



## **Expulsion Policy**

### **Introductory statement**

The Board of Management of St. Peter's School is committed to providing a positive and safe learning environment where effective teaching and learning can take place. All students and staff have the right to be treated fairly and with dignity in an environment free from disruption, intimidation, harassment, discrimination and victimisation.

Expulsion will be considered only in the most serious circumstances and after all other interventions have been exhausted, in accordance with:

- The Education Act 1998
- The Education (Welfare) Act 2000
- Tusla – Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (2008)

Expulsion means the permanent exclusion of a student from the school. It is the most serious sanction a school can impose and will only occur when:

- The student's behaviour is a serious threat to the safety, well-being, or education of others, or
- The student has engaged in persistent breaches of the Code of Behaviour, and all other efforts to support positive behaviour have failed.

The decision to expel a student is the responsibility of the Board of Management.

### **Positive behaviour is supported by St. Peter's School when:**

- A comprehensive range of interventions are tried and documented.
- Multi-disciplinary supports (e.g., NEPS, CAMHS, NCSE, Tusla) are engaged.
- The school makes reasonable accommodations to address the student's needs.
- The student and family are supported and opportunity for improvement is provided (recorded by St. Peter's School).

## Principles Underpinning this Policy

The following principles will guide all decisions regarding expulsion:

- **Fair procedures and natural justice** — including the right to be heard and the right to an impartial decision.
- **Proportionality** — the sanction must be appropriate to the seriousness of the behaviour.
- **Educational continuity** — the school will assist in supporting the student to continue their education elsewhere.
- **Transparency and documentation** — all decisions and communications will be recorded in writing.

## Factors considered by the Board of Management prior to making a decision to expel a student:

- The nature, scale and persistence of the behaviour.
- The effect of the behaviour on the school community, staff and students.
- The previous behaviour and conduct of the student.
- Any attempts by the student to reform their behaviour.
- Attempts (short of expulsion) made by the Principal and staff to divert, correct or check the behaviour and the effectiveness of those attempts.
- The duty of the school to provide an education for all its students and whether the continued enrolment of the student affects or limits the Board's ability to discharge this duty.
- The duty of care owed by the school to its employees, students and visitors to the school and whether the continued enrolment of the student affects or limits the Board's ability to meet the duty of care.

## Grounds for Expulsion

While not exhaustive, expulsion may be considered in cases such as:

- Serious physical assault or violent behaviour towards another student or staff member.
- Possession or supply of illegal substances.
- Severe or repeated bullying, harassment, or intimidation.
- Persistent and serious disruption of teaching and learning after multiple interventions.
- Serious damage to property or behaviour posing a risk to health and safety.

## **Procedures for Expulsion**

The following steps will be followed in all cases of proposed expulsion:

### **Step 1 – Preliminary Investigation**

The Principal will investigate the alleged serious misconduct.

The student and parents/guardians will be informed of the nature of the allegations and that expulsion is a possible outcome. At this point, the parents/guardians and student will be given an opportunity to respond before any decision is made.

### **Step 2 – Referral to the Board of Management**

If the Principal considers expulsion warranted, the matter will be referred to the Board of Management.

The Board will notify the parents in writing:

- That expulsion is being considered;
- The reasons for the proposed expulsion;
- The date and time of a meeting;
- The right to submit written and/or oral representations.

The school will then notify the Education Welfare Officer (EWO). At this point a 20-day period, during which a Section 24 meeting should take place, will begin.

### **Step 3 – Board of Management Meeting**

Parents and the student (where appropriate) will have the right to attend the meeting; discuss the Principal's recommendation and speak to the Board on their behalf.

The Principal will present their recommendation.

The Board will ensure all sides are heard fairly and impartially.

### **Step 4 – Board Deliberation and Decision**

The Board will deliberate in private.

If it decides to expel, the Board must:

- Record the decision and reasons in writing.
- Notify the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) who works with TUSLA Educational Support Service (TESS), in accordance with Section 24(1) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000;
- Inform the parents and student in writing of the decision and their right to appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

### **Step 5 – Notification to the Educational Welfare Officer**

The school will notify the EWO in writing before any expulsion takes effect.

The expulsion cannot take effect until 20 school days have passed from the date of notification to the EWO.

During these 20 days, the EWO should invite both the parents and Principal to attend a Section 24 meeting to facilitate any new evidence which the parent may wish to present and discuss the continued education of the child in question.

### **Step 6 – Final Implementation**

After the 20-day period and following consideration by the Board of Management of any representations from the EWO following the Section 24 meeting, the expulsion may be confirmed at a meeting of the Board of Management.

If the Board of Management confirms its intention to expel the student, it will propose a date on which the expulsion will become effective. The Educational Welfare Officer is again informed of the proposal to expel the student and the effective date of that proposal.

St. Peter's School will support the student and parents/guardians in finding an alternative educational placement when appropriate.

### **6. Appeals Process**

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, parents/guardians (or the student if over 18) have the right to appeal the expulsion to the Department of Education.

Appeal forms and procedures are available from the school or directly from the Department's website.

### **7. Record Keeping**

All records related to the expulsion process — including investigation notes, correspondence, Board minutes, and EWO communications — will be securely stored in accordance with data protection legislation and Tusla guidelines.

### **8. Review and Policy Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required by changes in legislation or Department of Education circulars.

### **9. Ratification and Communication**

This Expulsion Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 26<sup>th</sup> of November 2025.

It will be communicated to all members of the school community and made available on the school website and in the school office.

Rosemary Fahy

Eoin Ó Donnagáin

Principal St. Peter's School

Chairperson to the Board of Management

Signed:



Signed:



Date: 26<sup>th</sup> November 2025

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