



The Catlins Area School

Currently under review

We are reviewing this policy for its content and how well the school implements it. To share your comments and rate its implementation, click the "Start your review" button.

About the review process ⓘ

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Stand-down, Suspension, Exclusion, and Expulsion

The Catlins Area School may need to **stand-down, suspend, exclude, or expel** a student. This is part of the board responsibility to maintain a safe and effective learning environment.

We approach any stand-down, suspension, exclusion, or expulsion in a fair and flexible manner. We consider all the circumstances and options available to us before making a decision. Our board and principal consider learning support or other behavioural needs as part of their decision-making. Every situation is different and requires a different approach. Our principal and board seek advice when needed.

In the proceedings, we ensure everyone:

- understands the processes, practices, and procedures
- respects each other, including New Zealand's cultural diversity and recognises the unique position of Māori
- understands that our principal and board use our charter/strategic plan as guidance.

In any case of stand-down, suspension, or exclusion, we follow Ministry of Education guidelines. This includes giving parents/caregivers relevant information. See **Stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions and expulsions** [↗](#).

We do not use informal imposed absences for disciplinary reasons. The only way the school removes a student from the school is through stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions, or expulsions.

Key roles in a stand-down, suspension, exclusion, or expulsion

The principal is responsible for standing down or suspending a student. They must have reasonable grounds that gross misconduct or continued disobedience is:

- harmful to the student or others
- a dangerous example to other students
- likely to be seriously harmful to themselves or other students.

The principal has a duty to students who have been stood down or suspended. The principal must take reasonable actions to make sure the student has guidance and counselling, provide an educational programme to help the student returning to school, and minimise educational disadvantages from the absence.

As soon as practicable, the board provides the student and their parents/caregivers with the following in writing:

- notice of when and where the suspension meeting will be held

- information on the potential results of the suspension
- procedures that will be used during the suspension meeting
- information from the report of the principal or any other material that the school has no grounds to withhold under the **Privacy Act**, such as personal information.

The student and parents/caregivers must receive the material at least two days before the meeting.

The student may:

- speak at or phone/video call during a board meeting to have their views considered before the board makes a decision about the suspension
- continue to attend school during the stand-down or suspension period:
 - if the principal believes attendance is the best way to provide guidance and counselling
 - to continue their education, which may include fulfilling a course requirement or sitting an exam
 - if the parents/caregivers request their child still attend and the principal believes it is a reasonable request.

Parents/Caregivers may also attend the board meeting. They may also be directed by the Ministry to enrol their child at a distance school if their child cannot return to the school or attend a new school.

Stand-down

The principal tells the Ministry and parents/caregivers of the student the reason for the stand-down and the stand-down period.

A stand-down can be for more than one specified period. The period(s) cannot exceed five days in a term or 10 days within a school year. The principal can lift the stand-down early or shorten it for any reason. If the principal decides that there were not reasonable grounds, they must withdraw the stand-down on ENROL. The principal must inform anyone who was informed about the stand-down that they've withdrawn or shortened it.

After a student is stood down, the principal, student, and/or their parents/caregivers may request a stand-down meeting. If the parent/caregiver requests the meeting, the principal arranges the meeting as soon as practical. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the stand-down and share information about it. We may also use the meeting to decide next steps for the student.

Suspension

After suspending a student, the principal informs the board, Ministry, and parents/caregivers of the reason for the suspension. The principal also provides the board with a written report that includes all relevant information.

The board convenes a meeting to consider circumstances relevant to the suspension. A quorum of the board is required for a suspension meeting, or the board may delegate the power to make suspension decisions to a committee of at least two board members. The board must carefully consider every available statutory option available to them. The statutory options available to the board are:

- lifting the suspension early and choosing to include any reasonable conditions
- extending the suspension for a reasonable period that must include conditions to help with the student return to school
 - The board monitors the progress of the student towards returning to school. The principal shares this report with the student and their parents/caregivers.

- If the student does not comply with the conditions, the board may reverse or modify the previous decision at the request of the principal after holding a reconsideration meeting. The same rules apply to a reconsideration meeting as the first suspension meeting.
- excluding the student and requiring them to enrol at another school.

The board:

- may require the principal, the student and their parents/caregivers, and any other representatives to withdraw while the board decides on the outcome
- may try to reach an agreement with everyone involved in the decision
- must record its decision and reason in writing.

If the suspension is lifted, the student must return to school on the next school day.

If the meeting is not held or a decision is not reached, suspensions automatically end after seven school days or 10 calendar days if the student is suspended within seven days before the end of the term.

Exclusion and expulsion

If a student is excluded, the principal tries to find a suitable and convenient school for the student to attend. If a school cannot be found after 10 school days, the principal informs the Ministry about the steps they've taken to find one. The Ministry may:

- arrange for or direct another school to enrol the student
- direct the parents/caregivers to enrol the student at a distance school
- direct our school to allow the student to return if there is no suitable alternative school.

The Ministry must take steps to consult with the student, parents/caregivers, the board, and other relevant people/organisations before the student returns to the school.

Until the excluded student enrolls at another school, they remain on our register.

The board does not have to seek another school for an expelled student. Expelled students may attempt to enrol at another school.

We may refuse to enrol a student who has been excluded or expelled from another school unless the Ministry directs otherwise. Our school complies with any direction from the Ministry to enrol an excluded or expelled student from another school.

The principal assures the board that the school complies with the correct procedure and reporting requirements relating to stand-down, suspension, exclusion, and expulsion. See [Review Schedule and Board Assurances](#).





Related policies

- [Māori Educational Achievement](#)
- [Learning Support](#)
- [Behaviour Management](#)
- [School Records Retention and Disposal](#)

Legislation

- Education and Training Act 2020
- Privacy Act 2020
- Protected Disclosure Act 2022
- Official Information Act 1982

Resources

- Ministry of Education | Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga:
 - [Stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions and expulsions guidelines - Part 1](#) 
 - [Stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions, expulsions](#)  (information for parents and caregivers)
 - [Appendix 4: Information for parents and guardians](#)  (see parent/guardian information sheets)
- NZSBA | Te Whakarōputanga Kaitiaki Kura o Aotearoa: [Student behaviour management](#) 

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