

# SUSPENSION AND EXCLUSION POLICY

*Hamilton High School aims to create and to maintain an inclusive, safe, happy and harmonious environment conducive to Good Teaching and Learning. All members of the school community have a responsibility to ensure the success of the Code of Behaviour.*

However, if a student chooses to misbehave after interventions by their Year Head and/or the Deputy Principal, or if a student is involved in a single incident of serious misconduct there may be grounds for suspension. The student will be required to absent himself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days if they are suspended.

A student may be suspended by the Principal for up to *five* days or by the Board of Management for a longer period of time.

A student may be permanently excluded, if having exhausted all reasonable interventions they persist in engaging in serious misbehaviour. The Board of Management of the school may permanently exclude a student from the school.

## **A student may be suspended**

- If their behaviour has a seriously detrimental effect on the education and well-being of other students.
- If their behaviour seriously impedes the teaching process.
- If the student's continued presence in the school constitutes a threat to the Health, Safety and Welfare of themselves or any of the educational partners.
- If the student is responsible for serious damage to property.
- If a student is in possession of and/or uses alcohol, illegal drugs or substances on the school premises, at official school events or on school outings.
- A serious breach of the acceptable usage policy.

## **A student may be permanently excluded**

- If a student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or the teaching process.
- If the student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to the health, safety and welfare of themselves and others.
- If the student is responsible for serious damage to property.
- If a student is in possession of and/or uses alcohol, illegal drugs or substances on the school premises, at official school events or on school outings.
- A serious breach of the acceptable usage policy.

In **exceptional circumstances**, a single incident of misconduct/first offence may be grounds for exclusion.

Example;

- A serious threat of violence against another student or staff member.
- A serious threat to the Health and Safety of the school community
- Actual violence or physical assault
- Supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school
- Sexual assault
- A serious breach of the acceptable usage policy.

## Procedures

1. An alleged incident of misbehaviour will be reported to the Year Head/Deputy Principal/Principal. The Principal may impose an immediate suspension, following a preliminary investigation, if there is a threat to the health, welfare or safety of the student or others.
2. Staff will follow the 'ladder of referral'.
3. The alleged incident: A written statement may be taken by the Year Head /Deputy Principal/Principal. The alleged incident will be investigated by the Year Head and Deputy Principal/Principal in a timely manner. Please refer to the school's anti bullying policy for details with regard to bullying.
4. Parents will be informed by phone or in writing about their son's alleged misbehaviour. They will be informed about the investigation and that it could result in their son's Suspension/Permanent Exclusion.
5. The Year Head/Deputy Principal will report their findings to the Principal. The Principal, if necessary, will investigate further and report findings, if necessary, to the Board of Management of the school.
6. The student and their parents may be invited to meet with the Principal/ Board of Management to discuss the seriousness with which the school views the alleged misbehaviour and to respond before a sanction is imposed.
7. The Principal may impose a suspension of up to five days. The Principal will notify the Board of Management of all suspensions with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension. The Principal may, if necessary, consult and notify the EWO (Education Welfare Officer) in the case of suspension.
8. Parents will be contacted by the Principal to confirm the period of suspension, the reasons for the suspension, the study programme to be followed and arrangements for returning to school. It is recommended that the student, and their parents if required, will meet with the school's Guidance Counsellor and keep in regular contact with their Year Head on their return to school.
9. If a suspension longer than five days is proposed, the Principal will refer the matter to the Board of Management of the school. The Board of Management will consider the Principal's recommendations and review the initial investigation. The Board of Management will undertake a review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case.
10. A hearing will be held by the Board of Management if a suspension longer than 5 days or permanent exclusion has been recommended. Parents and the student will be given an opportunity to respond before a sanction is imposed. The Board of Management will consult with the EWO in the case of a proposed permanent exclusion and will deliberate and take any necessary actions following the hearing. The Board of Management may impose any one period of suspension of up to ten days. When a student is suspended for 20 days or more in a school year, the suspension is subject to appeal. The Board of Management may in very serious circumstances, permanently exclude a student.
11. Parents have the right to appeal a suspension to the Board of Management of the school. The written appeal must be sent to the Board of Management of the school immediately (within 3 days) outlining the case of appeal. When the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days or a student is permanently excluded, parents may appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.