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# Suspension and exclusion information for parents and carers

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Most students behave safely and positively if they can. When a student can't, it's usually because they need help to do what they are being asked to do. A student might still be learning communication, emotional or social skills. They might not be able to use their skills because they are feeling upset, stressed or unwell. Some students are trying to meet their needs for friendship, respect and inclusion, but haven't done this in the best way.

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## How does suspension or exclusion help?

Suspension and exclusion are not used as punishment. They are responses to student behaviour that affects the safety and learning of others.

### SUSPENSION AND EXCLUSION:

- help schools to be safe and positive learning places for everyone
- are used when other things have not helped students to behave safely and positively
- are problem solving processes
- help students, parents, carers and the school work out how to support students to behave safely and positively in future.

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## What is suspension?

### SUSPENSION:

- is a short term response to concerning student behaviour that affects the safety and learning of others
- means that the student does not go to school for between 1 and 5 school days
- is decided by the principal.

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## What is exclusion?

### EXCLUSION:

- is a longer term response to serious student behaviour that affects the safety and learning of others
- means that the student does not go to school for between 4 and 10 calendar weeks or the rest of the school term
- can only happen if the student has first been suspended for between 1 and 5 school days
- is decided by the principal.

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## When can a student be suspended or excluded?

The law says that the school principal can suspend or exclude a student. This can only happen when the principal believes on reasonable grounds that a student has acted in a way that affects the safety and learning of others.

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## How is the decision made?

The principal will act fairly and look at each situation. The principal has to be satisfied that a suspension or exclusion is the most appropriate response to the behaviour.

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## What can I do to help my child?

It's always important to understand what has happened.

- Stay calm
- Talk with your child
- Talk with the school.

Together, you can make a plan to:

- support your child's safe and positive behaviour
- support your child's learning.

This will be a part of the:

- Directions Conference
- Reconnection meeting.

## Complaints and Appeals

### SUSPENSION DECISIONS CANNOT BE APPEALED

If you can not resolve a disagreement with your child's school about a suspension decision, you can make a complaint to the Department for Education Customer Feedback Unit.

Phone 1800 677 435 (toll free)

Use the online complaint form at [www.education.sa.gov.au/schoolcomplaint](http://www.education.sa.gov.au/schoolcomplaint)

### EXCLUSION DECISIONS CAN BE APPEALED

You will find out how to appeal an exclusion at the Directions Conference. You will also receive the appeal form. You have 5 school days after the Directions Conference to lodge your appeal.

Remember, most students behave safely and positively when they can. Work with the school to support your child to be successful in their learning.

**Our goal is safe inclusion for all students.**

