

Code of Behaviour

Aims

Central Model Senior School aims to provide a happy, secure, friendly, learning environment where children, parents, teachers, special needs assistants, ancillary staff and Board of Management work in partnership. Each individual is valued, encouraged and respected for their uniqueness and facilitated to reach their full potential in a positive atmosphere.

Our aim is to create a happy, secure environment for our pupils in which there is a sense of good order and a reasonable approach to discipline.

Discipline For Learning (D.F.L)

In our school, we have a positive approach to teaching and learning (See Appendix on DFL)

School Rules

- Be in uniform, be on time, be ready for school
- Do as you are asked, follow instructions straight away.
- Work quietly, finish your work and do it well.
- Raise your hand and wait for permission to speak or move from your seat.
- Wait until the right time to discuss problems with your teacher.

Personal Safety

- Leaving the school grounds during the school day without parental permission is not permitted. If this occurs parents and Gardaí will be contacted.
- Mobile phones school takes no responsibility for the security of personal devices held by children. If children choose to bring mobile phones/personal devices to school they must keep them in their schoolbags and **turned off at all times**. Photographs/videos may not be taken in school or at school related activities.

Homework

It is the policy of the school to assign homework from Monday to Thursday. The time taken for this will vary from child to child but should in most cases take between 30 minutes and one hour. Homework is recorded in the pupil's journal. Parents should sign the homework journal to confirm that the work has been done.

If for some reason homework (or part of it) cannot be completed, parents are asked to note this in the homework journal.

Generally, homework is not given at weekends. Written work must be done neatly and carefully. Graffiti on textbooks and copybooks is not permitted.

Attendance

Under the Education Welfare Act 2000, absences or lateness, must be explained by a brief note written in the school journal and signed by a parent/guardian. Absences of 20 days or more must be referred by the school to the Education Welfare Board. Any child wishing to leave school early must have a note signed by their parent. The Education Welfare Officer is available to support parents with attendance issues. A text message is sent to parents if a child is absent from school. The parent is requested to contact the school to clarify the situation. After a pupil has been absent, a note from the parents must always be brought to the class teacher upon the pupil's return to school. When a pupil has to leave school early a note from parents must be brought to the class teacher stating the time at which the pupil is to leave.

Alternatively parents may verbally inform Principal/Class Teacher of absences/early school leaving.

Serious Misbehaviour

Persistent minor misbehaviour will be treated as serious misbehaviour.

Occasionally a pupil may move straight to stage 5 for serious misbehaviour. Examples of serious misbehaviour are aggressive behaviour, bullying (see Anti-Bullying Policy), physical, written or verbal abuse of a teacher or another student, leaving the classroom or school without permission. Bullying is defined as hurtful, aggressive, repeated and deliberate behaviour.

Suspension:

Suspension is defined as requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days.

During the period of suspension the student retains their place in the school.

The grounds for suspension:

- The students behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students.
- The students continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.
- Persistent minor misbehaviour will be treated as serious misbehaviour.

Informal or unacknowledged suspension:

Exclusion of a student for part of the school day, as a sanction or asking parents to keep a child from school as a sanction is a suspension. Any exclusion imposed by the school is a suspension.

Procedures in respect of suspension:

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school will

- Inform parents/guardians and students about the complaint
- Give parents and student an opportunity to respond
- Parents may be informed by phone and/or in writing.

Parents and student will be given an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed.

Procedures in relation to immediate suspension:

When an immediate suspension is warranted for reasons of the safety of the student, other students, staff or others, a preliminary investigation will be conducted to establish the case for suspension. A formal investigation will follow.

Period of Suspension:

A pupil should not be suspended for more than three days except in exceptional circumstances.

Suspension longer than three days: the matter will be referred to BoM for consideration and approval.

BOM may authorise Principal, with the approval of the chairperson, to impose a suspension of up to 5 days, where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion, subject to guidance concerning such suspensions.

The Board of Management should normally place a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension imposed by it.

Implementing the suspension:

Written notification

The principal should notify the parents and the student in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter should confirm

- Period of suspension, dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- Reason for suspension
- Any study programme to be fulfilled
- Arrangements for returning to school
- Commitments by student and parents. The student will agree to follow school rules and sign a contract on his/her return to school. The contract is as follows. " I understand the school rules. I agree to follow the school rules". The contract is signed by the student, his/her parents and the school principal.
- When the suspension is completed the student will be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start.

Records and Reports:

Formal written records should be kept of

- Investigation (notes of interviews)
- Decision making process
- Decision and rationale for the decision

- Duration of suspension and any conditions attached to suspension.

Principal reports all suspensions to BoM.

Suspensions will be reported to NEWB.

Expulsion:

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a student.

The school will have taken steps to address misbehaviour and will attempt to avoid expulsion.

The school will

- Meet with parents and the student to find ways of helping the student change their behaviour.
- Make sure that the student understands the possible consequences of their behaviour should it persist.
- Ensure other options have been tried.
- Seek assistance of outside agencies

Grounds for expulsion:

- Students behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
- Students presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

Expulsion for a first offence:

Exceptional circumstances where the board form the opinion that a student should be expelled:

- Serious threat of violence to another student or member of staff.
- Actual violence or physical assault
- Supplying illegal substances to others in the school
- Sexual assault

Procedures in respect of expulsion

The school is required by law to follow fair procedures Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

Procedural steps will include:

- Detailed investigation carried out by the Principal
- Recommendation to the Board by the Principal
- Board of Management meeting to consider recommendation
- Board of Management deliberates and actions following the meeting
- Consultations arranged by EWO
- Confirmation of decision to expel.

Board of Management may convene on more meetings. Parents to be given due notice of meetings and a fair and reasonable time to prepare.

Step 1: Detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal

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

Parents will be informed in writing of the alleged misbehaviour and proposed investigation.

Parents will be given the opportunity to meet with the board re serious misbehaviour and possible expulsion.

Step 2: After investigation and where expulsion is being considered/warranted, Principal will make a recommendation to the board.

The Principal should

- Inform parents and student that the Board is being asked to consider expulsion.
- Provide records of allegations, investigation and written notice of the grounds on which the Board is being asked to consider expulsion
- Provide the Board of Management with the same records.
- Notify parents of date of Board of Management meeting and invite them.
- Advise parents that they may make written submissions to the board.
- Ensure parents have enough time to prepare for meeting.

Step 3: Board reviews all documents and circumstances, ensures that investigation was conducted properly and in line with fair procedures.

Where Board decides to consider expelling a student it must hold a meeting. Principal and parents put their evidence to the Board in each other's presence. Each party can question the evidence of the other directly.

The Board should make every effort to be impartial. Parents may wish to be accompanied at hearings and the Board should facilitate this in line with good practice and Board procedures. Deliberations take place after hearing. Principal and parents should not be present.

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 must 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 should refer to National Educational Welfare Board reporting

procedures for proposed expulsions. 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)*).

An appeal against an expulsion under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998* will automatically succeed if it is shown that the Educational Welfare Officer was not notified in accordance with section 24(1) or that twenty days did not elapse from the time of notification to the Educational Welfare Officer to the implementation of the expulsion (*Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007, s4A*).

The Board should 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*).

The board may consider it appropriate to suspend a student during this time.

Step 6:

Where the 20 day period following notification to the EWO has elapsed, the Board will formally confirm the decision to expel (this duty may be delegated to the Chairperson and Principal). Parents will be notified immediately. Parents will be informed about their right to appeal and supplied with the standard form. Formal record will be made of the decision to expel.

Appeals:

A parent, or a student aged over 18 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 the National Education Welfare Board on behalf of a student.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 21/06/2017.