Wellbeing requirements for NSW Department of Education 2024

Revised May 2024

Contents

Overview

The updated NSW Department of Education (NSW DoE) Behaviour policy for implementation in 2024 requires configuration changes to how incidents and suspensions are handled within Sentral. This document contains an overview of the changes and new workflow processes.

Incidents and Suspensions

Formal Cautions, Suspensions and Expulsions as Follow-up Action to Incidents

All formal cautions, suspensions and expulsions must be created as follow-up actions to an incident. They cannot be created via the Suspension interface or student page

Wellbeing setup for Suspensions

The following setting for Suspensions has been set to Yes and the setting has been hidden for NSW DoE schools

Restrict To Incidents	Yes	No
	Whether Suspensions can be placed only via incidents or also on the student page and the Suspension interface.	

New Incident Categories and Incident Types

The previous incident types (behaviours) that existed under the **Negative – Suspension category** have been updated and divided into 2 specific sections: **Behaviours of concern – grounds for suspension** and **Serious behaviours of concern – consider grounds for immediate suspension**. To ensure that the correct follow-up actions are available for each section, two separate incident categories have been created:

- Negative – Behaviours of Concern
- Negative – Serious Behaviours of Concern.

> **Note:** *The previous Incident category of Negative – Suspensions will be hidden to maintain historical records and will no longer be available for use. All incidents that were created under that category will be available when searching and can be viewed and edited.*

> **Important:** *To comply with the new policy, suspensions and expulsions can only be assigned from incidents in these two new categories.*

New incident category: Negative – Behaviours of Concern

What are they?

The behaviours of concern are:

- Continued/persistent disobedience and/or disruptive behaviour
- Malicious damage to, or theft of, property
- Verbal abuse
- Bullying or cyber-bullying
- Misuse of technology
- Discrimination, including that based on sex, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity
- Other behaviour of concern.

Negative - Behaviours of Concern

🛈 These behaviours are grounds for suspension.

Continued or persistent disobedient and/or disruptive behaviour | Malicious damage to, or theft of, property | Verbal abuse | Bullying and cyber-bullying

Mis-use of technology | Discrimination, including that based on sex, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity | Other - Behaviour of Concern

Potential outcome

The behaviours of concern incident types in the Negative – Behaviours of Concern Incident category can result in a potential suspension. An immediate suspension cannot be assigned from incidents created in this category.

New incident category: Negative – Serious Behaviours of Concern

What are they?

The serious behaviours of concern are:
- Being in possession of, uses or supplies tobacco, vaping devices, alcohol, and e-cigarettes
- Possession of, uses or supplies a suspected illegal/restricted substance
- Being in possession of, or using weapons, including firearms and knives (excluding kirpans, in line with LIB22) and firearms
- Using an implement as a weapon
- Seriously threatening or engaging in physically violent behaviour
- Engaging in serious criminal behaviour related to the school
- Engaging in sexual harassment, sexual assault or sexualised behaviour that may pose a risk of or has caused physical, psychological, or emotional harm to others.
- Other serious behaviour of concern.

Negative - Serious Behaviours of Concern

🛈 These behaviours are grounds for immediate suspension.

Being in possession of, use or supply of tobacco, alcohol, vapes and e-cigarettes | Possession of, use or supply of a suspected illegal/restricted substance

Being in possession of, or using, weapons including firearms and knives (without reasonable cause) | Using an implement as a weapon

Seriously threatening or engaging in physically violent behaviour | Engaging in serious criminal behaviour related to the school

Engaging in sexualised behaviour that has caused physical or psychological or emotional harm to others | Other - Serious Behaviour of Concern

Potential outcomes

The serious behaviours of concern incident types within the Negative – Serious Behaviours of Concern Incident category can result in:
- a suspension
- an immediate suspension
- a notice of potential expulsion.

An immediate suspension can only be assigned from incidents created in this category.

Immediate suspension checkbox

A checkbox exists for Immediate suspension, and this should be checked to collect information. It is not mandatory to be selected as all serious behaviours of concern are grounds for an immediate suspension.

New field for 'Other' behaviours of concern

When the incident involves a behaviour that does not fit into one of the listed behaviours of concern or serious behaviours of concern, the 'Other' option can be selected. This will allow schools to add a new behaviour that warrants suspension when the listed behaviours do not apply.

When this option is selected, the grounds for suspension must be detailed before saving the incident. A text field will be available for this option, with a 50-character limit, and must contain text before the incident can be saved.

Changes to Follow-Up Actions: Formal Caution, Suspension and Expulsion

Formal Caution

> ⓘ **Note:** *A Formal Caution is no longer a pre-requisite for a suspension.*

Formal Cautions can be assigned as a follow-up action to any negative behaviour incident. For the two new categories described above, Formal Caution is a category within the Suspension/Expulsion/Formal Caution follow-up action. For other negative behaviour incidents, created in the negative incident category, Formal Caution is a follow-up action on its own and contains the same fields as the Formal Caution within the two new negative behaviour categories. Formal cautions no longer require a resolution and will not appear in the expired suspension list.

Suspension

Suspensions can only be assigned as a follow-up action to an incident and only for incidents recorded in the Negative – Behaviours of Concern and the Negative – Serious Behaviours of Concern incident categories.

The Suspension follow-up action is a category within the Suspension/Expulsion/Formal Caution follow-up action.

> ⓘ **Note:** *Suspensions no longer require a formal caution as a pre-requisite.*

When Suspension is selected for a student in years K-2, the 'Expires after' value will default to 5 days. This value can be decreased but cannot exceed 5 days initially. The suspension must be saved before attempting to increase the value, as it will then be classed as an extension.

When Suspension is selected for a student in years 3-12, the 'Expires after' value will default to 10 days. This value can be decreased but cannot exceed 10 days initially. The suspension must be saved before attempting to increase the value, as it will then be classed as an extension.

For incidents created in the 'Negative – Suspensions: Behaviours of concern' incident category, the ability to set an immediate suspension is not available.

For incidents created in the 'Negative - Suspensions: Serious behaviours of concern' incident category, the ability to set an immediate suspension is available and is indicated by using the 'Immediate suspension' checkbox.

Suspensions are not permitted to overlap with other suspensions but can overlap with formal cautions.

When a suspension results in the maximum number of days being exceeded, DEL approval must be obtained for going over maximum days, therefore a checkbox has been included to indicate that DEL approval has been obtained and this must be selected before the incident/suspension can be saved.

Expulsion

The Expulsion follow-up action is a category within the Suspension/Expulsion/Formal Caution follow-up action. The 'Type' field will have two options: Expulsion for serious behaviours of concern and Expulsion for unsatisfactory participation in learning (17 years and over).

> ⚠️ **Warning:** *The NSW DoE has confirmed that expulsion data entered in Sentral will not automatically update ERN. Schools must enter expulsions manually in ERN. The Expulsion date entered in Sentral will adjust the total number of days suspended for the relevant student in ERN, however all other expulsion information must be entered manually.*

Removal of Previous Requirements

Removal of Suspension Grounds and Suspension Descriptors

Suspension grounds and suspension descriptors are no longer required to be collected, as this information is already recorded as a behaviour of concern when documenting an incident.

Therefore, the previous suspension 'Type' field has been made read only for Formal Caution and Suspension and will display the action category (Formal Caution or Suspension). For Expulsion, the two options mentioned above will be available.

Removal of Validation on Formal caution

Previously, a 'Formal caution to suspend' was only permitted for the set of defined behaviours of concern as a Suspension category. This rule will be removed, allowing a formal caution to be applied as a follow-up action to any negative behaviour incident from any incident category. However, if a subsequent suspension is to be created, it must be done via an incident created in one of the new incident categories for behaviours and serious behaviours of concern. The previous requirement of having a 'Formal caution' in place before a suspension could be given has also been removed.

Removal of Suspension Cap

Under the updated policy, students are no longer limited to three suspensions per year, so the setting 'Maximum suspensions per year' has been removed. The requirement to limit the number of suspension days per year remains. Students can be suspended more than three times per year, provided that the maximum number of days permitted for their year level is not exceeded. The maximum number of days permitted for Years K-2 remains at 30 and the maximum number of days permitted for Years 3-12 remains at 45.

Consecutive Suspensions Permitted

The requirement that students may not be placed on consecutive suspensions and must return to school for at least one day before being suspended again has been removed and the relevant settings have been updated. A student can now be placed on an immediate suspension on the day they return to school from a previous suspension.

Allow Consecutive Suspensions	Yes No
	Determines if a student can be immediately suspended again when a current suspension expires. This will only apply to suspensions where Update Attendance is set to Yes.
Minimum Days Between Suspensions	0
	The minimum number of days that must elapse before a student can be suspended again.

Notice of Potential Expulsion

Notice of Potential Expulsion

A Notice of potential expulsion can be selected as part of the Suspension or Expulsion follow-up actions. Schools can impose an initial suspension for up to 10 school days while the 'Notice of potential expulsion for serious behaviour of concern' is being considered.

Once considered, the suspension can be extended for another 15 days while the 'Notice of potential expulsion for serious behaviour of concern' is in progress, that is, when the Notice of Potential Expulsion checkbox is selected.

This has been enabled in Wellbeing and therefore it is possible, while the suspension is current, to:

- suspend a student for up to 10 days when selecting the 'Notice of potential expulsion' checkbox
- create an extension of up to 15 additional days without any approval from the DEL
- further extend the suspension up to 5 days, after DEL consultation, by selecting the checkbox indicating DEL approval.

Changing a Suspension to a Notice of Potential Expulsion

A suspension can be changed to a 'Notice of potential expulsion for a serious behaviour concern' but within defined limits and criteria. The transfer is allowed only during the suspension period itself. Once the suspension period has elapsed, changes cannot be made. To enable this, the Notice of Potential Expulsion checkbox will be disabled for all completed suspensions.

Other Changes to Suspensions

Limitation on Suspension Deletion

Deleting a suspension will be limited to exceptional cases where schools have accidentally created a suspension. Therefore, past, resolved, or closed suspensions will not be able to be deleted from any of the Suspension current, expired or register pages in Wellbeing.

Suspension Extensions

A suspension can be extended by 5 days initially without DEL approval

When subsequent 5-day extensions are required, a checkbox signifying that the principal has consulted with the DEL must be selected before the extension can be saved. This checkbox includes the following instruction: 'Tick this to confirm that the principal has consulted the DEL'. For all extensions, information regarding the number of extensions to date will be displayed.

Suspensions and Formal Cautions across calendar years

Previously, suspensions and formal cautions were not able to cross calendar years. This restriction has been updated to allow this to occur but only after DEL consultation.

Within each suspension category, the following setting has been set to No, but an override can occur when DEL approval has been given.

Allow across calendar years:	Yes	No

Determines if the suspension may carry over into a new calendar year.

To indicate that a DEL consultation has occurred, a checkbox will be available on the Formal Caution and Suspension follow-up action set up screens titled 'DEL consulted for going over a calendar year.' When this is selected, the end date for the suspension or formal caution can be set to a date in the following calendar year.

Wellbeing Configuration

The existing configuration in Wellbeing will provide the following limitations:
- A student in years K-2 may be suspended for up to 30 days in a school year.
- A student in years 3-12 may be suspended for up to 45 days in a school year.

When creating a suspension, the following rule will still apply:
- A student in years K-2 may be suspended for up to 5 days at a time.
- A student in years 3-12 may be suspended for up to 10 days at a time.

These values will populate automatically when creating a suspension but can be edited when a suspension extension is required. The suspension must be saved before an extension can be applied. Note that the initial value of 5 or 10 days can be decreased, however, it cannot be increased.

Suspension rules

Sentral has removed the series of rules in the setup of Wellbeing, within the Suspensions menu, requiring a Formal Caution as a prerequisite for behaviours of concern, as this requirement has been removed.

Letters

The Behaviour policy includes several new letter formats. New letter templates have been added for the new formats and are available in the Letter Repository in the setup section of Wellbeing.

> **Note:** *Previous letter templates do not meet policy requirements and should not be used.*

☰ NSW DoE Suspension and Expulsions 2024

Name
Formal Caution to Suspend 2024 - Email version
Formal Caution to Suspend 2024 - Printed version
Notice of Expulsion Serious Behaviour of Concern 2024 - Email version
Notice of Expulsion Serious Behaviour of Concern 2024 - Printed version
Notice of Expulsion Unsatisfactory Participation 2024 - Email version
Notice of Expulsion Unsatisfactory Participation 2024 - Printed version
Notice of Extension of Suspension 2024 - Email version
Notice of Extension of Suspension 2024 - Printed version
Notice of Potential Expulsion Serious Behaviours of Concern 2024 - Email version
Notice of Potential Expulsion Serious Behaviours of Concern 2024 - Printed version
Notice of Potential Expulsion Unsatisfactory Participation 2024 - Email version
Notice of Potential Expulsion Unsatisfactory Participation 2024 - Printed version
Notice of Suspension 2024 - Email version
Notice of Suspension 2024 - Printed version

The new letter templates listed above have been added to the Letter Repository, ready for importing. It is recommended that a new letter group is created specifically for the new letter templates rather than using an existing group. See: How do I set up new letter templates?

Questions and Suggested Workflows

Preparation

What preparation is required for using Sentral Wellbeing in line with the new Behaviour policy?

- Familiarise yourself with the two new negative behaviour categories for suspensions. These can be moved to the top of the list of behaviour categories to make them easier to locate.
- The updated letter templates should be imported from within the Letter Repository. Depending on the layouts available at your school, you may also wish to adjust the templates to add styling or staff signatures in line with your school branding.
- Review the suggested workflows to familiarize yourself with the updates.

Restrictions

Can schools modify the new behaviours of concern and serious behaviours of concern?

- The new built-in behaviours cannot be modified however, the introduction of 'Other' behaviours will allow schools to include additional behaviours that warrant suspension but do not match the existing behaviours. If using 'Other' behaviours, the grounds for suspension must be detailed in the text box provided.
- Only the incidents listed under the new Negative – Behaviours of concern and Negative – Serious behaviours of concern categories will be compatible with the Behaviour policy when creating suspensions. However, you may add new incident details to incidents in this category to meet your school's needs.

Suspensions Exceeding Maximum Days

How will Sentral manage suspensions that exceed maximum days for a student?

When a suspension exceeds the maximum allowable days per year, which is 30 days for students in years K-2 and 45 for students in years 3-12, DEL approval must first be obtained before the suspension can be finalised. In this scenario, the suspension cannot be saved unless the checkbox indicating DEL approval has been selected. The number of suspended days for a student will be updated automatically via real-time integration to include suspended days from shared enrolments and previous enrolments in that calendar year.

Historical data

What will happen to the incidents and suspensions created in the previous 'Negative-Suspensions' category?

The Negative-Suspensions category has been removed however, all incidents and suspensions created in this category are still available for viewing and editing via the Incidents and Suspensions menus, as well as on the student Wellbeing screens.

Policy Information

Where can you locate information about the policy?

⚠️ **Important:** *While Sentral can help with any questions regarding the configuration of Wellbeing, any questions regarding the policy should be directed to NSW Department of Education.*

Recommended Workflows

How do I create a Formal Caution from the new Negative Behaviour categories?

(i) **Note:** *A Formal Caution can only be generated from an incident.*

1. Navigate to the Wellbeing home screen.
2. Using the menu on the left or using the short cut buttons on the right, select the appropriate Negative -Behaviour incident category and behaviour that requires a formal caution.
3. Complete the incident details for the selected student(s).
4. Select Suspension/Expulsion/Formal Caution from the Follow up Actions section.
5. Select Formal Caution from the available categories.
6. Complete the fields that appear where required:
   — Start Date
   — Date of Advisement
   — Expires after (this will default to 50 days but can be edited)
   — Comment
   — Nominated Contact
   — Associated Executive.
7. If the Formal Caution is to extend into the next calendar year, select the checkbox called DEL consulted for going over a calendar year.
8. Save the incident.

How do I create a Formal Caution from the existing Negative category?

(i) **Note:** *A Formal Caution can only be generated from an incident.*

1. Navigate to the Wellbeing home screen.
2. Using the menu on the left or using the short cut buttons on the right, select the Negative incident category and behaviour that requires a formal caution.
3. Complete the incident details for the selected student(s).
4. Select Formal Caution from the Follow up Actions section.
5. Complete the fields that appear where required:
   — Start Date
   — Date of Advisement
   — Expires after (this will default to 50 days but can be edited)
   — Comment
   — Nominated Contact
   — Associated Executive.
6. If the Formal caution is to extend into the next calendar year, select the checkbox called DEL consulted for going over a calendar year.
7. Save the incident.
8. If required, generate a letter using the appropriate letter template.

How do I add the Formal Caution follow up action to another category?

1. Do one of the following:
   a. In the Wellbeing Setup section, select Categories.
   b. If Wellbeing Setup is already open, select Setup in the left menu and choose Categories.
2. Locate the category in which you want to add Formal Caution as a follow up action and select Edit.
3. In the Follow up Action section, select Add Follow up Action.
4. In the Action field, open the dropdown list, select Formal Caution and then select Add.

   There is no option to rename this action. When viewing the list of follow-up actions, the newly added action will be named Formal Caution (Suspension).

How do I create a suspension or an immediate suspension?

> **Note:** *Suspensions can only be created via an incident but no longer require a formal caution as a pre-requisite.*

1. Navigate to the Wellbeing home screen.
2. Determine if a new incident is required.

   If a suspension is to be created and a formal caution is in place, a new incident should be created. You should not use the same incident that was created for the formal caution.
3. Using the left menu or using the short cut buttons on the right, select the appropriate incident category and behaviour that requires a suspension.

> **Note:** *A suspension can only be generated from the Negative-Behaviours of Concern or Negative-Serious behaviours of concern categories and that an immediate suspension can only be created from the Negative – Serious behaviours of concern category.*

4. Complete the incident details for the selected student(s).
5. Select the Suspension/Expulsion/Formal Caution follow-up action.
6. Select Suspension from the available categories.
7. If you selected 'Other' behaviour/serious behaviour of concern, use the text box provided to add the Grounds for Suspension. There is a 50-character limit on this text field.
8. Complete the fields (where required):
   — Start Date
   — Date of Advisement
   — Expires after

   This will default to 5 days for a student in years K-2 and 10 days for a student in years 3-12.
   — Review Date

   The date field will display if this checkbox is selected.
   — Comment
   — Nominated Contact
   — Resolution Date & Time
   — Resolution
   — Early Return to School
   — Associated Executive.

9. If an immediate suspension is required, select the Immediate Suspension checkbox.

    Immediate suspensions are only available from the Negative – Serious behaviours of concern category.

10. If the Suspension is to extend into the next calendar year, select the checkbox called 'DEL consulted for going over a calendar year'.

11. If the Suspension will exceed the maximum number of days for the selected student, select the checkbox indicating DEL approval has been obtained.

    The suspension cannot be saved unless the checkbox is selected.

12. If the suspension is to be extended a second or subsequent time, either with or without a notice of potential expulsion in place, select the text box called 'DEL consulted for subsequent 5-day block extensions'.

13. Save the incident.

14. If required, generate a letter using the appropriate letter template.

How do I create a notice of potential expulsion?

A notice of potential expulsion can be added to an existing current suspension or a new suspension.

1. To create a notice of potential expulsion on a new suspension, create the suspension via an incident as described above.

2. To create a notice of potential expulsion on an existing suspension, navigate to the suspension via the Suspension Register, the Incidents register, or via the student's Wellbeing screen.

3. Edit the Suspension or incident. Select the checkbox for 'Notice of Potential Expulsion'.

4. While the notice of potential expulsion is in place, the student can be suspended for an additional 15 days without DEL approval.

5. If the Notice of Potential Expulsion requires the suspension to be updated for a further 5-day block, select the checkbox called 'DEL consulted for subsequent 5-day block extensions'.

6. Save.

> **Note:** *A suspension can now have an outcome of Expulsion, provided the Notice of potential expulsion has been selected. For expulsions due to unsatisfactory behaviour for students over 17, you must select the Expulsion category, as this allows the selection of Unsatisfactory Participation in Learning (17 years and over).*

7. If required, generate a letter using the appropriate letter template.

How do I create an expulsion?

> **Important:** *The NSW DoE has confirmed that expulsion data entered in Sentral will not automatically update ERN. Schools must enter expulsions manually in ERN. The Expulsion date entered in Sentral will adjust the total number of days suspended for the relevant student in ERN, however all other expulsion information must be entered manually*

1. Navigate to the Wellbeing home screen.
2. Using the left menu or using the short cut buttons on the right, select the appropriate incident category and behaviour that requires an expulsion.
3. Complete the incident details for the selected student(s).
4. Select Suspension/Expulsion/Formal Caution follow-up action.
5. Select either the Suspension category or the Expulsion category.

> **Note:** *An expulsion can only be generated from the Negative-Behaviours of Concern or Negative – Serious behaviours of concern categories and that an immediate suspension can only be created from the Negative – Serious behaviours of concern category.*

6. If using the Expulsion category, select either 'Expulsion for serious behaviour of concern' or 'Unsatisfactory participation in learning (17 years and over)' from the Type dropdown.
7. If using the Suspension category, select Notice of Potential Expulsion. This will add the 'Expulsion' outcome to the list of outcomes when resolving the suspension.
8. Complete the details, including the date of the expulsion.
9. Save.
10. If required, generate a letter using the appropriate letter template.

How do I add an extension to a suspension?

1. Select the Sentral menu icon ⠿ and then select Wellbeing.
2. Select Suspensions and then Current Suspensions from the left menu.

   The Current Suspensions screen displays.
3. Select the Edit next to a student.

   The Edit Suspensions screen displays.
4. In Edit Suspension, next to Extensions, do one of the following:

   a. To add a new extension, select Add Extension.

      The number of days automatically populates with 5 days, which is the maximum number of days that NSW DoE permits. Adjust the number of days as required.

      For the second or subsequent extensions, select the checkbox that displays asking you to confirm that DEL has been consulted.

   b. To edit the most recent extension, select Edit, and then adjust the number of days as required.
5. Select Save.

   The list of current suspensions is updated.

How do I remove a suspension extension?

1. Select the Sentral menu icon ⠿ and then select Wellbeing.
2. Select Suspensions and then Current Suspensions from the left menu.
   The Current Suspensions screen displays.
3. Select the Edit next to a student.
   The Edit Suspensions screen displays.
4. In Edit Suspension, next to Extensions, select Remove next to the extension, and then select Confirm.
5. Select Save.
   The list of current suspensions is updated.

How do I set up new letter templates?

To add a new letter group:

1. In the Wellbeing Setup section, select Manage Letters.
2. Under Letter Groups, enter an appropriate new group name, and then select Add Letter Group.

To import the new templates into the letter group:

1. Do one of the following:
   a. In the Wellbeing Setup section, select Letter Repository.
   b. If Wellbeing Setup is already open, select Letters in the left menu and choose Letter Repository.
2. Select import next to the required template.
3. In Import Letter Template:
   a. Accept the default name or edit to suit.
   b. Choose the correct letter group for the template.
4. Select Save.
   The template displays in Manage Letters under the group you selected.

To hide letters no longer required:

1. In the Wellbeing Setup section, select Manage Letters.
2. If Wellbeing Setup is already open, select Letters in the left menu and choose Manage Letters.
   Existing letter templates are displayed in groups.
3. Select Hide next to the letters no longer required.