Walterstown N.S

Ar Aghaidh le Chéile

Enrolment Policy

September 2017

*This document includes school policy on:*

* *General Enrolment,*
* *Enrolment in Special Class*
* *Code of Discipline and Behaviour*
* *Anti-Bullying,*
* *Suspension and Expulsions.*
* *Application forms*

Table of Contents:

General Enrolment Policy .......................................................................................Page 3

Enrolment Policy for Special Class..........................................................................Page 8

Code of Discipline and Behaviour...........................................................................Page 10

Suspension Policy................................................................................................... Page 17

Expulsion Policy...................................................................................................... Page 21

Anti-Bullying Policy................................................................................................ Page 25

Application Forms ...................................................................................................Page 27

General Enrolment Policy.

General Information:

Walterstown National school is a co-educational Catholic school under the patronage of the Apostolic Administrator for the diocese of Cloyne, Archbishop Dermot Clifford. The school is governed by the Board of Management which includes teachers, parents, nominees of the Patron and members of the wider community.

While the School recognises the rights of parents in choosing the primary school for their children as enshrined in the 1998 Education Act, parents living outside the catchment area of the school will be asked to consider schools nearer to their place of residence before proceeding with enrolment.

Maximum Inclusion Policy:

The school welcomes all children, irrespective of ability, domination or family circumstance.

The school extends a particular welcome to children with special educational needs. The school will endeavour to seek the optimum level of support and resources from the relevant agencies in both the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Health to assist in its maximum inclusion policy.

In September 2017 the school opened a Special Class for Children with Autism. The school now has one class in this Unit which is named Le Chéile. Each class has a maximum class size of six. Applications for places in Le Chéile will be considered by the Board in consultation with COPE Foundation and the school SENO appointed by the NCSE.

A separate policy for enrolling children into Special Class is attached (Appendix1)

Staff:

At present the school has an administrative Principal, seven mainstream class teachers and 3.5 full-time Special Education Teachers and one special class teachers.

The school also has a Secretary and four Special Needs Assistants.

Class Organisation:

For the school year 2017-18 the classes are organised as follows:

SEN Team:

Le Chéile

Special Classes for Children with Autism with a Mild Learning Difficulty.

Class organisation is reviewed on an annual basis and is subject to change.

Where a particular class has to be split, children will be placed by the principal in consultation with the class teachers. Split classes will be organised on a mixed ability basis. Classes are split on the basis of mixed ability and gender balance. Decisions on split classes are non-negotiable.

Staff deployment is decided by the Principal.

Staff are addressed using surnames.

Funding:

The school is non-fee paying and depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education and Science. Accordingly school policy must have regard to the resources and funding available.

Making an Application to Enrol children into the Junior Infant Class.

* A child must be four years old before the 1st September of the year they start school.
* Parents who wish to enrol a child in the school should arrange to meet the School Principal.
* Parents who wish to enrol their children must sign an Application to Enrol Form. The signing of this form is not a guarantee of a place.
* Parents will be informed of the projected number for the junior infant class(es). They will also be told of projected enrolment numbers and provisional class division plans where relevant.
* Any questions on school policy will be answered where possible.
* Parents must complete a School Profile for each child

It is expected that the parents will:

* Inform the school about the child’s progress to date.
* Inform the school of any circumstance(s) which might impact on the child’s education.
* Brief the Principal on any special preparatory measures the school may need to make in order to facilitate the child’s inclusion into the school community.

Induction and Familiarisation.

Incoming junior infants will be invited to the school in June where they will spend an afternoon with the class teacher. The session will last no longer than one hour. Parents are requested to leave the children with the teacher for the duration of the induction session.

Parents will be invited to an evening meeting where they will be addressed by both the Principal and the Junior Infant teacher(s).This meeting will be followed by a Questions/Answers session

Making an Application to Enrol Children into Classes other than Junior Infants.

* Applications, except in the case of a change of residence, are not generally entertained during the school year.
* Places are not normally allocated to students who wish to transfer from other schools in the locality.
* Parents who wish to enrol their children into classes other than Junior Infants must contact the Principal to arrange a meeting. At the meeting with the Principal, the parents will be informed of the number on roll for the class(es) into which they seek to enrol their child(ren) as well as projected numbers and provisional class divisions where relevant.
* Questions on School Policy will be answered where possible.

It is expected that parents:

* Explain their reason(s) for seeking to enrol their child(ren) in the school.
* Provide the school with written progress records or/and reports from the previous school.
* Inform the school of any circumstance(s) which might impact either directly or indirectly on the child’s education in the school.
* Brief the Principal on any special preparatory measures the school may need to make in order to facilitate the child’s inclusion into the school community.
* Fill out an Application to Enrol Form. The signing of this form does not guarantee an offer of a place. The application will be considered by the Board of Management.

Class Size:

While the school operates a Maximum Inclusion Policy, the following points must be noted.

* The teacher pupil ratio within the school is determined by the Minister of Education and Science.

Applications exceeding Places:

When the number of applicants exceeds the number of available spaces the Board of Management is not obliged to accept any further enrolments and may only do so in emergency situations eg. in co-operation with the HSE.

Parents who seek enrolment of their children when the school is full will be advised to seek enrolment in:

* One of the other parish primary schools.
* Any of the other schools in the East Cork area but particularly those closest to the child’s residence. The Principal will advise parents on an individual basis.

In the event of the number of applications exceeding the number of places available the Board of Management will make the final decision(s) using the following prioritised criteria:

1. Brothers and Sisters (including step-siblings, resident at same address) of children already enrolled-priority to oldest.
2. Siblings of past pupils
3. Children whose home address is closest to the school (as measured by a straight line on O.S. map on The Great Island). Proof of address may be required.
4. Children of current school staff-priority to oldest
5. Children of past pupils
6. Children living within the Parish-priority to oldest
7. In the event of being unable to enrol a child (ren), those children will be put on a waiting list for the school year for which the application has been made. If parents wish to have their children considered for the following school year, a new application must be submitted. Applicants on the reserve list will only be offered a place in the school when the waiting list is cleared and will be prioritised according to a-f above.

\*Should the number of siblings exceed the number of available spaces then the Board will make a decision based on criteria 2 and 3.

All applications will be considered by the Board of Management. The closing date for receipt of applications is the first Friday in February.

All parents will be contacted in the month of February / March before the September that their child is due to start school.

Those offered places will be asked to confirm acceptance in writing before a specified date. Failure to confirm acceptance will result in forfeiture of the offer.

Those children not offered places will be placed on a waiting list.

Forfeited places will be offered to those children on the waiting list using the prioritised criteria above.

Equality of Access:

In order to facilitate equality of access for children with special needs the following objectives apply.

* In accordance with Department of Education and Science policy and directives all available resources will be sought. Special teaching support for each child with special needs will be supplied.
* A formalised system of childcare support will be provided for those children who have been assessed as requiring such support.
* The school principal and teachers will liaise and consult with parents, Department inspectors, specialist teachers, psychologists, speech therapists and other relevant agencies to support the education of children with special needs.
* The school shall endeavour to provide as full an education as possible for all children with special needs.
* An Individual Educational Plan will be designed and implemented for each child with special needs. This plan will include provision for regular update and review as the child’s progress is monitored and new educational needs emerge.
* Children with special needs play a participative role within the school community.
* The other children in the school will be informed as to how they can best help children with special needs.
* Staff members are encouraged to attend professional development courses in the area of special needs. This professional development is budgeted for by the school.

Enrolment Policy for Le Chéile

**Introduction**

In September 2017 a special class for children with autism was opened in our school. With an initial enrolment number of 6 children.

The unit is known as *Special Class* where we hope we provide the children with a secure and safe educational environment.

**Mission Statement:**

We aim to provide an holistic education for all our children meeting their needs and developing their full potential in both Special Class and in the mainstream classroom.

**September 2017**

Special Class has one special classes:

**Special Classes**

Parents wishing to enrol their child in a special class must present a psychological report to the school. This report must include

* A diagnosis of autism by a multi-disciplinary team.
* A statement that the minimum level of cognitive functioning is a mild learning disability
* A recommendation for a placement in a special class attached to a mainstream school.

Once this report has been forwarded to the School Principal, parents will be asked to make an application to enrol the child in a special class. See Form B attached. The Board of Management will then consider the application and notify the parents accordingly.

Should the number of applicants exceed the number of places a waiting list is put in place.

Placement in Le Cheile is subject to a yearly review. Parents will be advised to future schooling with the following options considered.

* Continuation in the special class
* Continuation in a special class nearer to the child’s home
* Mainstream class in Walterstown NS with resource teaching support
* Mainstream Class with support in a school closer to the child’s home
* Placement in a Special school
* Home Tuition

**Multi-disciplinary support:**

COPE Foundation provides a multi-disciplinary support service to children with a diagnosis of autism attending the school. This support includes psychology, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and access to both psychological and social work services.

**Mainstream Integration**

It is hoped that children enrolled in the unit experience meaningful integration with their typically developing peers during their time in Walterstown. The provision of integration for the children is dependent on resources and accommodation

This policy is subject to yearly review.

**Code of Discipline and Behaviour**

***Vision****:*

Walterstown National School is an environment conducive to optimum teaching and learning where all partners in the school community feel safe, valued and included. All reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that this vision is achieved.

***School Community:***

The partners in the school community are:

* Teachers
* Pupils
* Support Staff members
* Parents
* Board of Management members
* Visitors

***Aims****:*

* The creation of a school environment where all partners are safe, respected and valued.
* This environment is conducive to the attainment of the creative and intellectual potential of all the partners.

***Rights and Responsibilities:***

The effectiveness of this Code of Discipline is dependent on the three main partners, pupils, teachers and parents being aware of both their rights and responsibilities.

*Rights of Children*

Children have the right:

* to a broad holistic education in a safe environment
* to an education free from abuse, verbal, physical, sexual and emotional
* to be respected and to be valued
* to privacy
* to receive constant praise, acknowledgement and affirmation
* to be listened to
* to express their concerns and opinions
* to ask questions
* to be happy
* to enjoy school

*Responsibilities of Children:*

Children have the responsibility:

* to show respect for themselves and their peers, teachers, parents, support staff and visitors to the school
* to accept the outcomes of their own actions
* to be honest
* to be mannerly and polite
* to listen to and value the views and opinions of others
* to accept differences
* to be attentive
* to work to their potential
* to respect the school environment, i.e. classroom, school building, school grounds and equipment
* to ensure their own safety and that of others
* to be inclusive in their friendship groupings

*Rights of Teachers and Support Staff*:

Teachers and Support Staff have the right:

* to work in a safe and comfortable environment
* to work in an environment which is both conducive to learning and free from interruption
* to seek all available resources
* to be respected and held in proper esteem
* to be supported in the teaching and learning process by the parents
* to be supported in the teaching and learning by the Board of Management
* to have access to relevant information and documentation concerning their pupils
* to be listened to by pupils, parents, colleagues and Board members and have their opinions, ideas and questions valued
* to be happy and to enjoy their work

*Responsibilities of Teachers and Support Staff:*

Teachers and Support Staff have the responsibility:

* to be punctual
* to be approachable
* to protect the privacy of the child
* to create a classroom atmosphere conducive to active learning
* to be fair and consistent in the treatment of children
* to encourage and to model good manners, politeness and courtesy
* to promote gender equity
* to foster positive relations with parents
* to inform parents of each child’s progress, behavioural, emotional and intellectual
* to inform parents of changes in school policy
* to inform parents of school closures, early closings, events etc with maximum notice

*Rights of Parents*:

Parents have the right:

* to have their children educated in a safe and happy environment
* to have their children educated in an environment conducive to active learning
* to contact the principal and teachers
* to have their questions, concerns and opinions listened to and valued
* to be informed of the behavioural, intellectual and emotional development of their children
* to be informed of changes in school policy
* to be informed of school closures with maximum notice possible
* to offer their services
* to be included in extra-curricular activities
* to be confident that the self-esteem of the child is being enhanced
* to have a Parents Association or representative body
* to be happy with the school and to enjoy their children’s school years

*Responsibilities of Parents:*

Parents have the responsibility:

* to be punctual both in the delivery and collection of their children
* to ensure the safety of their children both in the delivery and collection of their children to and from school.
* to park safely and with consideration to other road users and local residents.
* to support the school’s Drop and Go policy between 9.05am and 9.20am
* to attend to their children’s personal hygiene and appearance
* to adhere to the school policy on Dress Code
* to ensure that homework is done and to inform teachers of any difficulties with same
* to inform teachers promptly of any problems their child may be experiencing at school
* to foster positive relationships with teachers
* to communicate openly with teachers
* to be respectful to teachers and to support staff and to encourage their children to do likewise
* to praise and to encourage their children
* to accept their child’s limitations and to set realistic goals and e
* expectations
* to demonstrate and model a positive attitude to education
* to offer all documentation or information relevant to their child’s education
* to attend all Teacher/Parent meetings when requested

***Behavioural Management***

Children deserve consistent praise and affirmation for their efforts at work and also for playing their part in maintaining the school as a happy place. Good behaviour needs to be rewarded.

Teachers are asked to choose from the Reward Well when considering rewards:

* Homework-free nights
* Part-homework free nights
* Golden Time
* Nature Walks
* Organised trips to places of interest
* Invited theatre/musical/art groups
* Films/DVDS
* Extra play time

***Strategies for Dealing with Ill-Discipline***

When children engage in disruptive or unacceptable behaviour they are in breach of the Code of Discipline. The class teacher may choose from the list of sanctions in dealing with ill-discipline as it may arise.

* Verbal reprimand A clear positive message indicating that the behaviour exhibited by the child is not acceptable. Preferably this message is delivered privately but bearing in mind the dynamics of the classroom, this is not always either practical or possible.
* Isolation from peers. The child is removed from peers for a set period of time. The child is told clearly why he/she is being isolated and is asked to consider his/her behaviour and its outcome while taking time out. Child returns to peers having apologised.
* Imposition of written work. Handwriting practice, written apology, written explanation.
* Supervised lunch-time detention.
* Contact home
* Loss of privilege. Place on sports teams, school outings etc
* Denial of privilege, denial of Golden Time etc.

**Suspension and Expulsion**

See Appendix 2 Suspension

See Appendix 3 Expulsion

***Assaults on Staff Members***

The Board accepts the recommendations outlined in Circular 40/97. The Board also has identified violence or the threat of violence as a potential hazard under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 1989.

Accordingly the Board of Management is committed to:

* Providing a safe place to work for employees
* Taking preventative measures to minimise the risk of assault to teachers or other staff
* To take measures in support of staff who have been threatened or assaulted
* Ensuring that appropriate action is taken to safeguard against a recurrence

***Annual Review***

This Code of Discipline will be reviewed by staff annually.

*…………………………………………………………………………*

***Parental Endorsement***

Please sign and return to the school secretary. Endorsement slips will be kept on file. Alternatively please send an email to [principal@walterstownns.ie](mailto:principal@walterstownns.iet) stating your name, your child(ren)’s name(s) and your endorsement.

I/We have read the Code of Discipline and wish to endorse it.

Signed ……………………………….

Parent(s) of ………………………………….

*Appendix1:* **Code of Behaviour for our Children**

The following is a list containing ideas to help you to make our school a better place in which to learn.

*General Rules*

* Be polite and mannerly
* Show respect to friends, teachers, support staff, parents and visitors
* Respect school property and equipment
* Be on time

*Classroom Rules*

* Stay seated in class unless instructed otherwise
* Listen to your teacher and to your classmates.
* Join in class discussions …. but wait your turn.
* Always work hard doing your best
* Present your work as neatly as you can
* Illustrate your work
* Keep your own space tidy, keep your classroom tidy
* Look out for litter and things out of place
* Use bins for recycling paper, pencil parings etc

*Lunch Time Rules*

* Bring a healthy lunch, junk-free
* Start your lunch straight away and stay seated
* Finish your lunch inside the classroom
* Bring your waste and litter home in your lunch-box

*Toilet Rules*

* Flush every time
* Wash your hands every time
* Inform your teacher if the bathroom needs paper, soap etc
* Report any mess you may discover

*Yard Rules*

* Play safely
* Include others
* Be on the lookout for younger children who might be in need of help
* Stay within the boundaries and learn where there no-go areas are
* On hearing the bell stop, wait for it to finish and then walk to the line

*And finally…..always…*

* Say hello! Dia duit! Slán!
* Keep our school a bad language-free zone
* Keep our school a bully-free zone
* Avoid taunting, teasing, mocking, name-calling, spitting, aggression, violence and horse-play
* Admit to mistakes, apologise when necessary
* Be happy, enjoy your school days
* Smile every day a lot

|  |
| --- |
| I have read the Code of Discipline and I understand that as a child I have rights and responsibilities. I have also read the Code of Behaviour and agree with the rules. I will do my best and play my part in keeping this school a happy place to learn  Signed:…………………………………..  Date ……………………………………… |

**Suspension Policy**

**1.1 Suspension:**

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

**1.2 Appropriateness of Suspension:**

Suspension can provide respite for staff and the child, give the student time to reflect on the link between their action and its consequences and give staff and parents time to plan ways of helping the child to change unacceptable behaviour.

**1.3 Authority to Suspend:**

The Board of Management has the authority to suspend a child. This authority is delegated to the Principal for suspension periods of no longer than three days.

A decision to suspend a child for a specified period in excess of three days will require approval from the Board of Management.

**1.4 Grounds for Suspension:**

Suspension is a proportionate response to a behaviour that is causing concern. A decision to suspend will be considered if:

* The pupils behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students
* The child’s continued presence in the school at this time constitutes threat to safety
* The child is responsible for serious damage to property
* The child is responsible for a serious act of serious misconduct

**1.5 Factors to consider before suspending a child:**

1. The nature and seriousness of the behaviour

* What is the precise description of the behaviour?
* How persistent has the unacceptable behaviour been?
* Has the problem behaviour escalated in spite of interventions tried?

1. The context of the behaviour

* What are the circumstances of the incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. in class, in the yard, in a particular teacher’s class, in a group)?
* What factors may have triggered incidents of serious behaviour (e.g. bullying, cultural, family factors)?
* What is the age, stage of development and cognitive ability of the child?
* Are there any factors that may be associated with the behaviour (e.g. home circumstances, special needs)?

1. The impact of the behaviour

* How are the other students affected by the student’s behaviour?
* What is the impact of the behaviour on the teaching and learning of the class?
* Does the behaviour have a particular or greater impact on some students or teachers?
* Does the student understand the impact of their behaviour on others?

1. The interventions tried to date

* What interventions have been tried?
* Over what period?
* How have the interventions been recorded and monitored?
* Have the parents been involved in finding a solution to the problem behaviour?
* Has the intervention of NEPS or other such psychological assessment or counselling been sought where appropriate
* Are any other interventions such as peer mediation, restorative justice approaches or family conferencing available?
* Is the student or parent involved with any support service and has this agency or support service been asked for help in solving this problem?
* Has any other agency been asked for assistance?

1. Whether the suspension is proportionate?

* Does the behaviour warrant suspension?
* Is the standard being applied to judging the behaviour the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other student?

1. The possible impact

* Will suspension allow additional or alternative interventions to be made?
* Will suspension help the student to change the inappropriate behaviour?
* How will suspension help teachers or other students affected by the behaviour?
* Will suspension exacerbate any educational vulnerability of the student?

**1.6 Behaviour Management Plan:**

Suspension allows the school:

* To set behavioural goals for the child’s re-integration
* The opportunity to plan other interventions
* To impress on the child and his/her parents the seriousness of his/her behaviour

**2.1 Forms of Suspension:**

*Informal:* The child is sent home for part of or during the school day.

*Immediate:* The Principal sends the child home for a specified time. The Principal is authorised by the Board to implement an immediate suspension for up to three days.

*Suspensions in excess of three days:* Suspension for a period in excess of three days will be implemented in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Board.

*Automatic Suspension:*The student will face automatic suspension for incidents of:

* Serious assault causing injury
* Sexual assault
* Serious damage to property
* Gross misconduct as determined by the Principal

The above named incidents

*Rolling suspensions:* A child may be suspended again if he/she:

* Engages in serious misbehaviour that warrants suspension
* Fair procedures are followed
* The standard applied to judging the behaviour is the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other child

**2.2.Procedures in respect of suspension**

The school will always follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend a child. The factors outlined in **1.5** will be considered. The reason for the suspension as in **1.4** will be documented and communicated to the parents.

1. by telephone when the Principal is implementing an informal, part day/during the day suspension
2. both by telephone and in writing when implementing an immediate or a suspension in excess of three days.

**2.3 Communication with Parents**

Parents will be given the opportunity to respond when informed that a suspension period is to be imposed. The Board will offer parents the opportunity to appeal a Principal’s decision to suspend a child. Where the Board implements an immediate suspension in excess of three days, the parents may appeal to the Patron.

Parents will be invited to meet with the Principal to discuss both the suspension and the plan to re-integrate the child following the period of suspension as outlined in **1.6**.

**3.1 Appeals**

The Board will formally review any proposal to suspend a child, where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the child has been suspended to twenty days or more. Any such suspension is subject to appeal under Section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*.

**3.2 Section 29**

Where the total number of suspended days for which a child has been suspended reaches twenty days, the parents may appeal the suspension under Section 29 of the *Education Act* *1998* as amended by the *Education Act 2007*.

At the time of being informed of any such suspension, the parents will be told of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 of the *Education Act 1998.* Parents will be given information about how to appeal.

**3.3. Implementing the suspension.**

**Investigation**

The Principal will conduct a preliminary investigation to establish the grounds on which an immediate suspension is to be implemented. A formal investigation will follow immediately and a record kept.

**Written Notification.**

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

* The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
* The reason for the suspension (see **1.5)**
* Study programme to be followed
* Appeals procedure (see **3.1** and **3.2**)
* Section 29 appeal procedure where relevant
* Arrangements for reintegration

**3.4 Grounds for removing a suspension**

The Board of Management may remove a suspension for any reason. The Secretary General of the Department may direct that a suspension be removed following an appeal under Section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*

**3.5 Records and reports**

Formal written records will be kept of:

* the investigation
* the decision and rationale for decision
* the duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the decision

**Expulsion Policy**

* 1. **Authority to expel**

The Board of Management of Walterstown NS has the authority to expel a student. A decision to expel can only be made by the Board.

* 1. **Grounds for expulsion**

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 should 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, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education National Education Welfare Board).

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

• 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, school authorities have tried a series of other interventions, and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the student’s behaviour.

**‘Automatic’ expulsion**

A Board of Management may decide, as part of the school’s policy on sanctions, and following the consultation process with the Principal, parents, teachers and students, that particular named behaviours incur expulsion as a sanction. However, a general decision to impose expulsion for named behaviours does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures.

**Expulsion for a first offence**

In exceptional circumstances the Board of Management may consider expulsion of a student 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.

* 1. **Determining the appropriateness of expelling a student**

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

**Factors to consider before proposing to expel a student**

**The nature and seriousness of the behaviour**

What is the precise description of the behaviour?

How persistent has the unacceptable behaviour been and over what period of time?

Has the problem behaviour escalated, in spite of the interventions tried?

**The content of the behaviour:::::ontext of the behaviour**

What are the circumstances of the incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. in class, in a particular teacher’s class, in the yard, in a group)?

What factors may have triggered or provoked incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. bullying, cultural or family factors)?

Are there any factors that may be associated with the behaviour (e.g. particular home

circumstances, special educational needs)?

**The impact of the behaviourof the behaviour**

How are other students and staff affected by the student’s behaviour?

What is the impact of the behaviour on the teaching and learning of the class?

**The interventions tried to date**

What interventions have been tried? Over what period?

How have the interventions been recorded and monitored?

What has been the result of these interventions?

Have the parents been involved in finding a solution to the problem behaviour?

Has the intervention of NEPS or other psychological assessment or counselling been sought,

where appropriate?

Is the student or parent involved with any support service and has this agency or support service been asked for help in solving this problem?

Has any other agency been asked for assistance (e.g. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, NEPS, SESS)?

Is the Board satisfied that no other intervention can be tried or is likely to help the student to change their behaviour?

**Whether expulsion is an appropriate response**

Is the student’s behaviour sufficiently serious to warrant expulsion?

Is the standard being applied to judging the behaviour the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other student?

**The possible impact of expulsion**

To what extent may expulsion exacerbate any social or educational vulnerability of the student?

Will the student be able to take part in, and benefit from, education with their peers?

In the case of a student who is in care, what might be the implications of expulsion for the

care arrangements?

**12**

**Inappropriate use of expulsion**

Expulsion should not be proposed for:

* 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 must be examined in context to understand both the behaviour itself and the response or sanction that is most appropriate.
  1. **Procedures in respect of expulsion**

The Board of Management will follow fair procedures as well as procedures prescribed under the *Education (Welfare) Act 2000*, when proposing to expel a student. 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 the holding of 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.

These procedures assume that the Board of Management is the decision-making body in relation to expulsions.

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

In investigating an allegation, in line with fair procedures, the Principal should:

• inform the student and their parents 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 will be informed in writing of the alleged misbehaviour and the proposed investigation in order to have a permanent record of having been informed. This also ensures that parents are very clear about what their son or daughter is alleged to have done. It serves the important function of underlining to parents the seriousness with which the school views the alleged misbehaviour.

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, or a student aged eighteen years or over, 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 conducting 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 should be made of the decision to expel the student.

**1.6. Appeals**

A parent, or a student aged over eighteen years, 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.

**1.7 Review of use of expulsion**

The Board of Management should 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.

**1.8 Summary: Applying the Guidelines means:**

1. Having a policy on, and procedures for, expulsion that are approved by the

Board of Management, and in line with these Guidelines, and with any additional

requirements set down by the Patron

1. Ensuring the policy is widely communicated
2. Developing and documenting good practice in the use of expulsion
3. Having fair procedures for investigation and decision-making
4. Having procedures for informing parents and students about their right to appeal
5. Having a system for regular review by the Board of Management of the use of expulsion in the school.

This policy document was ratified at the Board of Management meeting held on 23rd November 2009.It will be reviewed no later than two years from this date, ie November 2011

Anti–Bullying Policy

Introduction:

The policy was formulated by the staff following the DES Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour (1993).

Rationale:

The Board has identified the Anti-Bullying Policy as a priority and has instructed the Principal to ensure it is regularly reviewed. The policy is part of the general enrolment enpolicy which includes also the Code of Discipline.

The policy has been formulated to help to create a safe and harmonious school environment where bullying behaviour is neither tolerable nor acceptable. This is keeping with the characteristic spirit of our school which seeks to nurture the holistic development of each child in a caring environment. *Cairde le chéile ag foghlaim (friends together learning).*

Aims:

* To raise awareness of bullying as an unacceptable form of behaviour.
* To create a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying.
* To Develop procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying behaviour.

Definition of Bullying

The school defines bullying as repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or a group against others. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, which should not be condoned, cannot be described as bullying. However, when behaviour is systematic or ongoing it is bullying.

It is noted that it is school policy not to use the term bully when referring to a child who engages in bullying behaviour.

Types of Bullying

* Physical aggression
* Damage to property
* Extortion
* Intimidation
* Abusive phone calls, messages, emails cyber-bullying etc
* Isolation
* Name calling
* Slagging

Procedures for Noting and Reporting an Incident of Bullying Behaviour

All reports of bullying behaviour, no matter how trivial should be noted, investigated and dealt with by teachers. In this way pupils will gain confidence in “telling”.

Serious cases of bullying should be reported to the school principal.

Parents of all children involved both victims and perpetrators in an alleged bullying incident are to be contacted and given the opportunity to discuss the matter. This allows the parents to support their child before a crisis occurs.

The class teacher is the person to whom all initial concerns regarding bullying behaviour are referred. (S)he will then consult with the school principal. Reports are to be logged in the Incident Report Book which is kept in the office.

Ancillary staff must report incidents of bullying behaviour which they may have witnessed to the class teacher or the school principal.

Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying Behaviour

*Step 1:*  Each child involved will be interviewed by the class teacher and or principal, deputy principal or assistant principal. There must be a minimum of two staff members at each interview. The interview will be conducted in a calm, non-judgemental manner and will be based on the trigger questions, who, what, where, when and why? The children’s responses will be noted. The children may be asked to record their experiences in writing again within the parameters of the triggers questions.

*Step 2:*  In cases where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred the parents of both parties are invited to the school. At the meeting the parents will be informed of their child’s role in the reported incident. They will also be informed of the actions taken by the school. They will also be advised of ways in which they can reinforce and support actions taken by the school.

*Step 3:*  Follow-up meetings of pupils and parents may be convened at the discretion of the teachers/principal.

Promoting and Anti-Bullying Culture

Children will be given the opportunity to help create a culture within the school in which bullying will neither be tolerated nor accepted.

* Lessons on the theme of anti-bullying in both SPHE and R.E.
* The types of bullying referred to in this document can be discussed on an age-appropriate basis.
* Poster campaigns on inclusion, friendship and anti-bullying will be encouraged.
* The rights and responsibilities as stated in the Code of Discipline will form part of the school’s SPHE curriculum.

Review:

This policy is to be reviewed regularly. Any proposed amendments or comments are welcomed and may be forwarded in writing to the Chairperson, Board of Management c/o the school.

Appendix 2: Enrolment Application Form for Early Intervention Class for Children with Autism

*Le Chéile*

Walterstown National School

Uimhir Rolla 12281d

*Ar Aghaidh le Chéile*

Walterstown National School Fón: 021 4812625

Cobh office@walterstownns.ie

Co. Cork

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of Child |  |
| Date of Birth |  |
| Address |  |
| School Year for Enrolment |  |
| Contact Telephone Numbers |  |
| Mother’s Name |  |
| Father’s Name |  |
| Religion if applicable |  |

Has your child been assessed for autism? Yes/No

If so, who conducted the assessment and when? \_\_\_\_\_\_

Has your child received a diagnosis of autism? Yes/No

Has your child any other diagnosis of a disability? Please specify.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Has your child a learning disability? Yes/No

If so, please specify. (If unsure please contact a member of the assessment team.)

Severe/Profound Moderate Mild

With regard to future schooling, what is the recommendation of the assessment team?

How would you describe your child’s general behaviour?

Very challenging Challenging Not challenging

Please give examples

|  |
| --- |
|  |

How would you describe your child’s ability to communicate?

Age appropriate Delayed Non-Verbal

Please give examples

|  |
| --- |
|  |

How would you describe your child’s ability to interact with others?

Very Sociable Sociable Avoids interaction

Please give examples

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Outline your child’s development in the following areas. Please be specific.

Toilet training

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Dressing skills

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Eating

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Mobility

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Your child’s placement in the Early Intervention Class will be reviewed at the end of each school year. In consultation with the multi-disciplinary team the school will advise you on the future schooling needs of your child.

Please note that placement in the Early Intervention Class does not entitle your child to a placement in either the special class or the mainstream school.

Signature of Parent(s) ...................................................................

Signature of Special Class Teacher................................................

Signature of School Principal ........................................................

Appendix 3: Enrolment Application Form for Placement in Special Class for Children with Autism

*Le Chéile*

Walterstown National School

Uimhir Rolla 12281d

*Ar Aghaidh le Chéile*

Walterstown National School Fón: 0214812625

Cobh [office@walterstownns.ie](mailto:office@walterstownns.ie)

Co. Cork

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of Child |  |
| Date of Birth |  |
| Address |  |
| School Year for Enrolment |  |
| Contact Telephone Numbers |  |
| Mother’s Name |  |
| Father’s Name |  |
| Religion if applicable |  |

Has your child been assessed for autism? Yes/No

If so, who conducted the assessment and when?

Has your child received a diagnosis of autism? Yes/No

Has your child any other diagnosis of a disability? Please specify.

Has your child a learning disability? Yes/No

If so, please specify. (If unsure please contact a member of the assessment team.)

Severe/Profound Moderate Mild

With regard to future schooling, what is the recommendation of the assessment team?

How would you describe your child’s general behaviour?

Very challenging Challenging Not challenging

Please give examples

|  |
| --- |
|  |

How would you describe your child’s ability to communicate?

Age appropriate Delayed Non-Verbal

Please give examples

|  |
| --- |
|  |

How would you describe your child’s ability to interact with others?

Very Sociable Sociable Avoids interaction

Please give examples

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Outline your child’s development in the following areas. Please be specific.

Toilet training

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Dressing skills

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Eating

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Mobility

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Your child’s placement in an ASD class will be reviewed at the end of each school year. In consultation with the multi-disciplinary team the school will advise you on the future schooling needs of your child.

Please note that placement in the Early Intervention Class does not entitle your child to a placement in either the special class or the mainstream school.

Signature of Parent(s) .........................................................

Signature of Special Class Teacher .....................................

Signature of Principal ...........................................................

Appendix 4: General Enrolment Form

Walterstown National School

Uimhir Rolla 12281d

*Ar Aghaidh le Chéile*

Walterstown National School Fón: 0214812625

Cobh [office@walterstownns.ie](mailto:office@walterstownns.ie)

Co. Cork

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** |  |
| **Date of Birth** |  |
| **PPS number** |  |
| **Home address** |  |
| **Mother’s name** |  |
| **Father’s name** |  |
| **Names and ages of siblings** |  |
| **Mother’s occupation, place of work and daytime contact number** |  |
| **Father’s occupation, place of work and daytime contact number** |  |
| **Other relevant contact numbers** |  |
| **Religion if applicable** |  |
| **Place of Baptism if applicable** |  |
| **Does your child have any medical condition of which the school should be aware?** |  |
| **Is your child on any ongoing medication of which the school should be aware?** |  |
| **Does your child present with any special needs of which the school should be aware?** |  |
| **Is there any information you wish to give that may be relevant to your child’s education in the school?** |  |

**I wish to confirm acceptance of the offer of a place to my/our child ..................... for the coming school year \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Signed: ..............................**

Appendix 5: Application to Enrol Form

*Le Chéile*

Walterstown National School

Uimhir Rolla 12281d

*Ar Aghaidh le Chéile*

Walterstown National School Fón: 0214812625

Cobh [office@walterstownns.ie](mailto:office@walterstownns.ie)

Co. Cork

**Application to Enrol Form**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Child’s Name |  |
| Address |  |
| Date of Birth |  |
| Year for enrolment |  |
| Names/ages of siblings |  |
| Mother’s Name and Contact Details |  |
| Father’s Name and Contact Details |  |
| Any additional information you wish to include. |  |

Parent‘s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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

Principal Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

For Office Use Only:

Criterion: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_