

TPCS Stand-downs, Suspensions and Exclusions Policy 2026

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1. Introduction:

It is our conviction that the education of our child(ren) is the responsibility of parents, and that it involves training, discipline and correction.

At the time of enrolment, parents engage the staff of Tyndale Park Christian School (TPCS) to assist them in this responsibility. Parents acknowledge and understand that, if a serious behaviour incident occurs – such as defiant disobedience, unwholesome or disrespectful speech, dishonesty, willful damage of school property, or violence towards themselves or others – and once the facts of the incident have been established by the principal or an independent board or senior staff member not involved in the situation, then the following initial steps may be taken:

1. The student is removed from the classroom to a supervised space.
2. The parents/caregivers are informed as soon as possible and requested to come to the school.
3. The parents/caregivers are fully informed of the student's behaviour and the school's initial response.
4. The student does not return to class until school management is satisfied that the matter has been properly addressed by the parents/caregivers and there is an undertaking that such behaviour will not be wilfully repeated.

This policy is signed by parents; see the document Correction Policy.doc.

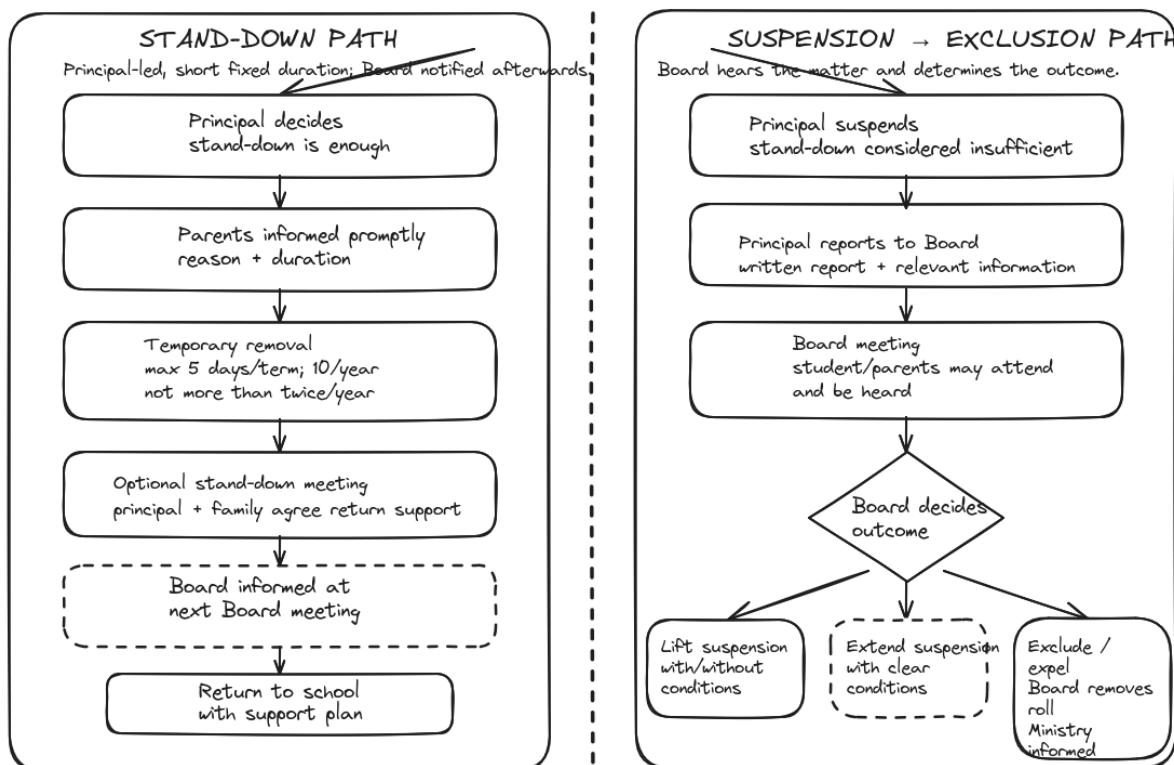
Where appropriate, the principal and board may also initiate a stand-down, suspension or exclusion under this policy.

A stand-down is a temporary suspension of up to 5 days. A suspension is removal from the school until the Board can meet to decide if the student can return under what conditions, or should be expelled.

The diagram below gives a short summary of the stand-down and suspension/expulsion differences.

TPCS Serious Behaviour Pathways

Stand-down and suspension/exclusion are separate pathways – not sequential steps.



2. Rationale:

The ultimate goal of a servant of Christ is to be self-disciplined: willingly conformed to the will and mind of Christ the Lord in every part of life (Proverbs 22:6, Hebrews 12:7-11). This self-control and submission to God, rooted in biblical freedom, comes as the Holy Spirit works in the born-again believer. Even the mature Christian grows in freedom and self-discipline by submitting to the express will of the Lord.

Children in school have the same overarching goal: self-discipline. To reach it, they must learn to submit to the discipline of those in authority over them. Discipline is not primarily about punishment (such as stand-down, suspension, exclusion or expulsion), but about training in self-control and godly character under the guidance of authority. Because the human heart is affected by sin and is not naturally inclined toward righteousness, children need loving instruction, discipline, and correction. Scripture teaches that *“folly is bound up in the heart of a child”* - Proverbs 22:15 and that the heart is *“deceitful above all things”* - Jeremiah 17:9. Therefore, training and correction are a necessary part of guiding children toward repentance, wisdom, self-discipline, and obedience to God.

The context of this training is explained more fully in the [TPCS Prospectus](#) and [Behaviour Management Policy](#). Despite the hopes and efforts of parents and teachers, some children

will misbehave and require more serious correction, which may include stand-down, suspension, or exclusion. This policy sets out the structures and processes that TPCS uses, alongside prayer, biblical counsel, and pastoral care, to respond to such behaviour.

3. Principles

All disciplinary responses under this policy are guided by the following principles:

- Upholding the distinct educational philosophy of Tyndale Park Christian School.
- Acting with justice, compassion and respect for each student as an image-bearer of God.
- Supporting the primary responsibility of parents/caregivers for their children's education and training.
- Ensuring processes are transparent, fair, and consistent.
- Providing appropriate guidance, counselling and educational support during any stand-down, suspension or exclusion.
- Seeking restoration of relationships and, where possible, a successful and peaceful return to school community life.

4. Relationship to Ministry of Education Guidelines

Tyndale Park Christian School is a registered private school under the Education and Training Act. As a private school, the statutory provisions on stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions and expulsions that apply to state and state-integrated schools do not apply to TPCS.

However, to promote clarity and consistency for students and families, TPCS:

- Chooses to substantially align its procedures with Ministry of Education guidelines on stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions and expulsions where these are compatible with our Christian educational philosophy and statement of faith.
- Adopts, as a matter of school policy (not legal obligation), key timeframes, processes and terminology used in Ministry guidelines, including stand-down and suspension time limits and requirements for written notice and meetings.
- Intentionally departs from Ministry guidelines where necessary to maintain our Christian character, pastoral approach and partnership with parents/caregivers.

Where there is any difference between Ministry guidelines and this policy, the procedures in this policy apply at TPCS.

5. Key Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Principal

The principal:

- Decides whether to stand down or suspend a student, having regard to this policy and other relevant TPCS policies.
- Ensures that serious behaviour incidents are investigated fairly and that relevant information is gathered before making a decision.
- Informs parents/caregivers promptly of serious behaviour concerns and any decision to stand down or suspend a student.
- Notifies the Ministry of Education of stand-downs and suspensions through ENROL, where applicable.
- Provides the board with a written report and all relevant information for each suspension.
- Ensures that appropriate guidance, counselling and educational support are provided during any stand-down or suspension.

5.2 Board

The Board (or a Board Committee, where delegated):

- Considers all suspensions referred by the principal at a meeting held as soon as practicable.
- Ensures that processes are fair, transparent, and consistent with this policy and the Christian education philosophy of the school.
- Considers all available options and determines the outcome of each suspension (including lifting, lifting with conditions, extending with conditions, or exclusion).
- Records its decisions and reasons in writing and ensures that parents/caregivers and students are informed.

5.3 Parents/Caregivers

Parents/caregivers:

- Are responsible before God for the training, discipline and correction of their children.
- Are expected to work in partnership with the school in matters of behaviour and discipline.
- Are expected to attend meetings related to serious behaviour incidents, stand-downs or suspensions, and to support any agreed plan for the student's return to school.

5.4 Students

Students:

- Are expected to respect the authority of teachers and staff and to adhere to the TPCS Behaviour Management Policy and school rules.
- Have the right to be heard in any process that may result in stand-down, suspension or exclusion.

6. Stand-down

6.1 Decision to Stand Down

The principal may stand down a student where there are reasonable grounds to believe that the student's gross misconduct or continual disobedience is:

- A dangerous or harmful example to other students, or
- Likely to be seriously harmful to the student or to other students.

6.2 Notification and Duration

When a student is stood down, the principal:

- Informs the parents/caregivers as soon as possible of the reason for the stand-down and its duration.
- Notifies the Ministry of Education through ENROL, where applicable.
- Record the stand-down in our Discipline Register.
- Informs the Board in the next meeting.

A stand-down may be for one or more specified periods. In line with Ministry guidelines, and as a matter of TPCS policy:

- The total period of stand-down may not exceed five school days in a term, or
- Ten school days in a school year,
- Not more than twice a year.

The principal may lift or shorten a stand-down at any time. If the principal later considers there were not reasonable grounds for the stand-down, the stand-down will be withdrawn on ENROL (where applicable), and all parties previously notified will be informed of the withdrawal or change.

6.3 Stand-down Meeting

After a student has been stood down, the principal, the student, and/or their parents/caregivers may request a meeting to discuss the stand-down. If the parents/caregivers request such a meeting, the principal arranges it as soon as practicable.

The purpose of this meeting is to:

- Discuss the behaviour that led to the stand-down and the context.

- Share information and perspectives.
- Pray together where appropriate and seek biblical counsel.
- Agree on next steps, expectations, and support for the student's return to school.

7. Suspension

7.1 Decision to Suspend

The principal may suspend a student where there are reasonable grounds to believe that the student's gross misconduct or continual disobedience is:

- A dangerous example to other students, or
- Likely to be seriously harmful to the student or to other students.

Suspension is a more serious response than stand-down and is used only where a stand-down is considered insufficient.

7.2 Notification and Principal's Report

After suspending a student, the principal:

- Informs the parents/caregivers as soon as possible of the suspension and its reasons.
- Notifies the Ministry of Education through ENROL, where applicable.
- Provides the board with a written report that includes all relevant information about the incident(s), the student's history of behaviour and support, and any steps already taken.

7.3 Board Meeting and Process

The board convenes a meeting as soon as practicable to consider the suspension. A quorum of the board is required, or the board may delegate its powers to a committee of at least two board members.

As soon as practicable, and at least two school days before the suspension meeting, the board (through the principal or board chair) provides the student and their parents/caregivers in writing with:

- Notice of when and where the suspension meeting will be held.
- Information on the possible outcomes of the suspension.
- A description of the procedures that will be followed at the meeting.
- A copy of the principal's report and any other material that the school has no grounds to withhold under the current TPCS Privacy Policy.

The student and their parents/caregivers may:

- Attend the board meeting in person and/or speak to the board (including via phone or video call) to have their views considered before a decision is made.

- Be accompanied by a support person or representative, if they wish. The support person or representative is a silent observer in this meeting.

The board may require the principal, the student and their parents/caregivers, and any other representatives to withdraw while the board considers its decision. The board may seek to reach an agreement with those involved, but must make its own decision and record its reasons in writing.

7.4 Educational Support During Suspension

During any suspension, the principal, board and parents/caregivers take reasonable steps to:

- Ensure the student has access to guidance and counselling.
- Provide an appropriate educational programme to help the student continue learning and to minimise educational disadvantage from the absence.

The student may, with the principal's approval, continue to attend school during all or part of the suspension period:

- If attendance is considered the best way to provide guidance, counselling or educational continuity.
- To fulfil a course requirement or sit an examination.
- If the parents/caregivers request continued attendance, and the principal considers this reasonable and safe.

7.5 Board Options and Outcomes

In line with Ministry guidelines, the board may consider the following options:

1. **Lift the suspension** (with or without conditions)
 - The student returns to school, and the board may impose reasonable conditions to support a successful return.
2. **Extend the suspension with conditions**
 - The suspension continues for a stated period, with clear conditions designed to support the student's return to school (for example, counselling, behaviour plans, or restorative meetings).
 - The board monitors the student's progress towards meeting the conditions. The principal reports this progress to the student and their parents/caregivers.
3. **Exclusion**
 - The board decides to exclude the student and require the parents/caregivers to enrol them at another school (see Section 8).

If the student does not comply with the conditions of a lifted or extended suspension, the principal may request a reconsideration meeting. The same rules apply to a reconsideration meeting as to the initial suspension meeting.

If the suspension is lifted, the student must return to school on the next school day, unless otherwise specified in the board's decision.

7.6 Timeframes

In alignment with Ministry practice, TPCS adopts the following timeframes as a matter of policy:

- If the suspension meeting is not held, or a decision is not reached, the suspension will automatically end after seven school days, or
- Ten calendar days if the student is suspended within seven days before the end of the term.

8. Exclusion

8.1 Decision to Exclude

Exclusion is a serious step and will be considered only after prayerful reflection and careful consideration of all alternatives.

If a student is excluded, the school will remove the pupil from its roll. It is the legal responsibility of the parents/caregivers to find a suitable and convenient school for the student to attend while the student is 16 years or less. The principal and school will, as far as practicable, assist the family by providing information about possible options.

8.2 Notification to the Ministry

The school will inform the Ministry of Education of the expulsion.

9. Definitions

Stand-down	A temporary removal of the student from attending school by the principal, for a maximum total of five school days in a term or ten in a year, to allow the student to reflect on their behaviour and for the school and family to plan a way forward.
Suspension	A formal removal of the student from attending school by the principal, pending a decision by the board (or board committee) on the student's return to school and any conditions.
Exclusion	A formal removal of the student from the school by the board, requiring the parents/caregivers to enrol their child at another school.

10. Legislation

In developing and applying this policy, TPCS has regard to the following legislation, as applicable to private schools:

- [Education and Training Act 2020](#) (private school registration provisions)
 - [Privacy Act 2020](#)
 - [Protected Disclosures \(Protection of Whistleblowers\) Act 2022](#)
 - [Official Information Act 1982](#) (as applicable)
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11. Related Documents and Resources

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- [TPCS Behaviour Management Policy](#)
- [TPCS Child Safety Policy](#)
- [TPCS Privacy Policy](#)
- [TPCS Prospectus](#)
- [TPCS Statement of Faith and Christian Educational Philosophy](#)

Where there is any inconsistency between Ministry of Education guidelines and this policy, this policy reflects the procedures adopted by Tyndale Park Christian School as a private Christian school.