

Discipline and Suspension

A positive school climate and a safe learning and teaching environment are essential if students are to succeed in school.

Positive School Climate

A positive school climate means everyone – parents, students, staff and community members – feels welcome and respected.

Making school safer involves progressive discipline. This involves the whole school and combines discipline with opportunities for students to continue their education. At Raft River this also involves a philosophy called Restitution so children have more opportunities to learn from the choices they make. We also know that every student learns differently. As an education or learning organization, learning is essential in the progressive discipline process and that might look differently for every situation and every student. In the end, progressive discipline and restitution promotes positive student behaviour and a culture of caring.

Suspension

A suspension means students are removed from school temporarily for a specific period of time. Students may be suspended from a period of time ranging from one school day to indefinitely. Students who are suspended for more than five school days (indefinitely) are considered to be longterm suspensions. Students can not take part in school activities or events while suspended.

Only the principal, vice-principal, or designate can formally suspend students.

When students are suspended, the principal will make every reasonable effort to let the student's parents or guardians know within 24 hours.

Suspensions will be considered whether the incident happens at school, at a school related activity (like a field trip), or in any other circumstances where the students behaviour has a negative impact on the school climate. This can include activities such as cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is bullying that happens through technology, like email or a cell phone.

The school will consider suspensions if students have engaged in any of the activities listed below. The include:

- Uttering a threat to inflict serious bodily harm on another person
- Fighting or assault
- Possessing alcohol or illegal drugs
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Swearing or acting aggressive toward a teacher or at another person in position of authority
- Committing an act of vandalism that causes extensive damage to school property at the students' school or to property on school premises
- Bullying (as defined by the Ministry)
- Chronic defiance or serious disruption

Before suspending a student we consider the individual student. This means that students involved in the same incident may not face the same consequence. For example, one student may be suspended

while another student is not. Or, one student’s suspension may be longer than another. The principal is required to look at each case individually and can decide on different consequences for each student, base on mitigating and other factors.

The following mitigating factors are considered:

- Age of the student
- The students history (for example: disciplinary history, progressive discipline record, or personal history such as recent trauma, etc)
- Whether the student can control his/her behaviour
- Whether the student can understand the possible consequence of his/her behaviour
- Whether the students presence in the school presents an unacceptable risk
- Whether the behaviour is related to harassment
- How the discipline will affect the students ongoing education

If students have special education needs and have an Individual Education Plan, the following will also be considered:

- If the behaviour was a manifestation of a disability identified in the students plan
- If appropriate accommodation has been provided
- Whether a suspension is likely to aggravate or worsen the students behaviour or conduct

Suspended students must return to school after the suspension is over. Students may have to check into the office before returning to their regular classroom routine. If a student is suspended indefinitely or has chronic suspensions (more than one or two), they may have to complete an action plan or a plan for re-entry. For these students, a meeting with the teacher, student, and where possible the students parents/guardians may be required to:

- Make the students transition back to school smoother
- Identify any extra academic or other supports to promote positive behaviour the student may need when returning to school

Community agencies that have been working with the school and student may also be encouraged to attend.

Guide to Programs for Suspended Students

| Suspension | Planning (PBIS Team) | Student Action Plan (Academic) | Student Action Plan (Behaviour) | Plan for re-entry |
|------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| <i>1-5 days (first time)</i> | Not required | Homework Offered | Not Required | Not Required |
| <i>1-5 days (chronic)</i> | Yes | Homework | Required | Not Required |
| <i>Indefinite</i> | Yes | Homework | Required | Required (this could include starting with a part time program) |