



CODE OF BEHAVIOUR POLICY



Code of Behaviour Policy Jonah Special School

Introduction

Jonah Special School is required, under the Education Act (1998) and the Education (Welfare) Act (2000), to develop and implement a Code of Behaviour.

Jonah Special School is a co-educational special school catering for students with autism and complex needs. Students may, at times, present with behaviours of concern. In recognition of this, individualised Student Support Plans are developed, where appropriate, to support each student's behavioural, communication and emotional needs.

This Code of Behaviour has been developed with careful consideration of the diverse and complex needs of our students. It acknowledges that behaviour is often a form of communication and that students may require support to develop self-regulation, social understanding and appropriate ways of expressing their needs.

The school adopts a neuro-affirmative, trauma-informed and regulation-first approach to behaviour. Positive relationships, predictability, and a structured environment are central to supporting students to feel safe, regulated and ready to learn.

This Code of Behaviour operates in conjunction with individual Student Support Plans. In situations where behaviours present a risk to safety or wellbeing, responses will be guided by both this Code and the individual plan, with due regard to the needs of all members of the school community. While this Code supports the implementation of individual Student Support Plans, in cases of serious or repeated misbehaviour where safety and duty of care are at issue, this Code of Behaviour will take precedence.

Jonah Special School is committed to ensuring that all students have the right to an education in a safe, respectful and as disruption-free an environment as possible.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies and procedures.

Aim

The aims of the Code of Behaviour in Jonah Special School are:

- To create a safe, harmonious, secure and orderly environment that supports the educational, social, emotional, behavioural and moral development of all students.
- To provide clear guidance to students, teachers, SNAs and all staff regarding behavioural expectations.
- To promote positive behaviour through a structured and supportive approach to discipline, including clear boundaries, encouragement of student success, and the development of self-esteem and modifying inappropriate behaviour.
- To identify and respond to the individual needs and challenges of each student within the school environment.
- To foster an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others.
- To support students in overcoming difficulties and to facilitate access to an appropriate and meaningful education.
- To work collaboratively with relevant professionals (e.g. psychologists, psychiatrists, behaviour specialists, social workers, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists) in supporting students' needs.
- To ensure consistency in the application of expectations and responses to behaviour.
- To provide a consistent framework within which positive motivation and encouragement are used by all staff.



- To promote mutual respect among all members of the school community.
- To strengthen co-operation between home and school.
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community.

Implementation

Every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of this Code of Behaviour. Positive behaviour is promoted and reinforced in a fair, consistent and respectful manner, taking into account the age, developmental level, communication profile and individual needs of each student. Where difficulties arise, the school places a strong emphasis on early intervention, proactive support and collaboration with parents/guardians and relevant professionals.

Where behaviours of concern arise, responses will focus on:

- Understanding the function of the behaviour.
- Supporting regulation and communication.
- Teaching appropriate alternative skills.
- Maintaining the safety and dignity of all involved.

A consistent, calm and predictable approach is expected across all school environments to ensure clarity and security for students.

Responsibilities –

All Staff (General Responsibilities)

All adults working in the school have a responsibility to model high standards of behaviour in their interactions with students and with each other. Staff act as role models, and their behaviour has a significant influence on students.

All staff should aim to:

- Create a positive, calm and predictable environment with realistic expectations.
- Promote honesty, courtesy, kindness and respect in all interactions.
- Provide a safe, caring and effective learning environment.
- Treat all students fairly, regardless of age, gender, race, ability or disability.
- Acknowledge and affirm the efforts and achievements of all students.

Board of Management's Responsibilities

The Board of Management is responsible for:

- Providing for a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for all members of the school community.
- Ensuring compliance with relevant legislation, including education, equality, child protection and health and safety requirements.
- Supporting the Principal, Clinical Director and staff in the implementation of this Code of Behaviour.
- Making decisions regarding suspension and expulsion in line with fair procedures and national guidelines.
- Reviewing, approving and ratifying the Code of Behaviour on a regular basis



Principal Responsibilities

The Principal is responsible for:

- Promoting a positive, inclusive school culture based on respect, empathy and high expectations.
- Ensuring the consistent and fair implementation of this Code of Behaviour across the school.
- Ensuring that appropriate supports are in place for students presenting with behaviours of concern.
- Communicating and working collaboratively with parents/guardians in relation to behavioural matters.
- Ensuring that behavioural incidents are recorded and managed in line with school procedures.
- Initiating review and evaluation of the Code of Behaviour as require.

Teacher Responsibilities

Teachers are responsible for:

- Implementing the Code of Behaviour in a consistent, fair and supportive manner.
- Creating a structured, engaging and safe learning environment. Planning and delivering differentiated learning experiences to meet individual student needs.
- Promoting and reinforcing positive behaviour, effort and achievement.
- Anticipating and reducing potential triggers for behaviours of concern within the classroom environment.
- Responding to behaviour in line with individual Student Support Plans.
- Supporting the development of students' communication, social and self-regulation skills.
- Recording and reporting significant incidents of behaviour in line with school procedures.
- Communicating with parents/guardians, where appropriate.
- Working collaboratively with colleagues to ensure a consistent whole-school approach.

Clinical Director Responsibilities

The Clinical Director is responsible for:

- Leading the development and oversight of individual Student Support Plans.
- Providing guidance to staff on evidence-based behaviour support strategies.
- Delivering training and ongoing professional development in behaviour support and crisis prevention.
- Communicating updates on student support plans and ensuring consistency in implementation.
- Supporting collaboration with parents/guardians in relation to behaviour support, in partnership with the Principal.
- Promoting a data-informed approach to behaviour assessment, monitoring and intervention.
- Advising on best practice, including ethical considerations in behaviour support.

Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) Responsibilities

SNAs are responsible for:

- Supporting the implementation of the Code of Behaviour and individual Student Support Plans.
- Assisting in the creation of a safe, calm and supportive environment.
- Encouraging and reinforcing positive behaviour and student engagement.
- Supporting students in accessing learning activities under the direction of the class teacher.
- Maintaining consistency in responses to behaviour.
- Supporting students in regulating their emotions and reducing escalation of behaviours of concern.
- Working collaboratively with teachers and other staff as part of a coordinated team approach.



Students Responsibilities

Students are supported, in accordance with their age, developmental level and individual needs, to:

- Attend school regularly and punctually.
- Engage in learning to the best of their ability.
- Listen to and follow instructions from staff, with appropriate supports.
- Show respect for themselves and others.
- Respect school property and the property of others.
- Behave in ways that support their own safety and the safety of others.
- Use appropriate communication methods, with support where needed. Use respectful language and avoid name-calling or swearing.
- Participate in school activities, including working and playing with others where appropriate.
- Follow school and class routines and expectations.

Parents/Guardian's Responsibilities

Parents/guardians play a key role in supporting their child's development and behaviour. They are encouraged to:

- Promote respect for self, others and property.
- Support regular and punctual school attendance.
- Engage with and support their child's learning.
- Familiarise themselves with and support the implementation of the Code of Behaviour.
- Work collaboratively with the school in addressing behavioural concerns.
- Share relevant information that may impact on their child's wellbeing, behaviour or learning.
- Support consistency between home and school approaches, where possible.
- Attend meetings and engage with school supports when requested.

Discipline for Learning (DFL)

Discipline for Learning (DFL) in Jonah Special School is based on a proactive, positive and educational approach to behaviour support. The focus is on recognising, reinforcing and teaching appropriate behaviours, rather than relying primarily on reactive responses to behaviours of concern. Staff are trained to consistently identify and reinforce positive behaviours, supporting students to develop self-regulation, engagement and positive learning habits.

A combination of whole-school and individualised expectations is used. School rules are designed to be clear, accessible and meaningful for students with autism and complex needs. These expectations are embedded within each student's Student Support Plan. Consistency is essential. Students benefit from predictable, structured environments where expectations and responses are clear and stable across all settings.

All students are supported through:

- Structured teaching approaches.
- Clear routines and visual supports.
- Individualised behaviour and communication supports.
- Consistent reinforcement of positive behaviour.

The school recognises that students may present with a wide range of communication, sensory and behavioural needs. Therefore, strategies are individualised, and what is effective for one student may not be appropriate for another.



Bullying

Bullying is defined as repeated verbal, psychological or physical aggression by an individual or group against another person or persons. Examples of bullying behaviour may include physical aggression, name-calling, intimidation, social exclusion, isolation or taunting.

Bullying behaviour is not tolerated in Jonah Special School. All incidents of bullying will be addressed in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy (Bí Cineálta Policy). Parents/guardians are expected to work collaboratively with the school in addressing and resolving incidents of bullying behaviour.

Where behaviour raises a child protection or safeguarding concern, it will be managed in line with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and procedures.

Before/After School

Parents/guardians are responsible for the supervision of students before the official opening time of 9:30am and after the official closing time of 3:00pm.

School Rules

School rules are designed to be clear, simple and consistent, with the health, safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community as the priority.

Rules are taught, modelled and reinforced across the school in a supportive and structured manner. They are designed to be accessible for students with autism and complex needs and where necessary, to meet individual needs.

The rules are:

- Respect for self and others.
- Respect for others' property.
- Respect other students and their learning.
- Kindness and willingness to help others.
- Follow instructions from staff immediately.
- Walk quietly in the school building.
- Courtesy and good manners.
- Readiness to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict.
- Ask permission to leave the classroom.
- Do your best in class.
- Take responsibility for your own work.
- Take responsibility for your own behaviour, as much as possible.

These can be summed up as 7 main rules:

- Show respect/be nice.
- Do your best.
- Be tidy.
- Be safe.
- Walk.
- Listen.
- Be calm.



Affirming Positive Behaviour

Jonah Special School places a strong emphasis on the recognition and reinforcement of positive behaviour. Positive reinforcement is used consistently to support the development of self-regulation, independence and engagement in learning. Emphasis is placed on teaching and acknowledging appropriate behaviours rather than focusing on negative behaviour alone. Staff are encouraged to recognise and respond to positive behaviour through a range of strategies, including:

- Specific verbal praise.
- Visual reinforcement.
- Positive attention and encouragement.
- Reward systems tailored to individual needs.
- Opportunities for responsibility and success.

A supportive and positive approach is central to developing students' confidence, self-esteem and motivation to learn.

Behaviour of Concern

Jonah Special School adopts a regulation-first and functional approach to behaviours of concern. Behaviour is understood as a form of communication and may serve a specific function for the student, such as communicating distress, avoiding a demand, gaining attention, or accessing a preferred activity.

The primary aim is to support students in developing appropriate alternative behaviours and communication skills that serve the same function as the behaviour of concern.

A strong emphasis is placed on teaching and supporting functional communication using appropriate strategies, which may include:

- Visual supports.
- Schedules and structure.
- Gestures and prompts.
- Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) systems.
- PECS, Lámh, speech or communication devices.
- Reinforcement systems.

All staff use daily interactions as opportunities to reinforce appropriate communication, emotional regulation and social skills.

When behaviours of concern occur, staff are expected to respond in a calm, consistent and supportive manner, with priority given to:

- Maintaining safety.
- Supporting regulation.
- Reducing escalation.
- Reinforcing appropriate alternative behaviours.

The school environment is structured to maximise opportunities for success, predictability and positive reinforcement.



Behavior Support Policy

The Clinical Director and the Principal have developed a Behaviour Support Policy, which is ratified by the Board of Management. This policy provides detailed guidance on behaviour intervention strategies and should be read in conjunction with this Code of Behaviour.

Reducing Behaviours of Concern

Jonah Special School follows a positive, proactive and functional approach to reducing behaviours of concern. The primary focus is on increasing appropriate behaviours, teaching alternative skills, and supporting students to regulate and communicate effectively.

Behaviour is understood as a form of communication. The school aims to identify the function of behaviour and to respond in ways that are supportive, educational and consistent with the student's individual needs.

Interventions are based on:

- Positive reinforcement of appropriate behaviour.
- Teaching and modelling alternative skills.
- Environmental adaptation and prevention strategies.
- Individualised Student Support Plans.
- Data-informed decision making.

Only where behaviours persist despite consistent implementation of positive supports, and where there is a clear safety or educational need, may additional structured responses be introduced. These will always be:

- Proportionate
- Individualised
- Time-limited where appropriate
- Agreed in advance with parents/guardians, where possible

Where appropriate, responses may include:

- Verbal reminders and re-direction.
- Planned ignoring of minor behaviours (where safe and appropriate).
- Temporary reduction of access to preferred activities (linked to learning goals, not punishment).
- Structured reflection or regulation time (supported, not exclusionary).
- Restorative conversations or repair of environment (where appropriate).
- Communication with parents/guardians.
- Review of support plans and strategies.
- involvement of relevant professionals

Important Principles:

- Students will not be deprived of access to curriculum content as a punitive measure, except where there are clear health and safety concerns.
- All responses must be consistent with the student's individual support plan.
- The focus is always on teaching replacement skills rather than punishment.
- Staff responses must prioritise dignity, safety and regulation

All behaviour support strategies will be developed in consultation with parents/guardians and, where appropriate, external professionals.



Crisis Management

The focus of behaviour support at Jonah Special School is on prevention, positive programming, and the development of students' self-regulation skills. The school prioritises proactive intervention, structured environments and proactive strategies to reduce the likelihood of behavioural crisis.

Staff are trained in CPI-informed approaches, with an emphasis on verbal de-escalation, low-arousal responses and regulation support.

In situations where behaviour escalates, staff will prioritise:

- Maintaining the safety of all students and staff.
- Using calm, consistent and supportive approaches.
- Implementing agreed individual de-escalation strategies.
- Supporting the student to regulate.

Physical Intervention is only used as a **last resort**, where there is an immediate and serious risk of harm to the student or others, and where all other appropriate strategies have been exhausted.

Any physical intervention will:

- Be proportionate and reasonable.
- Be the minimum necessary and for the shortest possible duration.
- Be carried out by appropriately trained staff.
- Be recorded and reviewed in line with school procedures.

Physical intervention is never used as a form of punishment. Further detail is outlined in the school's Behaviour Support Policy.

In rare and exceptional circumstances, where all internal supports have been exhausted, and where appropriate external supports have been engaged, the Board of Management may determine that the school is unable to meet the needs of the student in a manner that ensures the safety and wellbeing of all.

In such cases, the school will follow the procedures outlined in the Education (Welfare) Act (2000) in relation to suspension or expulsion. These measures will only be considered as a last resort and will involve consultation with parents/guardians, relevant professionals and appropriate external agencies.

Where used, suspension forms part of a planned, supportive response to behaviour and is not intended to be punitive. It may provide an opportunity to:

- Engage with parents/guardians to review and plan supports.
- Review and adjust behaviour support strategies.
- Assess and reduce risks within the school environment.
- Set clear and achievable behavioural goals.
- seek additional support from external professionals where appropriate

Strategies/Incentives (Individual Where Necessary)

Jonah Special School uses a range of evidence-based strategies and organisational approaches to support student needs and reduce behaviours of concern. These strategies are individualised and informed by each student's profile, including their communication, sensory and behavioural needs.

The school implements a combination of the following:



- Structured teaching approaches and predictable routines.
- Development of Student Support Files, including Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and Student Support Plans.
- Individual assessment to identify learning, sensory and behavioural needs.
- Positive behaviour support and crisis prevention strategies.
- Ongoing data collection to monitor progress and inform intervention.
- Collaboration with external professionals, where appropriate.
- Strong partnership with parents/guardians to support consistency between home and school.
- Individual sensory regulation programmes to support readiness for learning.
- Use of visual supports tailored to individual learning styles (e.g. objects, photos, symbols).
- Individualised communication systems (e.g. PECS, Lámh, AAC devices, speech).
- Social and life skills development programmes (e.g. Social Stories, SPHE).
- Pre-teaching of self-regulation and coping skills

Reinforcement and Encouragement

Positive behaviour is reinforced through:

- Specific praise and positive feedback.
- Encouragement and positive attention.
- Individualised reward systems.
- Visual reminders and supports.
- Opportunities for responsibility and success.
- Communication with parents/guardians to share progress.

Staff also use:

- Quiet acknowledgement of effort.
- Recognition of achievement within class or school settings.
- Structured feedback through school communication systems.

The school is committed to ongoing staff training and professional development in behaviour support and the management of behaviours of concern. Positive reinforcement and skill development are central to behaviour support. Where additional responses are required, these will be proportionate, individualised and implemented with due regard to the student's age, developmental level and needs.

Suspension

Suspension is defined as '*requiring a student to be absent from the school for a specific number of school days*'. The Board of Management has the authority to suspend a student. This authority to suspend for a period of up to and including three days is formally delegated to the Principal by the Board of Management. The Board of Management and Principal have a duty to ensure that there are no undue delays in an investigation in making decisions about the imposition of suspension. Great care will be taken to ensure that all matters to do with an investigation of alleged misbehaviour will be dealt with in confidence.

Suspension will always be exercised in a fair and non-discriminatory manner having regard to the good of the whole school community and the principles of natural justice which are the right to be heard and the right to impartiality.

Suspension will be an appropriate response to the behaviour that is causing concern such as –

- The student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety.
- The student's behaviour has a serious detrimental effect on the education of other students.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.
- The student is involved in a serious incident of behaviours of concern.



- The student is involved in a single incident of serious misconduct.

Suspension should be part of an agreed plan to address the student's behaviour.

- It should impress on a student and their parents the seriousness of the behaviour.
- It should give school staff an opportunity to plan other interventions.
- It should enable the school to set behavioural goals with the student and their parents.

Automatic Suspension

The Board of Management can impose automatic suspension for certain prescribed behaviours or in exceptional cases for a first offence. These include –

- Possession of a weapon.
- Sexual assault.
- Possession of illegal drugs.
- Actual violence or serious physical assault.
- Serious threat of violence against another student or staff member.

Fair procedures will be followed at all times.

For extreme behaviours of concern or repeated instances of serious behaviour of concern which poses a safety risk to students and staff, suspension may be considered. The Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend the school to meet the Chairperson and the Principal. Parents are required to give an undertaking to co-operate with the school in developing strategies to address the problem behaviour. Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with members of the staff involved, with due regard to records of previous behaviour, their pattern and context, reductive consequences and other interventions used and their outcomes, and any relevant medical information.

Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

Immediate Suspension

In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of students, staff, themselves or any other person at the school.

In cases where suspension is to take effect immediately and in the interest of Health and Safety –

- Parents/guardians will be informed by phone and asked to collect the student.
- Where possible, the following day, parents will be invited to meet with Principal, Clinical Director and class teacher to receive the explanation for suspension.
- Student (where appropriate) and parents will be given the opportunity to respond.
- Fair procedures will be followed at all times.

Procedures in Relation to Suspension

In the event that the Principal exercises his/her authority to suspend a student for a fixed duration, the following procedure will be followed –

- The student will be informed, where applicable; and given the opportunity to respond.
- The parents/guardians will be informed and invited to come to the school for a meeting to receive an explanation for the suspension.
- Written notification will be sent to the parents.



A student should not be suspended again shortly after they return to school unless –

- They engage in serious misbehaviour that warrants suspension and fair procedures are observed in full.
- The standard applied to judging the behaviour must be the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other student.

Written Notification

All suspension decisions will include a formal letter of notification with the following –

- Notice of suspension.
- Duration of the suspension.
- Dates on which the suspension will begin and end.
- Reason for the suspension.
- Arrangements for returning to school including any commitment to be entered into by student and parents/guardians e.g. students may be asked to re-affirm their commitment to the Code of Behaviour.
- Information of the appeal rights and procedures regarding suspension.

A statement that the Education Welfare Board has been informed if appropriate.

Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

A student or his/her parents/guardians may appeal the Principal's decision to suspend to the Board of Management. Such an appeal must be made in writing to the Chairperson of the Board of Management stating the grounds on which the appeal is being made. However, the school may insist that the student remain at home while the appeal proceeds. In the event that an appeal is successful, the suspension will be lifted and if the suspension has already been served, it will be expunged from the student's record.

An appeal of a suspension decision may also be made under Section 29 of the Education Act where a student has been suspended for 20 days or more. Information regarding this right of appeal will be provided with a formal notification of the suspension, if applicable.

Beyond success in such appeals, a suspension may be rescinded in the following circumstances:

- New circumstances come to light after the suspension has been applied that would have mitigated the sanction had they had known beforehand.
- Other mitigating factors consistent with the application of the Principles of Natural Justice.

Suspension Completion

Upon completion of a suspension, the following procedures may apply for the formal reintroduction of the student into the school –

- Parents will be requested to attend with the student upon his/her return to school.
- A written or verbal apology may be required for the student for his misbehaviour.
- The student may be required to enter into a contract of good behaviour or other conditions that may be specified before returning to school.
- A meeting will be arranged between the Principal, Clinical Director, class teacher, parents and student (where necessary) to support the student during the reintegration process.



Records and Reports

Formal written records will be kept of –

- The investigation.
- The decision making process.
- The decision and the rationale for the decision.
- The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension.

The Principal will report all suspensions to the Board of Management, with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension. The Principal will report suspensions to N.E.W.B. when a student has been suspended for 6 days and for 20 days accumatively.

Expulsion

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a student. As a matter of best practice, the authority will be reserved to the Board of Management and will not be delegated.

We recognise that expulsion of a student is a very serious step and one that will only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. The school will take significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid the expulsion of a student.

Procedures for expulsion will proceed in accordance with the Rule for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a student, the Board shall notify the Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as –

- The student's behaviour is a persistent cause of disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
- The student continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

Expulsion for a First Offence

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a student should be expelled 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 include –

- A serious threat of violence against another student or a member of staff.
- Actual violence or physical assault.
- Supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school.
- Sexual assault.

Determining the Appropriateness of Expelling a Student

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

Procedures in Respect of Expulsion

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures as well as procedures prescribed under the Education Welfare Act 2000, when proposing to expel a student (see 10.3 and 10.4 for information about fair



procedures). 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 and/or Chairperson.
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.

In investigating an allegation, in line with fair procedures, the Principal will –

- Inform the student, where necessary, 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 let them know. 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.
- If a student and their parents fail to attend a meeting, the principal will 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 the parents and their response.

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 the 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 or oral submission to the Board of Management.
- Ensure that the parents have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's Recommendation & Holding of a Hearing

It is the responsibility of the Board of Management to review that the initial investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures. The Board will undertake its own review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case. It will ensure that no party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the Board's deliberations.

If the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student, it will hold a hearing. The Board meeting for the purpose of the hearing will 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 will be allowed to question the evidence of the other party directly. The meeting will also be an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction.



In the conduct of the hearing, the Board of Management will 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 will ensure that the Principal and parents are not present for the Board's deliberations.

Board of Management Deliberations & Actions Following a Hearing

Having heard from all parties, it is the responsibility of the board to decide whether or not the allegation is sustained and, if so, whether or not expulsion is the appropriate sanction.

Where the Board of Management, having considered all of the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion and the reasons for this opinion. (Educational Welfare Act 2000, s24 (1)). The Board of Management will refer to the 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, S 4A).

The Board of Management will inform parents in writing about its conclusions and the next steps in the process. Where expulsion is proposed, the parents will be told that the Board of Management will now inform the Educational Welfare Officer.

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 will formally confirm the decision to expel (this task might be delegated to the Chairperson and the Principal).

Parents will be notified immediately that the expulsion will now proceed. Parents and the student, where necessary, will be told about the right to appeal and be supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal. A formal record will be made of the decision to expel the student.

Limitations

This document is not designed to list all the possible situations that may arise, nor state all the possible strategies to address behaviour of concerns, but to serve as a general guide to the students, the teacher, and the Principal to be used to solve individual problems.

Methods of Communicating with Parents

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to supporting children with behaviours of concern. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented at home and in school.

A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor encouraging positive behaviour in the school. Structures and channels designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, students and parents have been established and are being reviewed regularly. Parents should be encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life, in the past or present, which may affect the child's behaviour. The following methods are to be used at all levels within the school –

- IEP Meetings/IEP Review Meetings.
- Parent/teacher meetings throughout the year.



- Consultation throughout the year.
- Through children's home/school diary.
- Phone Call and/or text.
- Email.
- Aladdin Messages.

Related Policies

This policy must be read in conjunction with:

- Discipline (Behaviour Support) Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy (Bí Cineálta)
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Health and Safety Statement
- Admissions/Enrolment Policy
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy
- Critical Incident Policy
- Data Protection Policy (GDPR)

Jonah Special School

Code of Behaviour Policy.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management of Jonah Special School at its meeting held on:

Ratified by the Jonah Board of Management on: _____

Date

Signed: _____

Principal

Signed: _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Next Review Period: *September 2029*