

Procedures to be followed in the event that expulsion is being considered.

Ursuline College, Sligo

Procedures in relation to expulsion are drawn up within the context of the school's ethos which derives from the Religious and Educational philosophy of Ursuline schools.

1. The matter will be very serious; either a pattern of persistent misconduct or a serious once-off incident.
2. The issue will be fully investigated by the Principal, Deputy Principal or a person with delegated responsibility, other than the offended party. Witnesses to the event(s) may be interviewed. A written record of the investigation will be kept.
3. The student against whom the complaint is made will be given an opportunity to present her side of the story.
4. Parents/Guardians are required to meet with the Principal. The parents/guardians will be given an opportunity to present their case. Where an expulsion is being considered, a student may be required to stay at home until her parents visit the school.
5. An emergency meeting of the Board of Management with a single item agenda will be called, as soon as practicable and normally within 6 school days to determine the issue. A minimum of three days' notice will be given to parents in such a case.
6. At the start of the meeting, the Chairperson shall enquire whether any member has a conflict of interest in respect of the matter being considered by the Board. Where the Board is satisfied that a conflict of interest exists, the member(s) involved shall withdraw from the meeting at the same time as the parents (or guardians), student (if over 18 and representing herself) and the Principal.
7. Written documentation will be supplied to parents and Board Members with the notice of the Board meeting. Such documentation will include:
 - The details of the allegation against the student.
 - A copy of the case to be presented against the student at the Board hearing.
 - A copy of any supporting documentation that may be used by the school in support of its case.
 - A clear statement that expulsion is being considered as a sanction in this instance.

- An invitation to make a written submission and/or to be present and heard at the hearing.
 - Expectations of the student (whilst on suspension pending a hearing).
 - A statement that the NEWB has been informed, this should be stated.
 - Rights of appeal e.g. Section 29 Appeal.
8. Parents may be accompanied at the Board hearing but, as this is a lay forum, legal representation is not the normal practice.
 9. The Principal will present the case against the student and will be available to answer questions from parents and Board Members.
 10. The Parents/Guardians (or Student over 18) will present their case and will be available to answer questions from Parents and Board Members.
 11. Once the Principal and the parents have made their presentations, they will withdraw from the meeting.
 12. Should the Board require the professional advice of the Principal, the Principal may be invited to return to the meeting briefly for that purpose. While the Principal is present, there will be no discussion on the merits of the particular case being considered.
 13. When considering an expulsion or a long-term suspension, the Board will ensure that the following factors are given due consideration:
 - the seriousness of the misbehaviour.
 - the likelihood of a recurrence.
 - the impact the misbehaviour is having on the learning of others.
 - the safety of students and teachers in the school.
 - the degree to which the behaviour was in violation of written school rule(s) and the relative importance of the rule(s).
 - whether the incident was perpetrated by the individual on her own or whether as part of a group; if as part of a group, the extent to which the individual is responsible for the misbehaviour.
 - the extent to which parental, peer or other pressure may have contributed to the misbehaviour.
 - the frequency of misbehaviour from the student.
 - the cumulative discipline record of the student.
 - what other sanctions have been tried and the level of success of such sanctions.
 - the responses of the student and her parents or guardians to any previous misbehaviour

- the academic, attendance and extra-curricular record of the student.
- the age of the student
- whether the student is of school-leaving age.
- whether the student is due to sit for any State Examinations in the near future.

14. The Board will reach its decision and will record the reasons for deciding as it does.

15. Where the Board of Management decides to expel a Student, the Parents/Guardians (and/or a Student over 18) the student will be informed by letter delivered by registered post. The letter will include for the following:

- notice of the decision to expel and the effective date of the expulsion (this shall not be before the passing of 20 school days following the receipt by an educational welfare officer of the notification to expel).
- the reasons for the expulsion.
- their right to appeal the decision under Section 29 of the Education Act and information about the Appeal process including the titles, phone number(s) and addresses of the relevant authorities and that the student will remain out of the school until the outcome of an Appeal (if any) is known.
- a statement the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) has been informed.
- a clear statement that the student is under the care of the Parents/Guardians for the period of 20 days required by the Education Welfare Officer of the NEWB to examine alternative provision for the student.
- Expectations of the student while under the care of her Parents/Guardians.