

Suspension of Students

Information for parents and carers



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

What is a suspension?

A suspension is a formal process where a student is **temporarily removed** from their usual learning environment due to serious behavioural concerns.

The purpose of suspension is not punishment; it is an opportunity for the school, the student and their family to review what happened, and to work together on a restorative plan that supports positive behaviour and wellbeing.

Why might a student be suspended?

The principal may suspend a student if they meet the grounds for suspension.

The primary focus of a suspension is to enable a collaborative review of the factors influencing the student's behaviour and to work together to reach a restorative outcome.

Grounds for suspension

The grounds for suspension include when a student:

- (a) has **breached the school's enrolment agreement**, including but not limited to the MACS Student Code of Conduct, Student Behaviour Support Policy, Student Bullying Prevention and Response Policy, and ICT Acceptable Usage Policy – Students
- (b) behaves in a way that poses a **serious risk to the health, wellbeing or safety** of any person
- (c) **verbally or physically abuses** another student, staff member or member of the community
- (d) engages in behaviour that **vilifies, defames or humiliates** another person who is identified or perceived by reference to any characteristics protected under the Equal Opportunity Act
- (e) does not comply with a **clear and reasonable instruction** from a staff member which disrupts class activities or places a person at risk
- (f) **causes significant damage** or destruction to property
- (g) brings an item to be used as a **weapon** onto school property
- (h) commits, attempts to commit or is knowingly involved in the **theft of property**
- (i) possesses, uses or sells, or deliberately assists another person to possess, use or sell, **illicit substances or weapons**
- (j) commits a serious offence which **jeopardises the safety or security** of other members of the school community, or which has the potential to seriously harm individuals and/or the reputation of the school
- (k) engages in **cyberbullying**, exchanges violent imagery or text, and/or inappropriately uses artificially generated materials and/or deepfakes within online environments against others regardless of where the content was created
- (l) engages in **inappropriate conduct** with, or in relation to, staff online or on social media platforms.

Types of suspension

- **Internal suspension:** The student remains at school, but does not attend regular classes or activities. They are supervised in a safe space.
- **External suspension:** The student stays at home and does not attend school for a set period.



How long can a suspension last?

A student can be suspended for:

- **up to five consecutive school days** without additional approval
- **longer than five days** with approval from the MACS General Manager (Region).

A student cannot be suspended for **more than 15 school days in a school year** without approval.

What happens during a suspension?

- The school will provide learning tasks for your child to complete at home.
- The principal will review existing support plans; for example, their Student Behaviour Support Plan and Student Regulation and De-escalation Plan.
- A Program Support Group (PSG) may be formed or consulted to plan next steps.

Return to school

Before your child returns:

- a return to school meeting will be held with you, your child and relevant staff
- a Return to School Plan will be developed
- behaviour and safety plans will be updated to support your child's successful reintegration.

Questions or support

If you have any questions or need support during this process, please contact the school office or your dedicated school contact.

