

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Stand-down of a student from a state and state integrated school

You have been told by the school that your child has been stood-down. This information sheet gives you some information. You may also want to refer to the legislation and rules about stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions and expulsions, available from the principal.

If your child faces disciplinary action from the school, you may feel devastated or angry at the school or your child. You may want to support your child no matter what, or you may want the school to punish your child.

It is always important to hear both sides of the story and work with the school and your child to get your child back to school again.

Stay Calm

**Talk to your child
about what happened**

**Think about your child's
behaviour then go and
talk to the principal**

Frequently asked questions

What is a stand-down?

A stand-down is the formal removal of a student from school by the principal for a specified period. Stand-downs can be no more than five school days in a term or ten school days in a year.

What are the reasons for a stand-down?

The principal has to be satisfied on reasonable grounds that:

- » the student's gross misconduct (serious misbehaviour) is a harmful or dangerous example to other students at the school (**Section 80(1)(a) of the Education and Training Act 2020**), or
- » the student's continual disobedience is a harmful or dangerous example to other students at the school (**Section 80(1)(a) of the Education and Training Act 2020**), or
- » because of the student's behaviour, it is likely that the student, or other students at the school, will be seriously harmed if the student is not stood down (**Section 80 (1)(b) of the Education and Training Act 2020**).

Can a student be stood-down just for breaking a school rule?

The principal cannot automatically stand-down a student because the student has broken a school rule or behaved badly. The principal has to consider the circumstances of each situation and be satisfied that the situation warrants standing-down the student.

The principal must act fairly.

If my child has been stood-down, what happens next?

1. Your child will be able to return to school on the date given in the principal's letter (**Section 80(3) of the Education and Training Act 2020**).
2. You and/or your child may ask to meet the principal (or the principal may ask to meet you) to discuss the stand-down. You can take another support person with you.
3. Your child may be required to go to the school for guidance and counselling during the stand-down period (**Section 80(3) of the Education and Training Act 2020**).
4. Your child may be able to go to school during the stand-down period for specific activities or classes, if you ask the principal and the principal considers your request is reasonable (**Section 80(3) of the Education and Training Act 2020**).
5. You may ask the school or the Ministry of Education for a copy of the Education (Stand-down, Suspension, Exclusion and Expulsion) Rules 1999. The rules are on the Ministry's website at www.minedu.govt.nz/goto/sdsrules. These rules contain detailed information about stand-downs and suspensions (see the back page for Ministry phone numbers).

A stand-down is not a criminal offence and does not appear on a Police record.

There is no need for your child to change schools because of the stand-down.

At a stand-down meeting, ask the principal:

- » what happened from their perspective, and if they talked with your child about their concerns and listened to your child's point of view
- » how they helped your child understand the consequences of their behaviour and learn from it
- » how the disciplinary process works and how you can support your child
- » if what happened is part of a bigger problem
- » what other support and guidance is available
- » how your child can successfully return to school.

Note: Schools can link you with relevant agencies and suggest options for counselling and support.

Many schools have a plan to get students back into a normal school routine. You can help by:

- » working with the school
- » agreeing to a shared plan
- » checking the plan is working
- » having ongoing discussions with the school.

Where can you go if you would like some guidance and advice?**Student Rights Service**

This service is run by Wellington Community Law Centre (wclc)

PO Box 24005, Wellington 6142

Tel: 04 499 2928

Email: info@wclc.org.nz

Web: www.wclc.org.nz/our-services/the-student-rights-service/

Address:

Level 2, 15 Dixon St
Wellington

Te Awa Kairangi
Level 2, 59 Queens Drive
Hutt Valley

YouthLaw Aotearoa (nationwide)

Tel: 0800 884 529

Email: nzyouthlaw@gmail.com

Web: www.youthlaw.co.nz

Commissioner for Children

PO Box 5610, Wellington 6145

Tel: 0800 2244 53

Email: advice@occ.org.nz

Web: www.occ.org.nz

Community Law Centres

Web: www.communitylaw.org.nz

Citizens Advice Bureau

Tel: 0800 367 222

Web: www.cab.org.nz

Also consider people who know your child well and can speak for them, such as a coach, teacher aide or guidance counsellor.

Please note: it may be better not to ask a school staff member or member of the school's board of trustees, as they may not be able to speak on your child's behalf.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION		www.education.govt.nz
Tai Tokerau	Tel: 09 436 8900	Email: enquiries.whangarei@education.govt.nz
Auckland	Tel: 09 632 9400	Email: enquiries.auckland@education.govt.nz
Waikato	Tel: 07 850 8880	Email: enquiries.hamilton@education.govt.nz
Bay of Plenty/Wairariki	Tel: 07 349 7399	Email: enquiries.BoP-Wairariki@education.govt.nz
Hawke's Bay/Tairāwhiti	Tel: 06 833 6730	Email: enquiries.napier@education.govt.nz
Taranaki, Whanganui, Manawatu	Tel: 06 349 6300	Email: enquiries.wanganui@education.govt.nz
Wellington area	Tel: 04 463 8699	Email: enquiries.lowerhutt@education.govt.nz
Nelson, Marlborough, West Coast area	Tel: 03 546 3470	Email: enquiries.nelson@education.govt.nz
Canterbury	Tel: 03 378 7300	Email: enquiries.christchurch@education.govt.nz
Otago/Southland	Tel: 03 471 5200	Email: enquiries.dunedin@education.govt.nz

You may also contact:**Human Rights Commission**

Infoline: 0800 496 877

Email: infoline@hrc.co.nz

Text: 0210 236 4253

Web: www.hrc.co.nz

Office of the Ombudsman

PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143

New Zealand-wide answer phone

Tel: 0800 802 602

Complaints

Email: info@ombudsmen.parliament.nz

Web: www.ombudsmen.parliament.nz