



Suspension and Expulsion Policy

Ballarat Steiner School is committed to ensuring that our Policy and procedures for the suspension and expulsion of a student are based on the principles of procedural fairness.

Suspension or expulsion may occur as a consequence of a serious breach of School rules, or serious and ongoing disobedience.

This Policy sets out the procedures to be followed when making a decision about the suspension or expulsion of a student.

Scope

1. This Policy must be read in conjunction with the School's *Behaviour Management Policy*. Steps outlined in this Policy are considered after disciplinary measures as outlined in the *Behaviour Management Policy* have been applied, or the behaviour requires more serious consequences.
2. Consideration of a student's behaviour is subject to the terms of this Policy while the student is in any school environment. This may include attending school, travelling to or from school or engaging in any school activity away from school (including travelling to or from that activity).

Suspension and Expulsion - Definitions

A suspension is a temporary removal of a student from all classes that a student would normally attend at school for a set period of time.

The maximum continuous period of time a student can be suspended at any given time is 5 school days. Suspension of a student for 15 days in any one school year will be referred to the School Management Team for discussion and consideration of further intervention.

Expulsion is cancelling the enrolment of a student, resulting in the permanent removal of a student from the School.

Authority to suspend or expel

Where any teacher or staff member decides that an act or the behaviour of a student may warrant suspension or expulsion, the teacher or staff member must refer the matter to the Head of School who can make a reasonable and unbiased decision.

In serious circumstances, a student may be summarily suspended, pending a final decision under this Policy. In this case, a meeting with the student (depending on their age) and the student's parents/guardians to review the suspension must be convened as soon as is practicable.

Expulsion is considered only as a last resort and requires the endorsement of the Head of School.

Grounds for suspension or expulsion

Suspension

A serious breach of School rules may result in a suspension. Such breaches may include where a student:

1. Seriously undermines the ethos of the School.
2. Consistently and deliberately fails to comply with any reasonable request of the Head of School, teacher or any staff member.
3. Behaves in such a way as to pose a danger, whether actual, perceived or threatened, to the health, safety or wellbeing of any person.
4. Causes significant damage to or destruction of property.
5. Commits or attempts to commit or is knowingly involved in the theft of property.
6. Possesses, uses or sells or deliberately assists another person to possess, use or sell illicit substances or weapons.
7. Fails to comply with any clear and reasonable instruction of a staff member so as to pose a danger, whether actual, perceived or threatened, to the health, safety or wellbeing of any person.
8. Consistently engages in behaviour that vilifies, defames, degrades or humiliates another person.
9. Consistently behaves in an unproductive manner that interferes with the wellbeing, safety or educational opportunities of any other student.

Expulsion

The student does anything mentioned as a grounds for suspension, and this behaviour is of such magnitude that, having regard to the need of the student to receive an education compared to the need to maintain the health, safety and wellbeing of other students and staff at the School and the need to maintain the effectiveness of the School's educational programs, expulsion is the only available mechanism.

Procedures – ensuring procedural fairness

Where grounds for additional academic and/or behaviour support have been established, a Student Support Group, involving key staff who will work with the family will be set-up. The Student Support Group will:

1. Consider issues relevant to the behaviour of the student and implications for others in the community.
2. Identify critical factors leading to challenging behaviours.
3. Identify educational and social needs of student.
4. Identify and explore strategies to re-establish the student in the life of the school.
5. Consider support and resources that may be available both within and outside the school.
6. Develop an action plan for responding to the student's behaviour.
7. Ensure that decisions are implemented.
8. Maintain confidentiality at all times.
9. Consider legal ramifications of both the student's behaviour and strategies implemented to deal with the student's behaviour
10. Aim for consensus of the group. Where this is not achievable the Head of School takes responsibility for the final decision.

Where processes undertaken by the Student Support Group and/or teaching staff lead to a decision being considered to suspend or expel a student, the Head of School will:

1. Meet with the student (if appropriate), and the student's parents/guardians, stating:
 1. (a) The reasons that the student is under consideration for being suspended or expelled.
 2. (b) The relevant rules, policies, and standards of behaviour alleged to have been breached.
 3. (c) The relevant allegations said to warrant suspension or expulsion.
2. Allow the student (if appropriate) and/or the student's parents/guardians to give a response, either in writing or verbally.
3. Allow the student (if appropriate) to have a support person of the student's choosing.
4. Arrange further meetings with the student and the student's parents/guardians if necessary.
5. Meet with the student and the student's parents/guardians and/or support person.
6. Ensure that such a meeting is recorded in writing.

Decision and Notification

The Head of School, after following the procedures set out in this policy, will decide about the facts of the allegations against the student.

Any information or documentation provided by the student or their parents/guardians must be considered in making the decision.

The Head of School will then decide whether to suspend or expel a student based on the following considerations:

1. The safety of all students, staff and visitors.
2. The seriousness of the student's acts.
3. Any disability of the student.
4. The age of the student.
5. The response or remorse of the student (if applicable).
6. The pastoral care, educational needs and welfare of the student.
7. The student's prospects for rehabilitation.

Ballarat Steiner School and Kindergarten does not and shall not **discriminate** on the basis of race, colour, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry) and disability in any of its activities or operations including in making these decisions.

The decision made under this Policy will be communicated verbally or in writing to the student (if appropriate) and the student's parents/guardians.

In the case of a suspension, the school days on which the suspension shall occur and where the suspension will occur must be communicated.

The student, and the student's parents/guardians must abide by the terms and conditions of this decision.

Serving a suspension

1. For an in-school suspension, the student attends the School during school hours, but is excluded from normal classes.
2. For an out-of-school suspension, the student serves the period of the suspension at home. Parents/guardians are required to ensure the student has appropriate supervision at home for the period of the suspension.
3. Where a student is suspended for 3 school days or less, the School is required to provide the student with meaningful work to be undertaken during the suspension, if appropriate.
4. Where a student is suspended for more than 3 school days, the School is required to develop a *Student Absence Learning Plan* and *Return to School Support Plan*.

Appeals

A student and/or their family may seek a review of a decision made under this Policy. All appeals must be made in writing, to the Head of School, setting out the grounds of

appeal. In the case of an expulsion, the appeal must be submitted to the Head of School within 10 days of the expulsion taking effect.

In the case of expulsions, the decision by the Head of School to expel the student will be either upheld or overturned by a specially convened Expulsion Review Panel.

Register of suspensions and expulsions

The suspension or expulsion of a student is recorded on that student's individual file.

A central register of suspensions and expulsions is maintained and kept in our Administration area. Upon deciding upon suspensions or expulsions in accordance with this Policy, it is the responsibility of the Head of School to advise and record the details of the suspension or expulsion for entry into the register.

Confidentiality must be maintained at all times with regard to the suspension and expulsion of students. Access to the register of suspensions and expulsions is appropriately restricted to authorised users only.

Related Policies: Behaviour Management Policy

Document ID: Suspension and Expulsion Policy

Next Review Date:

Ratified by Committee of Management:

Written by the College of Teachers.