

## HUME CENTRAL SECONDARY COLLEGE

### SUSPENSION POLICY

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the implementation of suspension procedures at Hume Central Secondary College is consistent and complies with legislative and Departmental policy requirements.

#### SCOPE

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 is best reserved for incidents when other measures have not produced a satisfactory response. In line with DET policies, at Hume Central Secondary College, alternative interventions and supports are provided to students to address the reasons for the behaviour before proceeding to suspension.

- Suspension is a serious disciplinary measure and Principals must consider alternative interventions and supports for students before proceeding to suspension as the appropriate action.
- Only Principals have authority to make the decision to suspend a student. This authority cannot be delegated.
- Detailed requirements exist for the suspension process, and it is essential that Principals refer to the full mandatory Suspension Guidelines and Procedures when they are considering suspending a student.
- This policy is underpinned by Ministerial Order 1125.

#### GUIDELINES

##### 1. Authority to suspend

Only Principals have authority to make the final decision to suspend a student. This authority cannot be delegated.

##### 2. Grounds for suspension

In order for suspension to be an option, the following conditions must be in place. The student's behaviour must have occurred:

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

and, 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 wellbeing 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 wellbeing 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 or 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.

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 or off school premises on students is acknowledged, however, if the behaviour does not occur at school or a school activity or when travelling to or from school or school activity, 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.

### 3. Procedures for suspension

At Hume Central Secondary College, the suspension of a student is guided by DET Suspension Guidelines and Procedures to ensure the required suspension considerations (including grounds for suspension – see Appendix 1) and the suspension process are followed. In determining whether to suspend a student the Principal must ensure that suspending the student is appropriate to:

- the behaviour for which the student is being suspended;
- the educational needs of the student;
- any disability of the student;
- the age of the student; and
- the residential and social circumstances of the student.

Before implementing a suspension, the principal must ensure that:

- the student has had the opportunity to be heard;
- any information or documentation provided by the student, or their relevant person has been taken into account in making the decision regarding suspension; and
- other forms of action to address the behaviour for which the student is being suspended have been considered.

Prior to suspension taking effect, or on the day of implementing a suspension with immediate effect the Principal or the nominee (Assistant Principal, Team Leader) give verbal notification to the student and

- notify their parent/guardian via telephone or in person of the reason/s for the suspension, the school days on which the suspension shall occur and where the suspension will occur;
- provide contact details for additional support services to the student and their relevant person, as appropriate;
- where the student is suspended for 3 school days or less, provide meaningful work;
- where the student is suspended for more than 3 school days, develop a Student Absence Learning Plan;
- provide the student and their parent/guardian with a Notice of Suspension which must include
  - the reasons for the suspension; and
  - the school days on which the suspension shall occur; and
  - provide the student and their parent/guardian with copies of the Student Absence Learning Plan

### 4. Period of suspension

The maximum continuous period of time a student can be suspended at any given time is 5 school days unless a longer period is approved by the Regional Director. Where the Principal implements a suspension with immediate effect and is considering whether to expel the student, the principal may request written approval from the Regional Director for a period of suspension greater than 5 school days for the purposes of undertaking the expulsion procedures.

A student cannot be suspended for more than 15 school days in a school year without written approval from the Regional Director. If a student has been suspended for 15 school days in a school year, an expulsion is not the automatic consequence.

#### REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed as required or due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

Date Reviewed	To Be Reviewed	Endorsed at College Council
June 2021	Annually	24 <sup>th</sup> June 2021