



St. Oliver Plunkett N.S

Code of Behaviour

Introductory Statement

This Code of Behaviour was developed and reviewed through a consultation process involving children, teachers, Special Needs Assistants, ancillary staff, parents, PA and B.O.M.

Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School

We endeavour to nurture each child to develop his/her potential in a caring environment where the talents of each child are valued. This can only be achieved where there is a high level of respect and co-operation among staff and between staff, parents and children.

Aims

1. To enhance the learning environment where children can make progress in all aspects of their development.
2. To develop in the children a sense of respect, tolerance and consideration among all members of the school community.
3. To increase the co-operation between home and school
4. To ensure that parents understand and accept the rules and procedures of the code of behaviour and to provide guidance for children, staff and parents with regard to behavioural expectations.
5. To promote self-discipline and positive behaviour recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
6. To allow the school to function in an orderly and harmonious way.
7. To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community.
8. To outline (a) a structure of good behaviour (b) a transparent procedure and (c) agreed sanctions that will be available to teachers in response to behaviour which is unacceptable and which causes unhappiness and distress.

9. To enable teachers to teach and children to learn without disruption.

Guidelines (content of policy)

The school code places a greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions, and the ideal is that children will acquire self-discipline. There may be times however when it may be necessary to impose sanctions in order to maintain good order and to discourage inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour. We recognise the importance of a strong sense of community within the school and the existence of a high level of co-operation among teachers, ancillary staff, children, parents, BOM and PA. This high level of co-operation is seen as most beneficial to school discipline. The inclusion of the procedures for suspension and expulsion is necessary but their use is to be avoided if at all possible.

Strategies aimed at promoting good behaviour

Here is a collection of strategies aimed at promoting good behaviour in our school.

- Good home-school links and co-operation between teachers and parents.
- Parents encouraging good behaviour and checking that their children are behaving well in school e.g. parent to sign all correspondence from teacher
- Teachers presenting well prepared material in a way that is interesting and suitable to the level of the development and ability of each class.
- Motivating the children to have good behaviour through the use of praise and rewards, i.e. stickers, rewards, points on class dojo, student of the week, raffles, etc.
- Matching our expectations of children's behaviour to the level of their development and maturity.
- Effective supervision at all times, especially when children are outside the classroom during school hours and participating in school approved activities outside school hours.
- Treating the children with firmness yet kindness through a consistent application of rules geared to promote good behaviour.
- The teacher teaching discipline, i.e. educating the children to appreciate good behaviour and to espouse self-discipline; discourage physical aggression and encourage "Kind Hands, Kind Words, Kind Feet"

School Rules

These rules are devised with regard to the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. Within the context of this community, it is important to realise that some rules pertain particularly to an environment where over two hundred children and adults work daily, and as such it requires certain rules which on a one to one basis or family basis would seem unreasonable. We would ask parents to read this document with their children every term and highlight its importance to ensure that they understand the school rules.

1. Bullying in any form will not be tolerated. Parents are asked to co-operate with the school in a respectful way when dealing with instances of bullying.
2. Children are encouraged to wear the full uniform/tracksuit as appropriate. (no logos)

3. The home work set by teachers should receive the child's best attention. If homework cannot be done for some genuine reason, parents should inform the class teacher. A short note in the homework notebook will suffice.
4. Children are not allowed to bring to school any item, substance or material that might be a distraction to learning or a danger to one-self or others i.e. pen knives, lighters, matches, cigarettes, solvents, alcohol, glass bottles, mobile phones, cameras, PSP, i-pods, match attack stickers/cards.
5. Children need to follow hand hygiene guidelines in school and protect each other by sanitising and following school safety protocols.
7. Pupils are expected to follow instructions from staff immediately
8. Courtesy and respect to all adults and other pupils is expected at all times. Disrespectful behaviour towards other pupils or towards a teacher (cheek, defiance, insolence, constant talking or other disruptive behaviour (will not be tolerated)
9. pupils should take responsibility for their own work and do their best in class.
10. Pupils are expected to respect school and other pupil's property aswell as their learning.
11. pupils should show a readiness to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict

Rules were formulated by the children

The following rules were formulated by the children and are revised regularly.

- Be gentle - Never hit anyone or play rough games.
- Be friendly, polite and courteous towards the other children, staff and visitors.
- Freeze on the spot when the bell rings and walk quietly to the line when the bell stops ringing.
- Don't mess or push in the line.
- Stay out of classrooms, toilets and hallways during breaks. Ask an adult for permission to go indoors to the toilet.
- Wear outdoor shoes or boots when playing on the pitch (1st-6th classes)
- Don't play with sticks or stones.
- Don't climb trees, fences or walls.
- Appreciate the beauty of the garden and playground. Put litter in bins.
- Stay in the correct zone in the playground.
- Play safely at all times and walk away from trouble.
- Don't play ball games in the yard before or after school.
- Wear a helmet while playing hurling or camogie.
- Be careful not to splash others when there are puddles in the yard.
- Take turns during games and decide on the rules before the game begins
- Don't swing from the canopy, fence, gate or goalposts. Don't pull at goal nets, trees or padding on the basketball posts.
- Follow the Stay Safe Code. Don't bully others or allow others to bully you.
- Seek permission from a teacher to go to the garden or leave the school grounds. Adults only go on the road to get the ball.
- Stand back to let adults or very young children pass.
- No child has permission to access computers during break or lunchtime.

- Walk quietly in the hall, classroom and when going to and from the yard/gate/community centre/church/pitch & assembly points.
- Wait inside the gate until your parents arrive or until the bus has parked and the door is open.
- Be kind and respectful to others - Don't hurt other people's feelings. Don't call people names.
- Don't leave others out by forming clubs in class or on the yard or ganging up on someone. Don't boss people around. Don't mimic people. Don't tell lies or spread rumours about others.
- Use polite and appropriate language at all times.
- Always tell the truth.
- Listen to others when they are speaking
- Respect your own property, other pupils' property and the schools' property - Don't waste, damage or steal things. Don't take other peoples' possessions without permission.
- Work quietly - no fiddling, messing or disrupting others while they are working.
- Keep your hands, feet and any objects to yourself- 'Kind Hands, Kind Words & Kind Feet'
- Put up your hand when you want to speak.
- When a visitor comes into the room to talk to the teacher- Whisper. Don't interrupt.
- Help others and tell a teacher if something is wrong.
Wait for the teacher's permission to go out to break when the bell rings
- Don't bring money to school unless requested by school and approved by parents.
- Have a positive attitude to school and enjoy your time in school.

We will all be safer and happier when we follow these rules.

In addition to these rules pupils are expected to

- Apologies to others if they have misbehaved
- Accept apologies from those who have misbehaved towards them and work to their best to reconcile and move on amicably
- Co-operate fully with their teachers instructions as given as that an effective education programme can be undertaken.
- Respect the right of other pupils to learn. Any behaviour that interferes with this right or which distracts other pupils from learning is unacceptable.
- Treat others as they would like to be treated.
- Verbal and physical abuse of other pupils is strictly forbidden.

Class Rules

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children. These reflect and support the school rules, but are presented in a way that is accessible to the children. Class rules should be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. They should where possible emphasise positive behaviour (e.g. 'Walk' and not 'Don't run'). Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

Rewards:

Most of our children are very well behaved and rewarding good behaviour is an important part of our code. The following strategies may be utilised to reward good behaviour:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A note about good or improved behaviour in child's homework journal
- Verbal communication with parent
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- A special effort to 'catch' children behaving well and praise this
- Responsibility for a class job
- A visit to another class or Principal for commendation
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- Some homework off if particular targets are achieved
- Student of the day / week or other reward strategies - certificates, raffles, best listeners, gold medals, class dojo, Principal's Award, recognition at weekly assemblies, etc.
- End of year school report
- A class treat e.g. fun activities, story-time, extra free-play or PE, treats, etc
- Use the element of surprise e.g. reward something positive unexpectedly

Sanctions:

Strategies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour:

1. Initial warnings; oral, visual, etc.
2. Reason with the child / verbal reprimand (including advice on how to improve) Child is asked to apologise to the relevant party and undo damage if possible
3. Temporary separation from peers, i.e. changing the seating arrangements in class for the rest of the morning/day/week
4. Write an account on what happened and get it signed by parents/guardians
5. Prescribe extra homework to be signed by parent/guardian
6. A note in homework journal to be signed by parent/guardian
7. Move to another classroom for a short period{When possible due to Covid}
8. Class teacher speaks to parents concerning the misbehaviour. Parents are asked to deal with it so as to avoid further repetition and to encourage improved behaviour
9. Note repeated misbehaviour
10. Loss of privileges, e.g. sporting events, treats, outings.
11. Supervised detention during a break
12. Restriction of participation in selected activities/projects or outings
13. Referral to Principal
14. Case conference with child, class teacher, principal and parents/guardians
15. Suspension/ Expulsion
16. In order to ensure that standards of safety and good behaviour are observed, a child may be asked to take time out from play during break/lunch time, in a designated area in the yard at the discretion of the yard supervisor (e.g. a child may be asked to walk with the supervisor or stand/sit for some time- out watching play rather than being free to join in).

Procedures for correction of Misbehaviour:

Correction is seen as part of the education process. The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by helping the child to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable. It helps children to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others. It helps them to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences. It helps them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour. Sanctions may prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning and keep the child and others safe.

Degree of misdemeanours

The degree of misdemeanours will be judged by the teachers based on the definitions as follows:

(a) Examples of minor misdemeanours: Interrupting class work / Running in school building / Misbehaving in class line / Leaving litter around school / Being discourteous/ Unmannerly / Not completing homework or class work without good reason.

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with minor misdemeanours:

- Show disapproval / Direct the child back to the work at hand
- Direct the child's attention away from the source of misbehaviour by setting some work for him/her or occupy the child with some classroom chores
- If an object is the cause of distraction or inattention remove it
- Separate children who together are the cause of class disruption

(b) Examples of serious misdemeanours: Ongoing minor misdemeanours will be looked upon as serious

- Constantly disruptive in class
- Telling lies / Stealing
- Damaging other pupils property / Vandalism of any kind including writing graffiti
- Rudeness - giving cheek
- All types of bullying or threatening behaviour
- Laughing or jeering at other's mistakes or disabilities
- Leaving school premises during school day without appropriate permission
- Endangering self and/or deliberately injuring a fellow pupil
- Fighting
- Showing disrespect to staff
- Persistently and deliberately not working to full potential
- Using unacceptable language
- Bringing banned items to school
- Disobedience- defiance
- Passing offensive remarks to others

Teachers shall keep a written record of all instances of serious misbehaviour as well as a record of improvements in the behaviour of disruptive pupils.

Dealing with serious misdemeanours

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with serious misdemeanours:

- Teacher/adult on duty investigates the incident first.
- The child is asked to write the story of what happened – to be signed by parents/guardians.
- The teacher puts a note in the homework journal to be signed by parent/guardian.
- The parents shall be contacted by the class teacher, informed of the misbehaviour and asked to deal with it so as to avoid further repetition.
- Where a child wilfully disregards school rules and infringes on rights of others to participate in school activities, the sanctions already listed will be used to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour.
- Should this fail to resolve the situation and further serious misbehaviour arises, the parents shall be contacted again and invited to the school to discuss the matter with the class teacher and Principal, with a view to ending the matter and bringing about improved behaviour. At this stage the parents shall be advised that further instances of misbehaviour could lead to suspension.
- The Chairperson of the Board is informed and the parents are requested, in writing, to attend at the school to meet with the Chairperson and Principal. If parents refuse to acknowledge the behaviour or to co-operate with the school authorities, the child may be suspended from the school. Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

Gross Misdemeanours

Repeated incidences of serious misbehaviour; aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a staff member or other child will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour, depending on circumstances.

Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with gross misdemeanours:

- Before resorting to serious sanctions, e.g. suspension, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised.
- For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. (For further information on suspension/expulsion see Appendix 1).
- For children who are displaying serious emotional and behavioural needs an assessment by NEPS, CAMHS or HSE may be suggested to their parents.

Other policies, procedures and practices that are linked to the code of behaviour are the anti-bullying policy, health and safety, equality, dress code, enrolment, classroom management, teaching and learning, attendance etc.

Success Criteria

Positive feedback from teachers, parents and children will indicate the success of this policy. Teacher observation and records of behaviour in classrooms, hallways and yard will form the main criteria.

Roles and Responsibility

Board of Management

It has ultimate responsibility for the effective running of the school. It holds the position of highest authority and has the final decision on school matters. It can promote good discipline by advancing the general effectiveness of the school, by supporting the Principal, teachers and parents in their implementation of this Code of Behaviour. It may also have to deal with those issues that go beyond the scope of day to day practice.

As the BoM is responsible for the Health and safety of all staff and students, parents are asked to refrain from approaching or reprimanding another person's child on the school premises.

"The Board will not tolerate any rude or threatening behaviour towards staff members. The Board of Management has a duty of care to protect their staff under the Health Safety & Welfare at Work Act 2005. Failure to comply with this request may result in an individual being asked to leave the premises and the Board will be informed. In serious cases the Gardaí may be called. Posting of slanderous comments on social media platforms about members of staff will also be deemed as a serious breach of the Code and may result in the staff member and /or Board taking legal action.

Parents who have a serious difficulty or wish to make a complaint may do so following the grievance procedures that are set out in the CPSMA/INTO agreed parental procedures stages 1-5. Following these procedures is very rare as most difficulties can be resolved locally with the teacher and/or the Principal.

Meetings with teachers and Principal must be by appointment. Supervision and teaching cannot be interrupted as a staff member cannot adequately supervise children while at the same time speaking to a parent. Every effort will be made to facilitate a meeting with the parent after school. If a parent has an urgent message for teacher, the message may be passed on via the secretary or Principal. Parents are asked not to go classroom doors in the mornings to speak to a teacher but to relay the message via the Principal or secretary."

The Principal

The Principal promotes a positive climate and general good discipline in the school. She directs the teachers to do likewise and gives them the support and help they need to do so. She develops home-school relations and co-operation and takes overall responsibility for the children's improvement through the effective implementation of the code of behaviour. She arranges for the annual review of the Code.

Teachers

The Teachers' duty is to promote good discipline in their personal daily interactions with the children and with each other. Good classroom management, effective teaching methods and a positive approach to promoting good behaviour are the teachers' tools in promoting good discipline. The teachers' efforts will extend beyond their own classroom and through co-operation with each other and the parents promote whole-school discipline also. Teachers will

- Recognise and affirm good work.

- Prepare school work and correct work done by children.
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among children.
- Be courteous, consistent and fair.
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum.
Keep interruptions to a minimum during teaching time.
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour.
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour.
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

Parents

The Parents play a crucial role in shaping attitudes in their children which produce good behaviour in school. Parents can co-operate with the school by

- Ensuring that children attend regularly and punctually.
- Ensuring that every absence is accounted for in writing on the Absence Sheet provided on the child's return to school
- Encouraging children to respect their own property, that of others and the school property
- Being interested in, support and encourage their children's school work
- Ensuring that homework is allotted due time and effort and the homework journal/diary is signed each night
- Equipping children with appropriate school materials, sufficient healthy lunch and full uniform
- Being familiar with the Code of Behaviour, support its implementation and encourage their children to abide by the school rules
- Co-operating with teachers if their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others. Parents' confidence and trust in the school can be put to the test should they receive a bad report on their child's behaviour. They should realise that the teacher is concerned for the child's good and that it is together that they will most effectively promote this.
- Communicating with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child's progress or behaviour. E.g. a note to teacher in the homework journal /make a prior arrangement to meet the teacher

Children

The Children must learn that it is through the order of good discipline that the good of all is promoted. Hopefully they will be a credit to themselves, their families and their school. Children should

- Listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice.
- Show respect for all members of the school community.
- Respect all school property and the property of teachers and other children.
- Don't behave in any way which would endanger others.
- Avoid nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling.
- Include other children in games and activities.
- Bring correct materials/books to school.
- Follow school and class rules.

Each of the partners has been dealt with separately, but rather than each holding a separate and distinct role, it is the overlap of their efforts which will most promote the success of the school's Code of Behaviour.

Implementation

Every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour. Rules should be adhered to. Emphasis is on positive behaviour. Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the children and to individual difference. Good behaviour will be encouraged and rewarded. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

Timeframe for Review

The next review will take place in September 2022.

Ratification and Communication

Following ratification by the Board of Management the policy will be accessible to all on the school website www.newcastlens.blogspot.ie

Signed: **Rita Keane**

Chairperson, BOM

Date:

Signed:

Principal

Appendix 1: Suspension / Expulsion

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised.

Suspension

The decision to suspend a child requires serious grounds such as that:

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

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension. Suspension will be part of an agreed plan to address the child's behaviour. It will:

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

In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the child in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of children or staff or any other person.

Procedures in respect of suspension: Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school will observe the following procedures:

- inform the child and their parents about the complaint, how it will be investigated, and that it could result in suspension.
- give parents and child an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed. Parents may be informed by phone or in writing, depending on the seriousness of the matter.

A meeting with the child and their parents will provide an opportunity for them to give their side of the story. 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 child's behaviour. If a child and their parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal will 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 negative behaviour.

In the case of an immediate suspension

A preliminary investigation will be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. Parents will be notified, and arrangements made with them for the child to be collected. The school will have regard to its duty of care for the child. The formal investigation will immediately follow the suspension.

A child 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 in order to achieve a particular objective. This matter will be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval, giving the circumstances and the expected outcomes. The Board may authorise the Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson, to

impose a suspension of up to five days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion.

Appeals

The Board will offer an opportunity for parents to appeal a Principal's decision to suspend a child. In the case of decisions to suspend made by the Board, an appeals process may be provided by the Patron. Where the total number of days for which the child has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days, the parents, or a child aged over eighteen years, may appeal the suspension. At the time when parents are being formally notified of such a suspension, they and the child will be told about their right to appeal to the Department of Education and will be given information about how to appeal.

Implementing the suspension

The Principal will notify the parents and the child in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will confirm:

- Period of the suspension and dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- Reasons for the suspension
- Any study programme to be followed
- Arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the child and the parents (for example, parents might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the code of behaviour)
- Provision for an appeal to the Board of Management
- The right to appeal to the Department of Education and Skills (DES)

Engaging with child and parents

Where a decision to suspend has been made, the Principal and/ or staff members, delegated by the Principal, will meet with the parents to emphasise their responsibility in helping the child to behave well when the child returns to school and to offer help and guidance in this. Where parents do not agree to meet with the Principal or delegated staff member, written notification will serve as notice to impose a suspension.

Following or during a period of suspension

The parent/s may apply to have the child reinstated to the school. The parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended child will behave in accordance with the school code and the Principal and class teacher must be satisfied that the child's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the child's own safety or that of the other children or staff. The Principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the child and will re-admit the child formally to the class.

A suspension may be removed if the DES directs that it be removed following an appeal. A period of suspension will end on the date given in the letter of notification to the parents about the suspension. The school will have a plan to help the child to take responsibility for catching

up on work missed. Where possible, the school will arrange for a member of staff to provide support to the child during the re-integration process.

Expulsion

The decision to expel a child will only be taken by the Board in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. The school will have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a child including:

- meet with parents and the child to try to find ways of helping the child to change their behaviour
- make sure that the child understands the possible consequences of their behaviour, if it should persist
- ensure that all other possible options have been tried
- seek the assistance of support agencies (e.g. NEPS, HSE; Community Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, CAMHS, National Council for Special Education)

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

- the child's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- the child's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
- the child 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 child's behaviour.

Expulsion for a first offence

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board forms the opinion that a child 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 child or member of staff
- actual violence or physical assault
- supplying illegal drugs to other children in the school
- sexual assault

Given the seriousness of expulsion as a sanction the Board will undertake a very detailed review of a range of factors in deciding whether to expel a child.

Procedures in respect of expulsion:

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that warrants expulsion, the procedural steps will include:

1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.

Where expulsion may result from an investigation, a meeting with the child 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. 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 child's behaviour. If a child and their parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal will 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 will record the invitation issued to parents and their response.

2. A recommendation to the Board by the Principal.

The Principal will:

- inform the parents and the child that the Board is being asked to consider expulsion
- ensure that parents have records of: the allegations against the child; the investigation; and written notice of the grounds on which the Board is being asked to consider expulsion
- provide the Board with the same comprehensive records as are given to parents
- notify the parents of the date of the hearing by the Board and invite them to that hearing
- advise the parents that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board
- ensure that parents have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

3. Consideration by the Board 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 will undertake its own review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case. It will ensure that no party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the Board's deliberations (i.e., a member of the Board who may have made an allegation about the child).

Where a Board decides to consider expelling a child, it must hold a hearing.

The Board meeting for the purpose of the hearing will 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 will be allowed to question the evidence of the other party directly. The Board will take care to ensure that they are impartial between the Principal and the child. After both sides have been heard, the Board will ensure that the Principal and parents are not present for the Board's deliberations.

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.

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 will now inform the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO).

Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO)

Within twenty days of receipt of a notification from a Board of its opinion that a child should be expelled, the EWO must:

- make all reasonable efforts to hold individual consultations with the Principal, the parents and the child, 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 child 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 will focus on alternative educational possibilities.

In the interests of the educational welfare of the child, those concerned should come together with the EWO to plan for the child's future education.

Pending these consultations about the child's continued education, the Board may take steps to ensure that good order is maintained and that the safety of children is secured (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24 (5)). The Board may consider it appropriate to suspend a child during this time.

Confirmation of the decision to expel

Where the twenty-day period following notification to the EWO has elapsed, and where the Board remains of the view that the child should be expelled, the Board will formally confirm the decision to expel. Parents will be notified immediately that the expulsion will now proceed. Parents and the child will 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 of the decision to expel the child.

For further details about the Appeals process, including requirements for documentation, and the steps in the process, refer to current Dept. of Education and Skills guidance.