



# Genazzano FCJ College

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## Suspension and Expulsion Protocols

### Suspension

Suspension is the process of excluding a student from the standard instruction or educational opportunities being provided to other students at the school for part of a day, a full day, or multiple days.

Suspension is a serious disciplinary measure and at Genazzano FCJ College this is reserved for incidents where other measures have not produced a satisfactory response. Before considering a suspension, the College seeks to understand the reasons for a student's behaviour and considers alternative educational and wellbeing supports and interventions that can be provided to the student to effectively address the reasons.

The College recognises repeated or lengthy suspensions may not address the reasons for a student's behaviour and may risk leading to poorer outcomes for a student's engagement in education.

### Grounds for Expulsion and Suspension

In order for suspension or expulsion to be an option, the following conditions must be in place:

The student's behaviour must have occurred:

- whilst attending school
- or travelling to or from school
- or while engaged in any school activity away from the school
- or travelling to or from any school activity.

The student's behaviour must meet one or more of the following conditions:

- Behaves in such a way as to pose a danger, whether actual, perceived or threatened, to the health, safety or well-being of any person
- Causes significant damage to or destruction of property
- Commits or attempts to commit or is knowingly involved in the theft of property
- Possesses, uses or sells or deliberately assists another person to possess, use or sell illicit substances or weapons
- Fails 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 well-being of any person
- Consistently engages in behaviour that vilifies, defames, degrades or humiliates another person based on age; breastfeeding; gender; identity; impairment; industrial activity; lawful sexual activity; marital status; parent/carer status or status as a carer; physical features; political belief or activity; pregnancy; race; religious belief or activity; sex; 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 behaves in an unproductive manner that interferes with the wellbeing, safety or educational opportunities of any other student

Note: for incidents between students that occur outside of school hours or in locations other than those listed above, a suspension cannot be used as a response. The impact of cyberbullying (and other behaviours) outside of school hours/off school premises on schools is acknowledged, however, if the behaviour occurs solely outside of school hours/grounds suspension is not an available recourse. If incidents outside of school hours are connected to behaviour that does meet the grounds and location requirements for suspension, this external behaviour may be considered when determining the response to an in-school incident.

### **Authority to suspend or expel a student**

Only the Principal has the authority to make the final decision to suspend a student.

### **The relevant person**

Due to the seriousness of suspension and expulsion, students who are subject to suspension and/or expulsion processes have the right to a 'relevant person' to participate in the process, provide support and advocate for them. For most students this will be a parent or carer.

In situations where the parent or carer is unavailable or unwilling to act as the relevant person for their child, they can nominate an alternative relevant adult.

### **Suspension or Expulsion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students**

When considering a suspension/expulsion for an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander student, the Principal should engage an appropriate support person who can support the school and family to find the best outcome for the student, and connect the school and family to any local or regional supports.

### **Overseas Students**

When considering appropriate discipline for overseas students, otherwise known as international students, it is important to note that the decision to suspend or expel may impact on a number of the student's visa conditions. Such visa conditions include:

- the student must attend 80% of classes
- the student must make satisfactory progress.

Schools enrolling international students are required to contact the International education division which manages the deferment, suspension and cancellation of international student enrolments.

### **Students with separated parents**

For students who have separated parents, it is important to remember that suspension and expulsion are serious disciplinary measures and therefore all parents and carers are entitled to be notified of the intention to suspend or expel the student, subject to court orders.



In circumstances where there is more than one parent or carer who wishes to participate in the suspension and expulsion process, it is important to involve all of them in the process, in accordance with any relevant court orders.

### **Expulsion Clarification**

On rare occasions, an individual student's behaviour may compromise the health, safety and wellbeing of other students and staff at the school. When a behavioural incident is of such magnitude that an expulsion is considered, it is important that:

- a transparent, fair and supportive process is in place
- there are appropriate checks and balances at each stage.

The expulsion process has a focus on procedural fairness and comprehensive support for all students. It aims to ensure that:

- opportunities are provided to consider the effect of a student's behaviour on all affected parties
- decisions are informed by the safety, wellbeing and educational interests of the student and the school community
- vulnerable students are appropriately supported.

At Genazzano FCJ College, the decision to expel a student is rare. If this decision is made, the Principal will work closely with the student and their family to ensure the student and family are supported to successfully transition to a new educational setting as soon as possible.

### **Removing a student from a school while considering an expulsion**

The Principal may decide that a student should be suspended from school immediately, while an expulsion is being considered. This may happen if the student's behaviour is putting the health, safety and wellbeing of themselves or any other person at significant risk.

### **Students in and out of home care**

Students in out-of-home care face additional barriers to engaging in education. Many of these students have experienced trauma and multiple transitions between schools as a result of their living arrangements. If a student in out-of-home care is being considered for expulsion the Principal will work with Catholic Education Melbourne (CEM) to ensure appropriate support processes in place.

### **Monitoring Student Suspension and Expulsions**

All information related to a student suspension and/or expulsion will be recorded on an individual student's confidential file on GenConnect. A summary of all Student Suspension and Expulsion will be recorded on a confidential register that can be accessed by College Executive and Heads of School.