student:

1. *The nature and seriousness of the behaviour*
2. *The context of the behaviour*
3. *The impact of the behaviour*
4. *The interventions tried to date*
5. *Whether expulsion is a proportionate response*
6. *The possible impact of expulsion*

Procedures in respect of expulsion

Fedamore CNS required by law to follow fair procedures as well as procedures prescribed under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, when proposing to expel a student. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include:

1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal.
2. A recommendation to the Board of Management by the principal.
3. Consideration by the Board of Management/Single Manager of the principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing.
4. Board of Management/Single Manager deliberations and actions following the hearing.
5. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

The Board of Management/Single Manager of Fedamore CNS has decided that the above procedural steps at 2, 3, & 4 can be accomplished together in a single meeting, consistent with

giving parents due notice (at least 7 calendar days) of meetings and a fair and reasonable time to prepare for a Board hearing.

Step 1 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 student and their parents (in writing) about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
- give parents and the student every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made and before a sanction is imposed. This will include a meeting with the principal, parents and the student and any other relevant personnel.

Step 2 A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal

Where the Principal forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged

misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the principal makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion. The principal will:

- inform the parents and the student that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion.
- ensure that parents have records of the allegations against the student; 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 parents.
- notify the parents of the date of the hearing by the Board of Management and invite them to the hearing.
- advise the parents that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management/Single Manager
- ensure that parents have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

Step 3 Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing

The Board of Management will 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. No party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case will be part of the Board's deliberations.

Where a Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student, it will hold a hearing. At the hearing, the Principal and the parents, or a student aged eighteen years or over, put their case to the Board in each other's presence. Parents may wish to be

accompanied at hearings and the Board shall facilitate this, in line with good practice and Board procedures.

After both sides have been heard, the Board shall ensure that the Principal and parents are not present for the Board's deliberations.

Step 4 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 student 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 student 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 shall inform the parents in writing about its conclusions and the next steps in the process. Where expulsion is proposed, the parents should be told that the Board of

Management will now inform the Educational Welfare Officer.

Step 5 Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer

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

- make all reasonable efforts to hold individual consultations with the principal, the parents and the student, and anyone else who may be of assistance
- convene a meeting of those parties who agree to attend (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, section 24).

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

Step 6 Confirmation of the decision to expel

Where the twenty-day period following notification to the Educational Welfare Officer has elapsed and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the principal shall on behalf of the Board of Management formally confirm the decision to expel. Parents shall be notified immediately that the expulsion will now proceed.

Parents and the student shall be told about the right to appeal and supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal. A formal record shall be made of the decision to expel the student.

Appeals

A parent, or a student aged over eighteen years, may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills. An appeal may also be brought by TUSLA on behalf of a student.

Review of use of expulsion

The Board of Management shall 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.