STUDENT ENGAGEMENT
POLICY

AIM:
To provide a clearly understood policy that promotes student engagement, attendance and positive behaviour and has clearly defined and staged consequences for inappropriate behaviour.

SCHOOL PROFILE:
Wahgunyah Primary school is a small school located in the township of Wahgunyah, nestled on the banks of the Murray River in north-east Victoria. It is approximately 3 hours’ drive from Melbourne, the state capital and is approximately 40 minutes’ drive from the regional cities of Albury-Wodonga. The region is known for its wine industry and Wahgunyah is the home of Uncle Tobys, a major employer in the area. The school has a stable enrolment of approximately 80 students, drawn from the local community and the nearby communities of Corowa and Rutherglen. At the end of 2012 we moved into a new, purpose built building which houses our four classrooms. Our new building is designed with today's learners in mind. It's light, open, and fosters a real sense of teamwork, collaboration and community. A central learning and resource area also serves the classrooms and provides flexibility for small group work and whole school assemblies. The school has well-kept grounds. Significant funds have been spent on establishing all-weather and multi-purpose playing fields, as well as attractive and challenging play equipment.

The school currently provides early intervention literacy and numeracy support, specialist science, visual art, music, French and physical education programs. The school offers a wide range of extra-curricular activities, camps and excursions. The school employs a wellbeing co-ordinator who provides in-class, small group and individual support for students and families in the role of prevention and early intervention.

The school embraces the KidsMatter framework which caters for the social, emotional and mental wellbeing of students, staff and families. This includes a focus on engaging with parents and carers, and explicitly teaching the skills of social and emotional learning. The school primarily uses the program 'Bounce Back' to explicitly teach social and emotional skills.

WHOLE SCHOOL PREVENTION STATEMENT:
Wahgunyah Primary School has an expectation that children will be happy, confident, self-disciplined and motivated risk takers who strive for excellence whilst having respect for one's self and others. This is embodied in the school’s values: Be your best. Show respect. Everyone belongs. The school seeks to engender a positive community spirit which encourages learning in a caring, family atmosphere, where children are the focus and individual needs are met. We seek to provide a safe and responsible school community in which children can learn and be valued as an individual. The school’s values guide us in striving for such goals and provide the pillars on which student engagement is built.
SCHOOL VALUES:

Be Your Best
➢ strive for the highest personal achievements in all aspects of schooling and individual and community action, work and life-long learning
➢ give recognition to those achieving high standards
➢ frequently encourage and acknowledge individual improvement
➢ celebrate school community achievements
➢ encourage awareness of broader life opportunities
➢ maintain high learning expectations
➢ set and meet high standards
➢ persist through challenges and difficulties in learning

Show Respect
➢ accept the right of others to hold different views to your own
➢ listen to others
➢ obey school rules
➢ acknowledge the strengths and abilities of others
➢ affirm cultural diversity within the school

Everyone Belongs
➢ fairness towards those who differ from one’s own
➢ prepare to live, learn and work in communities that are diverse
➢ promote empathy and sympathy for others
➢ listen and respond to the concerns of children, staff and parents
➢ encourage principled, caring and reflective learners
➢ take care to balance the needs of all members of the school community

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:
We believe that each person should be treated fairly and that students, staff and parents have rights which will be recognised. We believe it is the right of every individual to feel safe in a supportive environment; to have an equal opportunity to learn and to have their individuality, ideas and property respected. With rights, come responsibilities.

Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENTS HAVE A RIGHT TO:</th>
<th>STUDENTS HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• their own opinions</td>
<td>• respect the property of others and look after their own property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• have their personal property respected and know their belongings are safe</td>
<td>• respect other people and make them feel like they belong and are accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• be treated fairly</td>
<td>• follow the class rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• use the resources of the school with permission</td>
<td>• use technology and other resources responsibly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• feel they belong and are accepted</td>
<td>• talk to teachers, students and parents with respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• learn new things and feel secure in a safe, supportive environment.</td>
<td>• be a positive role model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ask questions and share ideas</td>
<td>• be prepared and punctual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• feel safe in the classroom and</td>
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playground
- be respected by their teachers, students and parents
- have a clean room
- have fun
- learn and achieve to a high standard
- be rewarded for hard work and effort
- participate in school activities

contribute to the physical and emotional safety of people in our school
- play and to eat within the designated areas around the school
- keep our school clean by putting rubbish in the bin
- with appropriate support, complete work requirements
- act in a safe, responsible manner and to be supportive to fellow students.
- be in control of their own thoughts and feelings, and make good choices
- be open and honest with others
- not give up

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<tr>
<th>Staff HAVE A RIGHT TO:</th>
<th>Staff HAVE A RESPONSIBILTY TO:</th>
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<tr>
<td>be treated with respect and as a professional by students and parents</td>
<td>treat students and parents with respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be valued for their contribution to the wider school</td>
<td>teach students to the best of their ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>work in an environment that supports teamwork</td>
<td>make sure all students are safe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feel safe in the classroom and playground</td>
<td>come to school on time and to be in the classroom on time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teach without disruption, in a clean and tidy environment</td>
<td>be in control of their thoughts and feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>work in a pleasant, safe environment and to be treated with courtesy by all</td>
<td>act as role models and provide suitable, interesting activities while maintaining a safe environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>implement appropriate management strategies for children who are interfering with the rights of others</td>
<td>be consistent and fair in the implementation of the student management plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contact parents and carers when necessary and to expect their support</td>
<td>be approachable, to listen and be prepared to consult with parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be informed of any family situation or home issue that may affect a student’s learning or behaviour</td>
<td>contribute to creating a positive work environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be trusted to undertake their role to the best of their ability</td>
<td>value the work of others</td>
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<tr>
<td>have their privacy protected</td>
<td>engage in co-operative teamwork</td>
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<tr>
<td>access professional learning that improves practice.</td>
<td>undertake their role in a highly professional, organised and honest manner</td>
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<td></td>
<td>maintain the privacy of others</td>
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<td></td>
<td>be prepared to take on new and challenging situations</td>
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<td>support the school to be the very best.</td>
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Parents and Carers

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARENTS AND CARERS HAVE A RIGHT TO:</th>
<th>PARENTS AND CARERS HAVE A RESPONSIBLY TO:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• know their child is safe</td>
<td>• send their child to school daily and on time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• know where their child is at all times</td>
<td>• make sure their child has enough sleep at night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• know their child is getting an excellent education</td>
<td>• provide their child with lunch and a snack every day with a focus on healthy eating and waste wise packaging</td>
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<tr>
<td>• be kept informed of their child’s learning progress and behaviour at school</td>
<td>• reinforce the school’s values and student engagement policy with their child</td>
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<tr>
<td>• have information on school processes and curriculum.</td>
<td>• help their child with home learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>• expect that they will be treated with respect in their interactions with all members of the school community</td>
<td>• be respectful in their personal interactions with others in the school</td>
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<tr>
<td>• expect the school to work with them to ensure their child’s potential is fully developed</td>
<td>• use the school’s Complaints Resolution Policy when there is an issue</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• actively follow up on issues which may arise and support the agreed outcomes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• support and build resilience in their child</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• ensure they are well informed about their child’s progress by attending interviews, reading reports and seeking answers to any questions they may have</td>
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**SHARED EXPECTATIONS:**

Each classroom teacher will develop their own Classroom Management Plan in consultation with the students at the beginning of each year. This plan should reflect the school’s values, the shared rights and responsibilities of students, staff and parents and carers, and include the school processes which promote student engagement.

Beyond each Classroom Management Plan is a set of shared expectations across the whole school to help us remember our responsibilities:

- Mutual respect
- Attentive listening
- Appreciations/ No put downs
- The right to pass
**STUDENT ATTENDANCE:**
At Wahgunyah Primary School we believe that regular attendance at school is crucial for learning and student engagement. In supporting families to ensure regular attendance:

- staff keep twice daily records of student attendance
- the school sends home regular notices to individual families regarding unexplained absences
- absence data is included in mid-year and end of year student reports
- the school celebrates students with 98% or more attendance across a term with special achievement awards presented at assembly
- the school promotes the benefits of regular attendance through the newsletter
- staff monitor unexplained, prolonged or regular absences and ‘touch base’ with the family and inform the principal
- support agencies, such as the Department of Human Services, are engaged to support families where absenteeism continues to be an issue.

**SCHOOL ACTIONS & CONSEQUENCES:**
Student engagement, regular attendance and appropriate behaviours are encouraged through the implementation of whole-school strategies supported by targeted and individualised support when required. A staged response provides a continuum of support for student well-being and engagement.

At Wahgunyah Primary School we believe that positive behaviour models are the best way to support student engagement. Below are examples of the different, whole school processes, that are used to support students and actively engage them in their learning.

**Corporal Punishment is prohibited in all Victorian schools. Corporal punishment must NOT be used at School under any circumstances**

*Prevention:* whole school focusing on all students and staff across all settings

*Early Intervention:* targeted responses to problem behaviour

*Intervention:* intensive response to individual behaviour that persists after stages 1&2
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>1. Prevention</strong></th>
<th><strong>2. Early Intervention</strong></th>
<th><strong>3. Intervention</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>• actively teach the school values</td>
<td><strong>Includes all of the previous processes, plus:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Includes all of the previous processes, plus:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• verbal recognition of positive behaviours</td>
<td>• verbal reminders</td>
<td>• individual learning plans (ILPs)</td>
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<td>• acknowledgements and praise (6:1 ratio)</td>
<td>• warning systems</td>
<td>• individual behaviour plans</td>
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<tr>
<td>• plan and teach a curriculum that caters for different learning styles</td>
<td>• organisation of the class, routines, planning (prepare the child for the situation and the situation for the child)</td>
<td>• student support group meetings (SSGs)</td>
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<td>• displays and celebration of student work</td>
<td>• individual token economy / reward system</td>
<td>• parent meetings</td>
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<td>• parent / teacher interviews and mid-year / end of year reporting</td>
<td>• communication diary with home</td>
<td>• organisational tools</td>
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<td>• extra-curricular activities such as sports, camps and excursions</td>
<td>• parent discussions</td>
<td>• individual curriculum</td>
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<td>• differentiation of curriculum</td>
<td>• restorative practices</td>
<td>• involvment of support agencies, social workers and GP.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• classroom management plans in all classrooms</td>
<td>• individual and small group support programs such as <em>Friends for Life</em>, <em>KEAPS</em> and <em>Calmer Classrooms</em></td>
<td>• relationships with police and other services</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Playground and Classroom Flowcharts</td>
<td></td>
<td>• crisis plan for aggressive students</td>
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<tr>
<td>• whole school reward systems: House points, Principal’s Awards, assembly presentations, newsletter recognition</td>
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<tr>
<td>• classroom reward systems such as merit certificates, token economies, stickers, raffles</td>
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<td>• cross age tutoring</td>
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<td>• student voice through regular student leadership meetings</td>
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<td>• student goal setting</td>
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<tr>
<td>• learning plans for individual students</td>
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<td>• explicit teaching of Social and Emotional Learning</td>
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<td>• links with the community and parents and carers through regular afternoon teas and <em>Story Time</em> sessions</td>
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<tr>
<td>• provision of resources and programs for parents and carers</td>
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To assist staff and students in responding to inappropriate behaviour, the school makes use of two flowcharts (see appendices 1 and 2) which outline behaviours and appropriate consequences.

**SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION:**
When considering suspension or expulsion, schools are required to follow Department procedures (refer to appendices 3 and 4)

**EXPECTED OUTCOMES:**
Wahgunyah Primary School will foster positive behaviour guided by clearly defined and staged consequences promoting student engagement.

**EVALUATION:**
In accordance with the Policy Review table, the Student Engagement Policy will be scheduled for review in 2016.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in... May, 2014.
At Wahgunyah Primary School we be our best, show respect and make sure everyone belongs.

**Student responsibility in the playground**

To help everyone safely enjoy their time in the yard we will:
- try to solve our problems by talking them through
- go to a teacher on duty if we can’t solve the problem ourselves
- behave in a way that does not harm people, clothing or property
- play safely at all times
- wear a hat from September to April and shoes at all times. No hat, no play. Must sit in shade.
- stay within school boundaries
- walk on concrete and around corners
- be quiet in the quiet area
- stay away from out of bounds areas (breeze way, behind sports shed, water tanks, behind P/1 and 5/6 classrooms)
- stay away from wet and muddy areas
- not enter classrooms without permission
- stay away from out of bounds areas (breeze way, behind sports shed, water tanks, behind P/1 and 5/6 classrooms)
- eat our food at the green table
- play appropriate games - no tackling, brandy, playing with sticks or fighting
- climb only on playground equipment
- return to class when the first bell rings and be assembled outside the classroom before the second bell rings.

To help protect our environment we will:
- leave trees, shrubs and wildlife alone
- leave trees, shrubs and wildlife alone
- put all rubbish and recycling in the bins provided
- return sports equipment and other materials to their homes.

**Teacher responsibility in the playground**

To help everyone safely enjoy their time in the yard we will:
- on time for yard duty
- roam the yard and ensure students are playing safely
- listen to student concerns and assist with problem solving using a restorative approach
- apply consequences for students who misbehave
- wear a hat in accordance with our Sunsmart policy
- at change over, discuss any issues with the new yard duty teacher
- take high visibility vest, first aid bum-bag and yard duty folder on duty
- record behaviour incidents in the yard duty folder

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**Behaviour Management Flowchart: Playground**

**Low Level**
- not following rules of games
- disrupting the play of others
- playing in the toilets
- minor infringements of student responsibilities in the playground (as listed to the left)

**Mid Level**
- taking things that belong to others
- swearing and inappropriate language
- damaging property or misuse of equipment
- teasing or excluding others
- dangerous play (sticks, stones, tackling)
- continually playing in sun without a hat
- playing in out of bounds areas
- running around corners and on concrete

**High Level**
- frequently refusing reasonable teacher requests
- back-chatting
- abusive language and rude gestures
- anti-social play
- intense teasing

**Serious**
- violence
- bullying
- harassment
- intimidation
- racism
- leaving school grounds

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**Friendly reminder or warning by teacher**

For example:
- “What are you doing?”
- “What should you be doing?”
- Restate student responsibilities.

**Yard duty teacher to apply appropriate and logical consequences**

For example:
- walk with yard duty teacher
- pick up rubbish
- withdrawal from playground for a short period of time.
- restate student responsibilities.

**Send to office**

Follow up by teacher or Principal.
May result in:
- restorative practice
- withdrawal from playground for an extended period of time, including the following day
- temporary or permanent plan for playing in the playground
- detention
- community service such as tidying the yard.

Behaviour and consequences to be recorded in the yard duty folder. Repeated offences may lead to:
- parent contact
- an individual behaviour plan

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**1. Get immediate assistance**

2. Student removed from playground to Principal’s office

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**Follow up by Principal**

May result in:
- restorative practice
- withdrawal from playground for an extended period of time, including the following days
- temporary or permanent plan for playing in the playground
- detention
- community service
- parent contact
- an individual behaviour plan
- in school suspension
- suspension
- engagement of outside services such as social workers
- re-entry meeting to discuss behaviour and responsibilities
At Wahgunyah Primary School we be our best, show respect and make sure everyone belongs

**Rewards and Acknowledgements**
- House points
- Stickers and small prizes such as stationery
- Token economy such as marbles
- Verbal praise
- Free time/iPad use
- Comments in diaries
- Positive parent contact
- Principal Award
- Neighbourhood Watch Award
- Public recognition (assembly/newsletter/website)
- Extended play at recess or lunch
- Bucket Filler

**Low Level**
- not finishing work
- not staying on task
- disrupting the teaching or learning of others
- not being organised
- not following teacher instructions
- not using materials appropriately
- tardiness

**Mid Level**
- multiple or repeated Low Level offences
- swearing and inappropriate language
- damaging property or misuse of equipment
- teasing or excluding others
- back-chatting

**Teacher to apply appropriate and logical consequences**
*For example:*
- “What are you doing?”
- “What should you be doing?”
- Restate student responsibilities.

**High Level**
- multiple or repeated Low and/or Mid Level offences
- abusive language and rude gestures or behaviour
- endangering the safety of others
- aggressive, intimidating, threatening or violent behaviour
- bullying
- leaving a learning area or school grounds without permission
- vandalism

**Office Referral**
*Student sent to Principal. Staff member responsible to record incident on SM Tool. If Principal unavailable, teacher in charge to enact appropriate consequence (except suspension). Possible consequences include:*
- restorative practice
- withdrawal from classroom
- detention (behaviour report completed and sent home)
- after-school detention
- community service
- parent contact/collection
- an individual behaviour plan
- in school suspension
- suspension (formal process must be followed)
- Exclusion from camps and excursions
- Modified attendance program
- engagement of outside services such as social workers and emergency services
- re-entry meeting to discuss behaviour and responsibilities

**Continued Misbehaviour**
- Apply Mid Level consequences

**Remain in Classroom**

**Continued Misbehaviour**
- Apply High Level consequences

**Return to Classroom with ongoing monitoring**
PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSION
INFORMATION FOR PARENTS* FOLLOWING YOUR CHILD’S SUSPENSION

This brochure must be given to the student’s relevant person with the Notice of Suspension. This brochure provides the following information for students and their relevant person:
■ What to do if you have any concerns about your child’s suspension
■ How schools can support students after a suspension
■ Where to go for further information and support.
For extra information on the suspension process, including roles and responsibilities, and what you can expect to have occurred prior to suspension, see www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/behaviour/Pages/faqs.aspx

MY CHILD HAS BEEN SUSPENDED, WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

Suspension is a disciplinary measure that involves temporary removal of a student from classes or school approved activities for a specified period of time. Your child will be allowed to return to class or the school approved activity after the set period of suspension.

WHAT WILL THE PRINCIPAL HAVE CONSIDERED BEFORE SUSPENSION?

Before a student can be suspended, the principal must ensure that:
■ The student has had the opportunity to be heard
■ Any information or documentation provided by the student or their relevant person has been taken into account in making the decision regarding suspension
■ Other forms of action to address the behaviour for which the student is being suspended have been considered.

WHAT IS AN IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION?

Immediate suspensions can occur only if a student behaves in such a way that would provide the basis for a suspension ordinarily, and their behaviour is such that they are putting the health, safety and wellbeing of themselves, staff or other students at significant risk.

If the principal has determined that an immediate suspension is appropriate in the circumstances, school staff should have attempted to immediately notify you of this decision, and the need to collect your child as soon as is practicable.

If you were not able to be contacted and/or you were unable to make arrangements for the collection of your child, the principal should have made arrangements for your child to be adequately supervised until the end of the school day or the conclusion of the school approved activity.

It is important to remember that even though the time frames for an immediate suspension differ from a suspension implemented under normal circumstances, the process is the same and the principal must ensure that your child has had the opportunity to be heard and that his or her circumstances are taken into account.

HOW LONG CAN MY CHILD BE SUSPENDED FOR?

The maximum continuous period of time a student may be suspended at any one time is 5 school days.

In addition, a student cannot be suspended for more than 15 days in a school year without written approval from the Regional Director.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I AM NOT SURE IF MY CHILD’S BEHAVIOUR WARRANTED A SUSPENSION?

Every school is required to have a Student Engagement Policy which sets out the school community’s shared expectation in the areas of student engagement, respectful behaviour, attendance and acts as a reference point for how your school will respond to individual student circumstance.
You may also like to ask your school for a copy of their Student Engagement Policy or you can check their website to access it. This policy will set out the behavioural expectations within your school and will be a useful reference point in determining whether these expectations have been breached.


Suspensions are a serious disciplinary measure and are best reserved for incidents when other measures have not produced a satisfactory outcome.

Your child can be suspended if, whilst attending school or travelling to or from school or engaged in any school activity away from the school (including travel to or from that activity), they –

- Behave in such a way as to pose a danger, whether actual, perceived or threatened, to the health, safety or wellbeing of any person;
- Cause significant damage to or destruction of property;
- Commit or attempts to commit or is knowingly involved in the theft of property;
- Possess, use or sell or deliberately assist another person to possess, use or sell illicit substances or weapons;
- Fail to comply with any clear and reasonable instruction of a staff member so as to pose a danger, whether actual, perceived or threatened, to the health, safety or wellbeing of any person;
- Consistently engage in behaviour that vilifies, defames, degrades or humiliates another person based on age; breastfeeding; gender; identity; impairment; industrial activity; lawful sexual activity; marital status; parental status; physical features; political belief or activity; pregnancy; race; religious belief or activity; sexual orientation; personal association (whether as a relative or otherwise) with a person who is identified by reference to any of the above attributes;
- Consistently behave in an unproductive manner that interferes with the wellbeing, safety or educational opportunities of any other student.

It is important to remember that you can request a meeting with the principal at any point during a suspension process, even if the suspension has already been implemented.

If you do not feel your concerns have been addressed, you can contact the Community Liaison Officer in your closest departmental regional office or one of the other support services listed at the end of this brochure.

WHAT IS AN IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION? WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR MY CHILD?

An in-school suspension means that a student remains on school grounds under supervision but does not attend class. This may include:

- Pairing the student up with an experienced teacher or appropriate staff member for the day and accompanying that teacher to classes
- Participating in a work-based in-school suspension (e.g. working outdoors or preparation of educational materials)
- Providing a dedicated room or area where students can complete their in-school suspension under appropriate supervision.

It may also take on a different form depending on the particular school and circumstances.

It is important to remember that whilst this different from a traditional 'out-of-school' suspension, the process for both is the same and you should receive the same notification and documentation.

WHAT INFORMATION SHOULD THE SCHOOL PROVIDE ME WITH WHEN SUSPENDING MY CHILD?

When a principal determines that a suspension is appropriate, the school must provide both you and your child with the following documents:

- Notice of Suspension
- This brochure

The principal should also provide you with the following information:

- The reasons for the suspension
- The school days on which the suspension will occur
- Where the suspension will occur (i.e. on school premises or otherwise)
The contact details for additional support services for you and your child as appropriate.

The arrangements made for the provision of appropriate school work for your child for the period of the suspension.

Notes:
(1) If your child is suspended for 3 days or less, the principal should ensure that he or she is provided with meaningful work to complete whilst they are absent from school.
(2) If your child has been suspended for more than 3 days, the principal should ensure that a Student Absence Learning Plan and a Return to School Plan are provided.

WHAT WILL MY CHILD DO WHEN THEY ARE SUSPENDED? DOES THE SCHOOL HAVE TO PROVIDE HIM/HER WITH WORK?

It is expected that for a suspension of three days or under, a student is given meaningful work to complete. If a student is suspended for over three days, it is expected that a Student Absence Plan and a Return to School Plan are developed. Templates of these plans can be found at www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/resources.aspx

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE END OF THE SUSPENSION?

Once the period of suspension has ended, your child should be supported to return to school.

If your child has been suspended for a period of three or more school days, it is recommended that a post-suspension Student Support Group meeting be held with the school, you, and your child. You can also request that a Student Support Group meeting is held if you feel your child needs additional support when returning to school or to address any behavioural issues that may have led to the incident that result in a suspension.

The purpose of this meeting is to provide an opportunity to discuss the following:
- The Student Absence Learning Plan and the school work completed during the period of suspension
- The strategies to be developed within and outside of the school to meet the educational, social and emotional needs of your child
- The respective responsibilities of you, your child, the school staff and other professionals in supporting these strategies.

For more information on Student Support Group meetings see www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/Pages/supportgroups.aspx

For more information on what supports are available to schools see Strategies and Supports Available to Schools www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/interventions.aspx

CAN I APPEAL A SUSPENSION?

There is no process for appealing a suspension.

If you have any concerns about your child’s suspension, you should immediately discuss these concerns with the school principal.

If you do not believe that your concerns have been adequately addressed by the school principal, you may contact the Community Liaison Officer at your local regional office.

If you still believe that your concerns have not been adequately addressed by the regional office, you can write to your Regional Director or the Deputy Secretary, Regional Support Group to lodge a formal complaint.

Additional information, phone numbers and further contact details regarding parent complaints can be found on the DEECD website at www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/parentcomplaint.htm

WHO CAN I CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION OR SUPPORT?

The procedures for suspension and expulsion are detailed in the Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance which can be found by visiting: www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/studengage.aspx

FAQs for parents regarding suspension and expulsion are available at: www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/behaviour/Pages/faqs.aspx

If you require additional information and support, you should contact the Community Liaison Officer at your closest regional office (contact details next page).
ESTABLISHING THE GROUNDS FOR SUSPENSION

- The principal must first establish whether a suspension is an available option:
  - Did the behaviour occur whilst at school, travelling to or from school or at a school approved activity?
  - Does the behaviour meet one or more of the grounds for suspension?
- The principal must take into account whether a suspension is appropriate to the behaviour, the student’s education needs and any other relevant circumstances.
- Before implementing a suspension, the principal must ensure that:
  - The student has had the opportunity to be heard
  - That any information or documentation provided by the student or their relevant person has been taken into account in making the decision regarding the suspension
  - Other forms of action to address the behaviour for which the student is being suspended have been considered and implemented.
- The principal must decide on the duration of the suspension bearing in mind that:
  - A student cannot be suspended for more than five consecutive school days and written approval from the Regional Director is required if the total number of days the student has been suspended in the year is more than 15 days
  - If the period of the suspension is longer than the days left in the term, the principal should consider the likely disruption to the student’s learning before imposing a suspension that will continue into the following term.

SUSPENSION WITH AN IMMEDIATE EFFECT

- In some instances, the principal may consider that due to the severity of the situation and the possibility of immediate threat to another person, they may need to implement immediate action.
- Under these circumstances, the school must provide supervision until the student can be collected or until the end of the school day.
- When a suspension with an immediate effect is implemented on school camp or excursion and the student is unable to be collected, then they will need to be supervised until the end of the activity.

NOTIFICATION

- As soon as is practical, the principal must:
  - Give verbal notification to the student and their relevant person of the intention to suspend the student, the reason/s for the suspension, the schools days on which it will occur and where it will occur
  - Provide the student and their relevant person with the Notice of Suspension and the Procedures for Suspension brochure prior to the day on which the suspension occurs (or on the day a suspension is implemented, if it is a suspension with immediate effect)
  - Provide contact details for additional support services to the student and their relevant person.
- Where appropriate, or if requested, a Student Support Group or another meeting with the student and their relevant person can be convened.

DURING SUSPENSION

- Prior to the day on which the suspension occurs, or on the day a suspension is implemented with immediate effect:
  - If the student is suspended for three days or less, the school must arrange for appropriate school work to be supplied
  - If a student is being suspended for more than three days, a Student Absence Learning Plan and a Return to School Plan must be developed and provided to the student and their relevant person.
SUPPORT AND FOLLOW-UP

- Following the suspension, it may be appropriate to convene a meeting with the student and their relevant person to discuss the behaviour that led to the suspension. A relevant person can also request a meeting at any time during the suspension process.

- For students that have been suspended for five days or where they have received three or more suspensions in a year, then it is recommended that the school convene a Student Support Group meeting with the student, their relevant person and other personnel to discuss the behaviour that led to the suspension/s and the range of strategies to address the concerns.
SUSPENSION PROCESS CHECKLIST

It is not a requirement of the suspension process that this checklist be completed; it is intended to guide principals through the requirements expected of them under Ministerial Order 625.

IS SUSPENSION AN AVAILABLE OPTION?

- The student’s behaviour must have occurred:
  - While attending school; or
  - Travelling to or from school; or
  - While engaged in any school activity away from the school, including travelling to or from that activity.
- One or more of the following grounds for suspension must be applicable:
  - Behaving in such a way as to pose a danger, whether actual, perceived or threatened, to the health, safety or wellbeing of any person;
  - Causing significant damage to or destruction of property;
  - Committing or attempting to commit or is knowingly involved in the theft of property;
  - Possessing, using or selling or deliberately assisting another person to possess, use or sell illicit substances or weapons;
  - Failing to comply with any clear and reasonable instruction of a staff member so as to pose a danger, whether actual, perceived or threatened, to the health, safety or wellbeing of any person;
  - Consistently engaging in behaviour that vilifies, defames, degrades or humiliates another person based on age; breastfeeding; gender; identity; impairment; industrial activity; lawful sexual activity; marital status; parental status or status as a carer; physical features; political belief or activity; pregnancy; race; religious belief or activity; sexual orientation; personal association (whether as a relative or otherwise) with a person who is identified by reference to any of the above attributes;
  - Consistently behaving in an unproductive manner that interferes with the wellbeing, safety or educational opportunities of any other student.

PRINCIPAL MUST MAKE A DECISION TO SUSPEND

- I have ensured that suspension is appropriate to:
  - The behaviour for which the student is being suspended
  - The educational needs of the student
  - Any disability or mental illness of the student
  - The age of the student
  - The residential and social circumstances of the student.
- If the student is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander:
  - I have considered whether it is appropriate to contact a Koorie Education Coordinator.
- As part of my considerations, I have ensured that:
  - The student has been given an opportunity to be heard
  - Any information or documentation provided by the student and or their relevant person has been taken into account in making the decision
  - Other forms of action to address the behaviour which may lead to suspension have been considered.
Details of Suspension

- If it is a suspension with an immediate effect, I have ensured that the following grounds have been met:
  - The student behaved in a way that would provide the basis for a suspension; and
  - The behaviour is such that the student is putting the health, safety, and wellbeing of themselves, staff or other students at significant risk.

- I have also ensured that:
  - I have contacted the relevant person to advise them of the suspension with immediate effect and have requested that the student be collected by the relevant person or an emergency contact
  - I have arranged adequate supervision for the student until he/she can be collected by the relevant person or emergency contact, or until the end of the school day or school activity in the case of school camps or excursions.

- If the suspension is not to take effect immediately, I have determined a start date for the suspension.

- I have determined the period of the suspension and have ensured that:
  - The period of suspension does not exceed 5 school days
  - The suspension will not result in the student being suspended for more than 15 days in a school year
  - If this suspension does result in the student being suspended for over 15 days in the school year, I have sought written approval from the Regional Director
  - I have considered the likely disruption to the student’s learning before imposing a suspension for a period that is longer than the days left in a term.

- I have determined where the suspension will occur:
  - In-school suspension
  - External suspension.

Procedure Prior to Suspension

Before the suspension has commenced, I have done the following:

- Given verbal notification to the student and the relevant person of:
  - The reason/s for the suspension
  - The school days on which the suspension will occur
  - Where the suspension will occur (i.e. in-school or external suspension)
  - Contact details for additional support services for the student and the relevant person as appropriate.

- Arranged for appropriate school work to be provided to the student for the period of the suspension:
  - Where the student is suspended for 3 days or less, I have provided meaningful work
  - Where the student is suspended for more than 3 days, a Student Absence Learning Plan and Return to School Plan have been developed.

- Provided student and their relevant person with the following documentation:
  - Notice of Suspension
  - Student Absence Learning Plan (if applicable)
  - Return to School Plan (if applicable)
  - Information brochure Procedures following Suspension.
  - Recorded the suspension on CASES21.
# NOTICE OF SUSPENSION

## SCHOOL INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL NAME</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCHOOL NUMBER</td>
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<tr>
<td>CONTACT PERSON’S NAME</td>
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<tr>
<td>CONTACT NUMBER</td>
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## STUDENT INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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## RELEVANT PERSON DETAILS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
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<tr>
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</table>
## Suspension Details

### Current Suspension
- **From** [ ] / [ ] / [ ]
- **To** [ ] / [ ] / [ ] (inclusive)
- **Total Number of Days for this Suspension** [ ]
- **Total Number of Days for Suspensions in this School Year** (including current suspension) [ ]

### Previous Suspension(s) (if any) in This School Year
- **From** [ ] / [ ] / [ ] to [ ] / [ ] / [ ]
- **Number of Days** [ ]
- **From** [ ] / [ ] / [ ] to [ ] / [ ] / [ ]
- **Number of Days** [ ]
- **From** [ ] / [ ] / [ ] to [ ] / [ ] / [ ]
- **Number of Days** [ ]
- **From** [ ] / [ ] / [ ] to [ ] / [ ] / [ ]
- **Number of Days** [ ]
- **Total Number of Days** [ ]

### Previous Suspension(s) (if any) in Previous School Years
- **Year** [ ] [ ] [ ]
- **From** [ ] / [ ] / [ ] to [ ] / [ ] / [ ]
- **Number of Days** [ ]
- **Year** [ ] [ ] [ ]
- **From** [ ] / [ ] / [ ] to [ ] / [ ] / [ ]
- **Number of Days** [ ]
- **Year** [ ] [ ] [ ]
- **From** [ ] / [ ] / [ ] to [ ] / [ ] / [ ]
- **Number of Days** [ ]
- **Year** [ ] [ ] [ ]
- **From** [ ] / [ ] / [ ] to [ ] / [ ] / [ ]
- **Number of Days** [ ]
- **Total Number of Days** [ ]

## Grounds for Suspension

**Under Ministerial Order 625, this student was suspended for:**

(please tick)
- Behaving in such a way as to pose a danger, whether actual, perceived or threatened, to the health, safety or wellbeing of any person;
- Consistently engaging in behaviour that vilifies, defames, degrades or humiliates another person based on age; breastfeeding; gender; identity; impairment; industrial activity; lawful sexual activity; marital status; parental status; physical features; political belief or activity; pregnancy; race; religious belief or activity; sexual orientation; personal association (whether as a relative or otherwise) with a person who is identified by reference to any of the above attributes;
- Consistently behaving in an unproductive manner that interferes with the wellbeing, safety or educational opportunities of any other student.
- Causing significant damage to or destruction of property;
- Committing or attempting to commit or is knowingly involved in the theft of property;
- Possessing, using or selling or deliberately assisting another person to possess, use or sell illicit substances or weapons;
- Failing to comply with any clear and reasonable instruction of a staff member so as to pose a danger, whether actual, perceived or threatened, to the health, safety or wellbeing of any person;
REASONS FOR SUSPENSION
Details of student's behaviour (including time and date) and the evidence (and witnesses) relied upon to support the grounds for suspension.

STUDENT HAS BEEN GIVEN OPPORTUNITY TO BE HEARD
Include details of any meetings with the student and their relevant person, and any information or documentation provided by the student/relevant person.

OTHER FORMS OF ACTION TO ADDRESS THE BEHAVIOUR THAT HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED
Specify details of other strategies or supports that have been considered/implemented to address the behaviour. For additional information on supports available please see the Supports Available to Schools section of the Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance document.

DATE OF POST-SUSPENSION STUDENT SUPPORT GROUP
If applicable

PRINCIPAL'S NAME

SIGNATURE

DATE / /
ESTABLISHING THE GROUNDS FOR EXPULSION

- The principal must consider whether expulsion is an available option:
  - Did the behaviour occur whilst at school, travelling to or from school or at a school approved activity?
  - Does the behaviour meet one or more of the grounds for expulsion?
  - Is the behaviour of such magnitude that expulsion is the only available mechanism?
- When considering an expulsion for a student in out-of-home-care the principal must notify the relevant Regional Director.
- When considering an expulsion for an overseas student the principal must notify the International Education Division of the Department.

INVESTIGATION

- Before implementing an expulsion, the principal must undertake a thorough investigation to establish the relevant behaviours, who committed those behaviours, the context in which the behaviour was committed and any other relevant circumstances in relation to the behaviour.
- The principal should also consider any alternative disciplinary measures that may be appropriate to address the behaviour of the student.

REGIONAL APPROVED SUPPORT PERSON

- As part of their investigation the principal must seek the support of a person on the Regional Approved List to assist with the following:
  - Considering alternative disciplinary measures
  - Considering appropriate alternative education, training or employment options that may be suitable for the student
  - Attending the Behaviour Review Conference (if appropriate).
- The Regional Approved Support Person should also ensure that all options are considered and support transition arrangements where appropriate.

BEHAVIOUR REVIEW CONFERENCE

- The principal must convene a Behaviour Review Conference:
  - To inform the student and the relevant person about the reasons expulsion is being considered and the evidence to support this
  - To provide the student and the relevant person with an opportunity to respond and be heard
  - To discuss and identify future educational, training or employment options that may be suitable for the student should the principal decide to expel the student
  - To identify a course of action in the event that a decision is made to expel the student
  - To provide the student and the relevant person with the information document Procedures for Expulsion.
FINAL DECISION AND IMPLEMENTATION

- After the Behaviour Review Conference, the principal must consider all of the relevant matters and make a decision about whether to expel the student.
- The student and the relevant person must be notified of their decision within 48 hours of the conclusion of the Behaviour Review Conference.
- If the principal decides to expel the student, they must:
  - Provide the student and the relevant person with the Notice of Expulsion and Expulsion Appeal Form
  - Prepare an Expulsion Report
  - Provide the Regional Director with the Notice of Expulsion and the Expulsion Report within 24 hours of the expulsion taking effect
  - Record the expulsion in CASES21.

TRANSITION AND SUPPORT

- Following the decision to expel the student, the principal, in consultation with the regional office, must implement the plan of action that was devised at the Behaviour Review Conference.
- If there is going to be a significant delay in making further education or employment arrangement for the student, the principal must develop a Student Absence Learning Plan and continue to provide the student with appropriate work until the transition is made.
EXPULSION PROCESS CHECKLIST

It is not a requirement of the expulsion process that this checklist be completed; it is intended to guide principals through the requirements expected of them under Ministerial Order 625.

■ IS EXPULSION AN AVAILABLE OPTION?

☐ The student’s behaviour must have occurred:
  ☐ While attending school; or
  ☐ Travelling to or from school; or
  ☐ While engaged in any school activity away from the school, including travelling to or from that activity.

☐ One of more of the following grounds for expulsion must be applicable:
  ☐ Behaving in such a way as to pose a danger, whether actual, perceived or threatened, to the health, safety or wellbeing of any person;
  ☐ Causing significant damage to or destruction of property;
  ☐ Committing or attempting to commit or is knowingly involved in the theft of property;
  ☐ Possessing, using or selling or deliberately assisting another person to possess, use or sell illicit substances or weapons;
  ☐ Failing to comply with any clear and reasonable instruction of a staff member so as to pose a danger, whether actual, perceived or threatened, to the health, safety or wellbeing of any person;
  ☐ Consistently engaging in behaviour that vilifies, defames, degrades or humiliates another person based on age; breastfeeding; gender; identity; impairment; industrial activity; lawful sexual activity; marital status; parental status or status as a carer; physical features; political belief or activity; pregnancy; race; religious belief or activity; sexual orientation; personal association (whether as a relative or otherwise) with a person who is identified by reference to any of the above attributes;
  ☐ Consistently behaving in an unproductive manner that interferes with the wellbeing, safety or educational opportunities of any other student.

☐ The student’s behaviour must be of such magnitude that expulsion is the only available mechanism.

☐ I have considered the need of the student to receive an education compared to the need to maintain the health, safety and wellbeing of other students and staff at the school and need to maintain the effectiveness of the school’s educational programs.

☐ For students with a history of behavioural issues, I can confirm that sufficient prior interventions have been put in place. (Note: this is not a requirement under Ministerial Order 625 but a ground for appeal under the Order.)

■ PROCEDURES PRIOR TO EXPULSION

☐ I have identified the student’s relevant person and/or arranged for the appointment of a suitable person.

☐ I have considered alternative discipline measures for this student.

☐ I have considered appropriate education, training and employment options that may be available to student should a decision be made to expel the student.

☐ I have nominated a person from the Regional Approved List to assist with:
  ☐ Attending a Behaviour Review Conference with the student (if appropriate)
  ☐ Considering alternative disciplinary measures
  ☐ Considering appropriate alternative education/training and/or employment options
  ☐ Assisting in the implementation of the course of action agreed at the Behaviour Review Conference.
*If the student is in out-of-home care,* I have informed the Regional Director that expulsion of the student is being considered.

*If the student is an international student,* I have informed the International Education Division in central office, DEECD.

*If the student is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander,* I have considered contacting the Koorie Education Coordinator.

*If the student has a disability such that transition arrangements may be difficult to establish (as a guide this might include students on Level 4 or above of Program for Students with a Disability as well as other students who may or may not be funded)* I have considered contacting the regional office for assistance.

### PRIOR TO THE BEHAVIOUR REVIEW CONFERENCE

- I have contacted the student and their relevant person to arrange a Behaviour Review Conference prior to making a decision about whether to expel a student. I have advised them of the following:
  - The date, time and place for the Behaviour Review Conference
  - That they are encouraged to attend the meeting
  - That they may be accompanied by an independent support person of their choice who is not acting for fee or reward
  - That they are entitled to have an interpreter present and that relevant arrangements will be made if required
  - That if the relevant person is unable or unwilling to attend, the relevant person or the student may nominate another person to attend the Behaviour Review Conference
  - That if the student and / or the relevant person do not attend the meeting, a decision about whether to expel the student may be made at that meeting. If an expulsion is decided, the course of action may, therefore, be determined without the benefit of hearing from a student and their relevant person.

- I have made reasonable attempts to schedule a Behaviour Review Conference at a date, time and place that allows the student and the relevant person to attend.

- I have determined whether an interpreter is required by any person attending the Behaviour Review Conference and have arranged for such assistance to be present at the meeting.

### THE BEHAVIOUR REVIEW CONFERENCE

- I have made reasonable attempts to ensure that the following people are present at the Behaviour Review Conference:
  - The student
  - The relevant person, and their independent support person (if required)
  - Nominee from the Regional Approved List
  - Interpreter (if required).

- I have included the following discussion points on the agenda for the meeting:
  - Expulsion of the student is being considered
  - Grounds for expulsion that are being considered
  - Evidence to support a finding that the student has engaged in the conduct that warrants expulsion
  - Advising the student and the relevant person that this is an opportunity to respond and to be heard
  - Development of a course of action in the event that a decision to expel the student is made including future educational, training and/or employment options.

- I have provided the student and the relevant person with the following documentation:
  - Information document Procedures for Expulsion.
If the student and the relevant person did not attend the Behaviour Review Conference:
☐ I have ensured that documentation of the key points discussed at the meeting are sent to the student and the relevant person.

**DECISION TO EXPEL**

☐ I have properly, fairly and without bias considered all of the relevant matters in making my decision, including:
☐ The behaviour for which the student is being expelled
☐ The educational needs of the student
☐ Any disability or mental illness of the student
☐ The age of the student
☐ The residential and social circumstances of the student
☐ The need to maintain the health safety and wellbeing of other students and staff at the school
☐ The need to maintain the effectiveness of the school's educational programs.

☐ I have notified the student and the relevant person of my decision within 48 hours of the conclusion of the Behaviour Review Conference.

**IF A DECISION IS MADE TO EXPEL**

☐ I have provided the student and the relevant person with the following documents:
☐ Notice of Expulsion
☐ Expulsion Appeal Form

☐ I have prepared a written Expulsion Report

☐ I have provided the following documents to the Regional Director, within 24 hours of the expulsion taking effect:
☐ Notice of Expulsion
☐ Expulsion Report
☐ I have recorded the expulsion in CASES21.

**PROCEDURES FOLLOWING EXPULSION**

☐ I have ensured that the student is provided with educational and developmental opportunities as soon as practicable after the expulsion.

☐ In the case of a student of compulsory school age, I have ensured that the student is:
☐ Enrolled at another registered school; or
☐ Enrolled at a registered training organisation; or
☐ Engaged in employment.

☐ In the case of a student who is beyond compulsory school age, I have provided the student and their relevant person with information about other schools, registered training organisations or employment agencies that may provide suitable opportunities for the student.

☐ If there is to be a significant delay in making further educational/employment arrangements, I have ensured that a Student Absence Learning Plan has been developed and will continue to provide the student with appropriate work.