



# Hansfield



## Educate Together National School

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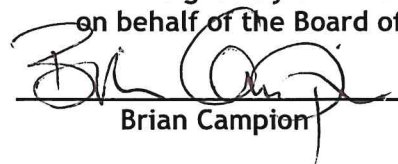
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## Code of Positive Behaviour

No.	Content Amendments	Date	Review Date
1.	Introduction, Rationale, Aims, Roles, Strategies, Rewards, Sanctions, Records, 10 steps, Success criteria, Review, Tracker.	April 12	Dec13
2.	Introduction, Rationale, 10 steps, positive strategies,	Dec 13	Dec 14
3.	Insert the legal rationale, process of suspension & expulsion and appeal - inspector's advice.	April 14	Dec 14
4.	Amend 10 steps. (page7) brought by the donor returned by the host. 20 mins for Junior school - no work, Until the next break Senior School with work. School may request that the child be taken home for the remainder of the day.	Jan 15	Jan 16
5.	Amend "sanctions" Page 5. Serious "out of bounds -minor" and gross add "Major out of bounds".	Nov 15	Jan 16
6.	Amend 10 step plan, now 12 step plan. Amend minor, serious and gross misdemeanours, more examples given.	April 19	April 20
7.	COVID-19 amendments - see appendices 9 and 10. Amendment to 12-Step plan. Addition to gross misdemeanour.	August 20	Oct 21
8.	COVID-19 amendments removed	Jan 23	Jan 24
9.	Minor/ Serious/ Gross Incidents updated from the AUP, reference to 'time out' changed to 'reflection time' as a more appropriate term for the purpose of the sanction	Sept 23	Sept 25

Ratified by the Board of Management

Signed by the chairperson  
on behalf of the Board of Management:

 28/09/2023  
 Brian Campion Date

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# Code of Positive Behaviour Policy

## Mission Statement

At Hansfield ETNS, we strive to create a safe, happy and warm environment that enhances our learning every day. We cherish difference. We respect ourselves and others, and by living the Educate Together ethos, we support each other to be the best that we can be, always.

In line with our school's mission statement above, this policy was created in collaboration with our school's Board of Management, parents, staff and where appropriate, pupils of Hansfield ETNS.

## Introduction

Our school is now in its 8th year and our context has been established sufficiently to fine tune our code of positive behaviour especially with regard to the twelve steps that staff use but always with an emphasis on positive reinforcements. The changes were made by the staff during a staff meeting at the beginning of January 2019. Suggestions made by the staff as a whole, individual teachers and our school's NEWB officer. The amended code was brought to the BOM for ratification on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019. It is intended that, with our full complement of pupils and staff, new staff members, fully functioning PTA and Student Council, we will review this code in January 2020 consulting all stakeholders.

## Rationale

Our requirements remain the same as those in the original code; to have a solid set of behaviour expectations, rewards and sanctions in place that will be known by everyone in our educational community including our new cohort of Junior Infants and parents joining us each September. We intend also to include reading the 12 steps and emphasising our positive strategies at our "Meet and Greet" sessions with all new pupils and their parents.

## Philosophy

Our school philosophy, while adopting the four pillars of all Educate Together schools, focuses especially on how to nurture a participative community spirit in our staff, parents and most of all in our pupils. To this end, we use the safe and encouraging school environment to develop the behaviour skills required for our pupils to accept the responsibility of active citizenship.

## Aims of our policy

- We require a clearly understood set of behaviour expectations allowing our school to function in an orderly fashion and also ensuring that every pupil's learning is enhanced to its maximum without unnecessary interruption through repeated displays of poor behaviour skills by other pupils.
- Our teaching staff will strive to promote positive behaviour and ensure that behaviour expectations are understood by everyone but also recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
- By setting out a set of behaviour expectations, we ensure the safety & wellbeing both of staff and children in our school.
- The fruits of our community actively participating in our Code of Positive Behaviour policy will be witnessed by an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others, developing in our school.

## Whole School Approach to this policy

- Our policies will be developed with all other policies in mind thus facilitating our philosophy to permeate through all aspects of our learning environment.
- Pupils, parents and teachers will work as a team, managing behaviour.
- We hope to develop a whole-school approach to curricular and classroom management that will be systematically planned for and regularly reviewed.
- We plan to accommodate new specific challenging behaviours that emerge periodically in consultation with staff, PTA, Student Council, our NEPS psychologist, our NEWB officer and our BOM.

### **Role of the Class Teacher**

- Class teachers will strive to empower our pupils to self-discipline rather than develop behaviour that simply pleases adults.
- The class teachers will be committed to using communication strategies with pupils, parents and colleagues that demonstrate co-operation, respect, tolerance and encouragement.
- While the principal has overall responsibility for discipline in the school, each class teacher assumes responsibility for maintaining discipline in their own class.
- Class teachers will strive to implement any reward/sanction system in a fair and consistent manner.
- Class teachers and Principal will keep written record of all misdemeanours and meetings with parents regarding behaviour incidents.

### **Role of the BOM**

The BOM's role in our Code of Positive Behaviour Policy is one of ensuring its generation, its appropriateness to our school's context, its compliance with DES requirements and its understanding by all members of our school community.

In relation to suspension and expulsion, the BOM is required to ensure that our policy is set out in accordance with The Education Act, periodical DES circulars, Educate Together's directives, that everyone is aware of the process of suspension and expulsion, that it is fair to all and that every stakeholder is informed about the process and any changes that are made.

### **Role of the Parent**

Parental understanding of the Code will lead to invaluable support and reinforcement. This can be achieved through organising information meetings for parents of new children to the school, encouraging parents to share information that may lead to understanding pupils' behaviour better, setting up clearly understood routes for parents to discuss behaviour challenges and encouraging parents to get involved in policy generation.

### **Positive Strategies for Managing Behaviour**

- The rules that we will reinforce in class and during assemblies will use positive language.

Be gentle, try not to hurt anybody  
Be kind, try not to hurt others' feelings  
Be honest, try not to cover up the truth,  
Do your best work, try to always finish your work  
Care for your belongings, try not to waste,  
Listen to others, try not to interrupt

- Classes in our school use "Circle Time" as a strategy that affords every child an opportunity to "soap box" their feelings on a pre-determined topic confidentially, in his/her class group. Children learn the skills of co-operative games, turn-taking, listening and shared discussion in a positive way.
- Pupils in our school will be actively involved in the democratic process from First Class onwards through the Students' Council; organisation of school events, conducting school surveys, contributing to policy generation which will all reinforce our school's positive approach to discipline through empowerment.
- Day-to-day strategies we use to focus on the positive element of our behaviour code are:

Teachers praise, sticker charts for individual pupils, Star of the week, Smiley faces for playground time, Golden book, positive comments in the home/school communication book, marble jar, Table Stars, visiting another classroom, encouragement stamps on the children's work, class singing praise/compliments, compliment boards, school-wide praise (assembly, notice board), Tír na nÓg and assembly celebrations. Fair and friendly tokens, participation in "Friends" programme.

## The playground

Children will be encouraged to participate and include those who seem to be excluded for whatever reason. Violation of playground positives will lead to “positive sanctions” similar to those in the classrooms - Supervised Withdrawal, Reflection Time, “Thinking Grid” always marked by an explanation of desired/socially acceptable behaviour. We also operate a “friendly Squad” initiative.

## Other School Activities

As new situations arise, we will develop positive behaviour strategies in conjunction with the pupils, teaching staff, SC, PTA, outside agencies and BOM: Wet day’s activities, behaviour on stairs, visitors, school trips etc.

## Rewards

- Rewards for social and academic success will be treated with equal merit
- The best reward of all is teachers’ listening & encouragement.
- Compliments, positive comments and stickers on children’s work.
- Class systems of merit marks.
- Public celebration of academic and behaviour achievement (assemblies, notes home)
- Reward certificates.
- Recording achievements in profile/assessment folders.
- Sharing achievements with parents and school community.
- Giving responsibilities as rewards.
- Occasional exclusive use of ICT, PE, art equipment etc.

## Sanctions

When a child demonstrates that he/she has difficulty displaying acceptable behaviour, we will always ensure to focus on the behaviour rather than on the child as a person. Behaviours will be considered within 3 categories.

	1. MINOR	2. SERIOUS	3. GROSS
B e h a v i o u r	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interrupting In class</li> <li>• Annoying others</li> <li>• Messing in toilet</li> <li>• Disobedience</li> <li>• Lying</li> <li>• Avoiding work</li> <li>• Refusing to work</li> <li>• Not following staff instructions</li> <li>• Inappropriate language</li> <li>• Accidental use of personal devices in school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeated ‘minor’ misbehaviour</li> <li>• Bullying (cyberbullying)</li> <li>• Racism</li> <li>• Spitting</li> <li>• Telling Lies with intent.</li> <li>• Injuring others</li> <li>• Minor Theft</li> <li>• Minor damage</li> <li>• Cheating</li> <li>• Fire alarm - accident</li> <li>• Out of Bounds - minor</li> <li>• Breaking school’s AUP</li> <li>• Intentional use of personal devices in school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeated ‘serious’ misbehaviour</li> <li>• Assault on teacher</li> <li>• Assault on pupil <i>(Note: Assault is a physical or verbal attack with intent to hurt, injure or defame)</i></li> <li>• Throwing equipment</li> <li>• Major theft</li> <li>• Major Damage</li> <li>• Fire alarm - prank</li> <li>• Out of bounds - major</li> <li>• Spitting at someone with intent</li> <li>• Repeated cyber bullying</li> <li>• Repeated intentional use of personal devices in school</li> <li>• By- pass the content filter by using proxy sites</li> </ul>
S a n c t	Behaviour Tracker Aladdin Parents informed	Yellow behaviour card home Parents invited to help devise strategies that encourage acceptable behaviour (Incredible Years behaviour plan)	Suspension Expulsion Yellow Card

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- All “once off” and repeated incidents of a minor nature will be dealt with by the class teachers immediately and using the sanctions listed chronologically on page 8 & 9.
  - It is not necessary for parents to be informed about all minor incidents but should a teacher consider it useful that parents are made aware, a brief note will be written in the child’s homework journal/notebook.
  - Incidents in the playground are managed in a manner consistent with the classroom.
1. Verbal indication of desired behaviour explained.
  2. Reflection time for a period of time as per classroom duration - (see page 8).
  3. Reflection time for remainder of playground time & Tracker & Yellow Card.
- Parents will be made aware and expected to become involved in the process should a behaviour be deemed to be consistent with step 4 to 12.
  - Should an incident be deemed “Serious”, the behaviour is dealt with beginning at steps 4-7 (Inc.) whichever is deemed to be the most appropriate.
  - In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour and failure to improve following meetings involving teachers, principal, parents and the pupil, temporary suspension will be considered (in accordance with Rule 130 (5) of the Rules for National Schools.
  - In the case of **Gross Misbehaviour**, the BOM authorises the Chairperson and Principal to sanction an initial and immediate suspension (max. 3 school days) pending a discussion with the child’s parents.
  - Should parents either not show for the meeting (without contacting the school) or not give an assurance to work with the school to modify their child’s behaviour, then the BOM can authorise a further period of suspension of max.10 days to allow for a consultation process. NEWB and ET will be informed at this stage.
  - A further period of suspension can be authorised by the BOM in exceptional circumstances.
  - For the successful modification of a **Gross Misbehaviour**, a psychological assessment may assist in identifying reasons for the behaviour and strategies for its modification. The school will support the family in any way possible.
  - Expulsion will only be considered in extreme cases, in accordance with the school’s published policy, Rule 130(6) and in consultation with NEWB, NEPS, outside agencies and our patron body, Educate Together and only when enrolment in a more appropriate educational setting has been arranged.
  - Where a BOM is of the opinion that a pupil should be permanently excluded, the NEWB will be informed in writing giving an outline of the reasons for the expulsion.
  - The expulsion will take effect 20 days subsequent to the NEWB receiving the BOM letter.
  - Where a pupil has been expelled and all appeal processes have been exhausted, the student’s expulsion will be reported to Tusla (NEWB) on a “Student Absence Report” Form.

### Keeping Records

- An individual behaviour tracker system is used on Aladdin (school administration system) for each pupil to record incidents, teacher, date, sanctions imposed and effect.
- Behaviour which reaches Step 4 and above from the ‘12 Step Behaviour Plan’ outlined below will be recorded on the behaviour tracker on Aladdin. This record of incidents will be with the child for the duration of their time in our school. All teacher/SNAs can add an entry to any child’s tracker.
- Records should be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and GDPR recommendations ensuring the eight rules for obtaining, use, storage, security and accuracy of information.

**Success Criteria**

We will endeavour to identify practical indicators of the success of this policy and share and celebrate them with everyone in our learning community.

- Observation of positive behaviour in classrooms.
- Practices and procedures being implemented by staff members.
- Positive feedback from parents, pupils and teachers.
- Practice in other schools.

**Ratification and Communication**

This policy has been devised in consultation with the staff and Board of Management of the school.

This policy should be read in conjunction with all other school policies that are in place. Relevant policies can be found on the school website: [hansfieldetns.com](http://hansfieldetns.com)

# 12 Step Behaviour Plan

1.	<i>Every child starts on green each morning. One verbal warning / reminder of desired behaviour</i>	<i>Begin here</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Indicate misbehaviour</li> <li>▪ Indicate desired behaviour</li> <li>▪ Indicate consequence</li> </ul>
2(a)	<i>Visual indication</i>	<i>1<sup>st</sup> Visual Warning</i>	Behaviour management system in each class will be the 'Traffic Lights' system. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Indicate misbehaviour</li> <li>▪ Indicate desired behaviour</li> <li>▪ Indicate consequence</li> </ul>
2(b)	<i>Visual indication</i>	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> Visual Warning</i>	
3.	<i>Reflection time in class</i>	<i>Reflection Time</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No work, sitting in a quiet corner in the room</li> <li>• Reflection time in class should be child's age + 1 minutes</li> <li>• A single 'serious' incident may reach this step without going through the previous steps</li> </ul>
4.	<p><b>Reflection time in another classroom.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age appropriate think/reflection sheet (see Appendix 1 &amp; 2) will be completed while visiting another classroom. Sheet to be taken home/signed/returned/noted on Aladdin. Infants will sit and reflect in another classroom, as opposed to completing a written reflection.</li> <li>• Reflection time in another class: 10 mins-Junior Infants, 15 mins-Senior Infants, 20 mins-1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup> Classes, until next break for 3<sup>rd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> class.</li> <li>• Children will be encouraged to work their way back up to the "green" during the day by demonstrating positive behaviour. The aim is that every child will return to "green".</li> </ul>		
5.	<p><b>Yellow card</b> (Appendix 3)</p> <p>This step is reached when the previous steps have been exhausted or if there has been a serious/gross misbehaviour. The card is sent home along with a copy of the '12 Step Behaviour Plan' with Step 5 highlighted. The 'Yellow Card' template is included below. Signed by parents. Returned to class teacher. Entered on Aladdin.</p>		
6.	<p><b>Positive Behaviour Plan</b></p> <p><b>Class teacher meets with parents.</b></p> <p>Incredible Years is a recommended behaviour strategy. The "Incredible Years" Behaviour Template (Appendix 4) is explained to parents and implemented - time limit of 1 - 6 weeks. This behaviour plan may be tailored to each individual child, as circumstance dictates. Parents are given a copy of the '12 Step Behaviour Plan' with Step 6 highlighted.</p>		
7.	<p><b>Pupil is brought to principal's office by class teacher:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If Step 6 was unsuccessful</li> <li>• 2 yellow cards/week</li> <li>• 3 yellow cards/month</li> <li>• Gross misbehaviour</li> </ul> <p><b>Parents phoned requesting an immediate meeting - Class teacher, Principal &amp; Parents.</b></p>		



	<p>(If parents cannot be contacted by phone, a letter is sent home explaining the situation and requesting a meeting. A copy of the Behaviour Policy is enclosed highlighting Step 7). Principal records the visit (Appendix 5) and informs pupil of future steps in the Behaviour Policy.</p> <p>Pupil does not return to the class for remainder of that day. E.g. reflection time in another class, return home with parent(s), remain in principal's office.</p>
8.	<p><b>Principal &amp; Class teacher meet with Parents and Child.</b></p> <p>“Daily Report” is explained - Behaviour in school will be monitored and recorded a number of times daily until the behaviour recorded is acceptable for a period of 5 consecutive days. (Appendix 6, 7 &amp; 8)</p> <p>The document is signed daily by the Class Teacher, Member of ISM, Child and Parents for the duration.</p> <p>Parents are given a copy of the Behaviour Policy with Step 8 highlighted.</p>
9.	<p><b>Pupil may be placed on a reduced day and/ or suspended for a period of 1 full day by Principal in consultation with the Chairperson of the Board of Management.</b></p> <p><b>NB. A single ‘gross’ incident may reach this stage without going through the previous steps.</b></p> <p>Parents must bring pupil to school when returning after suspension.</p> <p>Meeting with parents, class teacher and principal to review behaviour policy and devise a behaviour plan for moving forward which will be signed by all parties indicating commitment to the policy by all concerned parties. Principal to reintroduce the pupil to the class. (Appendix 6)</p>
10.	<p><b>Maximum 3 day suspension may be appropriate following consultation between School Principal and Chairperson of BOM.</b></p> <p>Parents bring pupil to school when returning after suspension</p> <p>Principal, parents and child review our policy. Parents &amp; pupil reaffirm their commitment to the policy. Principal reintroduces pupil to class.</p>
11.	<p><b>Suspension (Rule 130 (5)) - up to 20 days. (See Tusla guidelines)</b></p>
12.	<p><b>Expulsion. Following legal advice and consultation with patron body- (See Tusla guidelines)</b></p>

## NEWB - Suspensions and Expulsions.

(taken from NEWB Guidelines) See TUSLA website - Code of behaviour - guidelines for expulsion

“Access to education shapes the life chances of children and young people in a fundamental way. For this reason, a proposal to exclude a student, through suspension or expulsion, is a serious step, warranted only by very serious misbehaviour.

### The legal context

The entitlement to education is protected in a range of constitutional and legal provisions and in human rights Conventions. These legal protections for the individual student’s right to education mean that decisions to suspend or expel a student are open to appeal and may be subject to judicial review by the High Court. Schools are required, under section 23(2) of the *Education (Welfare) Act 2000*, to include their procedures for suspension and expulsion in their Code of Behaviour.

### The Board of Management should:

- Ensure that the school has a policy & procedures for the use of suspension and expulsion that are in line with NEWB Guidelines and with any additional requirements set down by Educate Together.
- Ensure that all students and parents are aware of the school’s policy for suspension and expulsion.
- Ensure that fair procedures are used for suspension and expulsion and that staff are aware of these.
- Ensure that the fair procedures are accessible to those from different language or cultural backgrounds.
- Ensure that the BOM and the Principal/DP understand their roles in the case of suspension and expulsion.

### Time and timeliness

The Board of Management and Principal have a duty to ensure that there are no undue delays in an Investigation and in making decisions about imposing suspension or expulsion.

### Confidentiality

Great care should be taken to ensure that all matters to do with an investigation of alleged misbehaviour are dealt with in confidence.

### Fair procedures based on the principles of natural justice

Our school is happy to follow the legal requirement of “fair procedures” when proposing to suspend or expel a student. The requirement for fair procedures derives from the Constitution of Ireland, international Conventions and case law. Fair procedures have two essential parts:

## 1. THE RIGHT TO BE HEARD

### The right to be heard means:

- The right to know that the alleged misbehaviour is being investigated.
- The right to know all information that will be taken into account.
- The right to know how the issue will be decided.
- The right to respond to the allegations.
- The right to be heard by the decision-making body.
- The right to ask questions of the other party or witnesses where there is a dispute about the facts.

## 2. THE RIGHT TO IMPARTIALITY

### The right to impartiality means:

- The right to an absence of bias in the decision-maker.
- The right to impartiality in the investigation and the decision-making.
- Freedom from bias entails ensuring that a person with an interest in the matter is not involved in the investigation or decision-making.  
An impartial process is one that allows a decision to be made based evaluation of information and evidence.
- Impartiality requires that the investigation is separated from the process of making a decision so that the decision-maker comes to the task with an open mind.

## Applying fair procedures in practice applies to:

- The **investigation** of alleged misbehaviour that may lead to suspension or expulsion and
- The process of **decision-making** as to (a) whether the student did engage in the misbehaviour and (b) What sanction to impose.

The **principles** of fair procedures always apply, but the degree of formality required in implementing fair Procedures will depend on the gravity of the alleged misbehaviour and on the seriousness of the possible Sanction.

### **Suspensions and expulsions: legal and procedural requirements**

The level of formality required, for example for a suspension of fewer than three days, would be less than that required in the case of a longer suspension or in circumstances that might lead to an expulsion. The principles of ensuring the **right to be heard** and the **right to impartiality** apply in all cases.

The **right to be heard** means that a student and their parents are fully informed about an allegation and the processes that will be used to investigate and decide the matter; and that they must be given an opportunity to respond to an allegation **before** a decision is made and before a serious sanction is imposed.

**Absence of Bias** in the decision-maker would mean, for example that if the child of the Principal was accused of misconduct that might warrant suspension or expulsion, the Principal would not be involved in the decision. Similarly, if the child of a member of the Board of Management was accused of misconduct, that parent would absent themselves from the Board for any consideration of the matter by the Board.

**Impartiality in decision-making** means it is preferable that, where possible, the school Principal arranges for another member or members of staff to conduct the investigation and to present a full report on the facts of the case and any other relevant information to the Principal. The Principal is then free to take a view about whether the student did engage in the behaviour and about the sanction, based on the report of the investigation.

Where circumstances require the School Principal to conduct the investigation as well as making a finding and proposing the sanction, he or she must not only act fairly but be seen to act fairly. It is incumbent upon the Principal to review the investigation to ensure that it has been fully and fairly conducted. It should be evident to the student, parents, staff and other students that the Principal, as decision-maker, is basing his/her decision, in an objective way, on the findings of the investigation.

Thoughtful application of professional judgement and knowledge of the requirements of fair procedures will generally guide decision-making about suspension and expulsion. However, in circumstances of particular complexity, school authorities may need to seek legal advice to support their decision-making.

### **Involving the Gardaí**

Where allegations of criminal behaviour are made about a student, these will usually be referred to the Gardaí who have responsibility for investigating criminal matters. The Juvenile Liaison Officer can be a significant source of support and advice for the school and the student.

## **The procedure for Suspension**

The Board of Management of a recognised National School has the authority to suspend a student. The Board of Management of **Hansfield Educate Together NS** has delegated authority to the school Principal Fergal Collins to instigate a suspension of up to three days without convening a BOM meeting. He will consult with DP/Acting DP to form a proposal. The Chairperson of the BOM will be informed immediately

indicating the rationale and how the suspension fits into an overall plan of behaviour modification for the child. Following approval, the child's parents will be informed and requested to collect their child from school. Arrangements will be made at this point for Principal, Class Teacher and Parents to discuss the Behaviour Plan for the child. A "cooling off" period is of benefit to all parties.

### **Applying the Guidelines means:**

- Ensuring that the school has a policy on, and procedures for, the use of suspension that are approved by the Board of Management and in line with NEWB Guidelines and any additional requirements set down by Educate Together.
- Ensuring the policy is widely communicated.
- Developing and documenting good practice in relation to the use of suspension
- Having fair procedures for investigation and decision-making
- Having procedures for informing parents and students about their right to appeal
- Having a system for regular review by the Board of Management of the use of suspension in the school.

Suspension should be a proportionate response to the 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:

- 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.

### **Suspension as part of a behaviour management plan**

Suspension should be part of an agreed plan to address the student's behaviour and should:

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

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend a student. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school should observe the following procedures:

1. Inform the student and their parents about the complaint
2. Give parents and student an opportunity to respond.

### **Procedures in relation to immediate suspension**

Where an immediate suspension is considered by the Principal to be warranted for reasons of the safety of the student, other students, staff or others, a preliminary investigation should be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension.

- The formal investigation should immediately follow the imposition of the suspension.
- All of the conditions for suspension apply to immediate suspension.
- No suspension, including an immediate suspension, should be open-ended.
- In the case of an immediate suspension, parents must be notified, and arrangements made for the student to be collected.
- Where parents do not agree to meet with the principal/teacher, written notification will serve as notice to impose a suspension.

### **The period of suspension**

A student should 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 in order to achieve a

particular objective. Circumstances under which suspensions of longer than three days that might be approved are listed in the table on page 5.

If a suspension longer than three days is being proposed by the Principal, the matter should be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval, giving the circumstances and the expected outcomes.

The BOM of Hansfield ETNS place a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension imposed by it.

The BOM 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.

These provisions enable school authorities to give the student a reasonable time to reflect on their behaviour while avoiding undue loss of teaching time and loss of contact with the positive influences of school.

They recognise the serious nature of the sanction of suspension and ensure that this seriousness is reflected in school procedures. 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.

## Appeals

The Board of Management should offer an opportunity to appeal a **Principal's decision to suspend a student**. In the case of **decisions to suspend made by the Board of Management**, an appeals process may be provided by the Patron.

## Section 29 Appeal

Where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days, the parents, may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the *Education Act, 1998*.

When parents are being formally notified of such a suspension, they will be told about their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science and guided through the process. The SENO and EWO will be of assistance in this regard.

## Implementing the suspension

The Principal will notify the parents in writing of the decision to suspend.

The letter should confirm the following:

- The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end.
- The reasons for the suspension.
- Any study programme to be followed.
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents - e.g. reaffirm their commitment to the code of behaviour
- The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management/Patron/DES

NOTE: The letter will be clear and easy to understand as English is not the mother tongue of a large proportion of our parent body.

## After the suspension ends

A period of suspension will end on the date given in the letter of notification to the parents of the suspension.

When the child returns to school, the principal (or another member of staff designated by the Principal) will meet with the parents to emphasise their responsibility in helping the student to behave in an acceptable manner in school. The Principal/teacher will offer help and guidance in this regard.

The school will have a plan to help the student to take responsibility for catching up on work missed. This plan will help to avoid the possibility that suspension starts or amplifies a cycle of academic failure.

Successful re-integration goes beyond academic work. A suspended student may feel angry or resentful about their suspension, and these feelings can trigger problems with reintegration which, in turn, may lead to further behaviour difficulties.

Where possible, our school will arrange for a member of staff to provide support to the student during the re-integration process.

When any sanction, including suspension, is completed, a student will be given the opportunity to seek support for a fresh start. Although a record is kept of the behaviour and any sanction imposed, once the sanction has been completed, the school should expect the same behaviour of this student as of all other students.

## EXPULSION

The Board of Management of a recognised national school has the authority to expel a student. As a matter of best practice, that authority should be reserved to the Board of Management and should not be delegated.

Expulsion should be a proportionate response to the student's behaviour. Expulsion of a student is a very serious step, and one that should only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. The school will have taken significant steps 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 e.g. National Educational Psychological Service.
  - Health Service Executive
  - Community Services,
  - National Behavioural Support Service,
  - Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services,
  - National Council for Special Education.

A proposal to expel a student requires serious incidents such as:

- 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, our school will have tried a series of other interventions, and believe we have exhausted all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour.

There also 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 other students in the school
- Sexual assault.

## **Inappropriate use of expulsion**

- poor academic performance
- poor attendance or lateness
- minor breaches of the code of behaviour.

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

## **Procedures in respect of expulsion**

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures as well as procedures prescribed under the *Education (Welfare) Act 2000*, when proposing to expel a student (see suspension section for information about fair procedures). 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 of the Principal's recommendation and holding a hearing.
4. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.
5. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

**It is a matter for each Board of Management to decide which of the tasks involved in these procedural steps requires separate meetings and which tasks can be accomplished together in a single meeting, consistent with giving parents due notice of meetings and a fair and reasonable time to prepare for a Board of Management hearing.**

## **Step 1: A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.**

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.

Parents and the student must have every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made about the veracity of the allegation, and before a sanction is imposed.

Where expulsion may result from an investigation, a meeting with the student and their parents is essential. It provides the opportunity for them to give their side of the story and to ask questions about the evidence of serious misbehaviour, especially where there is a dispute about the facts. It may also be an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction, and for the school to explore with parents how best to address the student's behaviour.

If a student and their parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal should write advising of the gravity

of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and, failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the inappropriate behaviour. The school should record the invitation issued to parents and their response.

## **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 should:

- 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 that hearing
- Advise the parents that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management.
- 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.**

It is the responsibility of the Board to review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures. The Board should undertake its own review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case. It should ensure that no party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the Board's deliberations (for example, a member of the Board who may have made an allegation about the student).

Where a Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student, it must hold a hearing. The Board meeting for the purpose of the hearing should be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures. At the hearing, the Principal and the parents, put their case to the Board in each other's presence. Each party should be allowed to question the evidence of the other party directly. The meeting may also be an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction. In the conduct of the hearing, the Board must take care to ensure that they are, and are seen to be impartial as between the Principal and the student.

Parents may wish to be accompanied at hearings and the Board should facilitate this, in line with good practice and Board procedures.

After both sides have been heard, the Board should 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 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 purpose of the consultations and the meeting is to ensure that arrangements are made for the student to continue in education. These consultations may result in an agreement about an alternative intervention that would avoid expulsion. However, where the possibility of continuing in the school is not an option, at least in the short term, the consultation should focus on alternative educational possibilities.

In the interests of the educational welfare of the student, those concerned should come together with the Educational Welfare Officer to plan for the student's future education. Pending these consultations about the student's continued education, a Board of Management 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 Board of Management should formally confirm the decision to expel (this task might be delegated to the Chairperson and the Principal). Parents should be notified immediately that the expulsion will now proceed. Parents and the student should be told about the right to appeal and supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal. A formal record will be made in BOM meetings record of the decision to expel the student.

### **Appeals**

A parent, may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (*Education Act 1998* section 29). An appeal may also be brought by the National Educational Welfare Board on behalf of a student.

### **The appeals process**

The appeals process under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998* begins with the provision of mediation by a mediator nominated by the Appeals Committee (Department of Education and Science). For further details about the Appeals process, including requirements for documentation, and the steps in the process, refer to current DES guidance.

## **Review of use of expulsion**

The Board of Management will 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.

Appendix 1 – Junior Reflection Sheet

<u>My Feelings</u>	
<u>Before</u>	<u>After</u>

<u>Others' Feelings</u>	
<u>Before</u>	<u>After</u>



# Think Sheet

What could I have done differently?

How do I feel now?

How will I make things better?

**Teacher's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Child's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix 3 - Senior Reflection Sheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What did I do? How did I feel? What choices did I make? What other choices could I have made instead?

2. How did my behaviour affect others?

3. What will I try to do the next time?

4. Who do I need to apologise? Why?

Teacher's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 4 - Yellow Card**

***Dear Parents/Guardians,***

*Your child, ..... misbehaved today and is  
now on Step 5 of our behaviour policy for:*

*Repeated disruption of class work*

*Being aggressive*

*Playground misbehaviour*

*Other:*

\_\_\_\_\_

- 1. Parents, please discuss the incident with your child.*
- 2. Parents, please sign here .....*
- 3. Please return this card to your child's class teacher*

***Many thanks for your co-operation***

Appendix 5 - Incredible Years Behaviour Plan Template

INCREDIBLE YEARS  
BEHAVIOUR PLAN TEMPLATE

Child's Name:		Class Teacher:		Date:	Review Date:
Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	
Negative Classroom Behaviours	Occasion	Desired Behaviours (Positive opposite behaviours targeted to increase)	Building Positive Relationships / Proactive Strategies (i.e., preventative strategies)	Praise and Encouragement strategies (i.e., strategies for encouraging appropriate behaviours)	

Appendix 5 - Incredible Years Behaviour Plan Template

Step 6	Step 7	Step 8	Step 9
<p>Incentives to use (tangible and non-tangible)</p>	<p>Non-intrusive discipline strategies (ignoring; redirecting, etc)</p>	<p>Intrusive discipline strategies - consequences (natural / logical; loss of privileges, etc)</p>	<p>Reflection Tim</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ When / for what behaviours?</li> <li>❖ How?</li> <li>❖ What will you do if pupil is non-compliant?</li> </ul>
<p>Parent(s) signature: _____</p> <p>Teachers Signature: _____</p>			





# Hansfield











## Educate Together National School

Barnwell Road, Hansfield, Dublin 15.

01-8614720 [www.hansfieldetns.com](http://www.hansfieldetns.com) 085-8722323 [hansfieldetns@gmail.com](mailto:hansfieldetns@gmail.com)

Pupil's Name:		Date:	Teacher:
Parent:		Parent:	Other:
1. What reasons has led to this meeting being convened?			
✓ ✓			
2. Teacher's observations/Concerns			
✓ ✓			
3. Parents' observations/concerns			
✓ ✓			
4. Agreed strategy to address the learning difficulty.			
<u>School</u>		<u>Home</u>	
1.		1.	
2.		2.	
3.		3.	
5. Date for next meeting, who should attend, evidence, resources required etc			

Appendix 7 - Junior Report

Time	Behaviour	Notes
Morning routine		
Work		
Yard		
Mid-morning work		
Mid-morning work		
Yard		
Maths		
End of day routine		

Teacher's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix 9 - Senior Report

<b>Morning</b>	<b>Tick if behaviour is displayed</b>	<b>Time that behaviour is displayed</b>	<b>Sanction/Reward</b>
Listens to teacher's instructions			
Concentrates on work			
Completes a given task			
Ignores teacher's instruction			
Does not complete classwork			
Refuses to do what was asked by teacher			
Uses kind hands and feet			
Uses nice words			
Walks in a line nicely			
Physically hurts others			
<b>First break</b>	<b>Tick if behaviour is displayed</b>	<b>Time that behaviour is displayed</b>	<b>Sanction/Reward</b>
Plays nicely on yard			
Physically hurts others on yard			
<b>After break</b>	<b>Tick if behaviour is displayed</b>	<b>Time that behaviour is displayed</b>	<b>Sanction/Reward</b>
Listens to teacher's instructions			
Concentrates on work			
Completes a given task			
Ignores teacher's instruction			
Does not complete classwork			
Refuses to do what was asked by teacher			
Uses kind hands and feet			
Uses nice words			
Walks in a line nicely			
Physically hurt others			
<b>Second break</b>	<b>Tick if behaviour is displayed</b>	<b>Time that behaviour is displayed</b>	<b>Sanction/Reward</b>
Plays nicely on yard			
Physically hurts others on yard			

Appendix 9 - Senior Report

Teacher's Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_

—

Principal's Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_

—

Parent's signature:

\_\_\_\_\_

—



# Hansfield



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Name	
Class	
Reason(s) for being 'On Report'	
Report Period (Dates)	

Appendix 9 - Senior Report

Pupil's Signature	
Parent's Signature	
Teacher's Signature	
Principal's Signature	

**Daily Report**

Page 1

<b>Daily Report</b>		
Name: _____ Date: _____		
Targets		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>		
	Teacher Comment	Pupil Comment
Morning		
1 <sup>st</sup> Yard		
Mid-Morning		
2 <sup>nd</sup> Yard		
Afternoon		

Appendix 9 - Senior Report

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<b>Pupil's Signature</b>	
<b>Parent's Signature</b>	
<b>Teacher's Signature</b>	
<b>Principal's Signature:</b>	