

ADMISSIONS, DISCIPLINE & EXCLUSIONS

Admissions

- (i) Any family interested in their child entering the school arrange a trial week with our office staff.
- (ii) Paperwork, (previous reports, statement of educational needs, ed.psych reports) is forwarded to us and if the staff feel that the school can meet the child's academic, social and emotional needs the trial week commences.
- (iii) With the help of a temporary tutor and 'mentors' from their age group, the child on trial spends a week at Sands.
- (iv) During the week they receive an interview with a staff/student interview panel (see Meryl and interview book).
- (v) The following school meeting (usually the next day) the child's application is discussed with feedback from the interview panel and the school votes on whether to offer a place based on the following principles:-
 - Does the child show an interest in learning and do we believe they will take advantage of the academic environment at Sands?
 - Do we believe that they will be a positive individual who will respect others – i.e. not a bully, but respectful and considerate?
 - Do they show some understanding of our ethos and display a willingness to participate in the democratic structure of the school?
 - Do they want to learn, will they respect others and do they understand (relative to sex, age and experience) the school's philosophy and the demands it puts on them?

- (vi) The child is then:
- a) offered a place;
 - b) given more trial time if the school meeting believes that greater exposure to the school will help them understand our principles;
- OR
- c) denied a place.

(It needs to be stressed that 9 out of 10 applications are successful and usually unsuccessful applications fail at stage (ii) before the child has their week's trial.)

Discipline:

The school prides itself on its common sense approach to daily life and from its inception in 1987 the use of petty rules and punishments has been avoided as much as possible and has been replaced by discussion, negotiation and conflict resolution.

However there is a disciplinary procedure that can, in extreme cases, lead to exclusion.

There is a list of rules that the School Meeting has designed and ratified. These are explained to the pupil during interview and on admission.

Breaking these rules can lead to a number of consequences:-

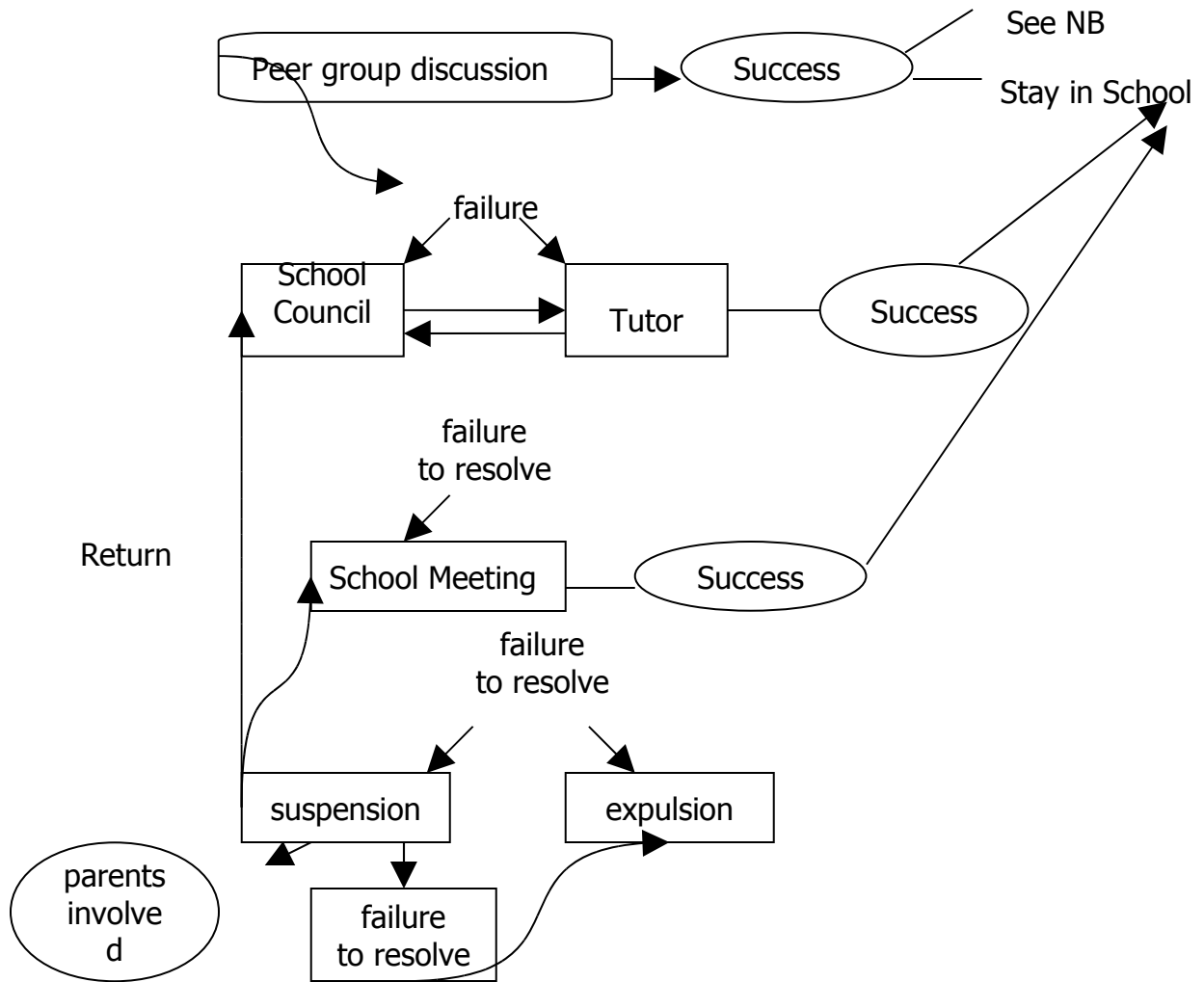
- (a) Situation handled by class group and teacher if problem occurs in class.
- (b) Academic tutor involved.
- (c) School council delegated to investigate the problem further and discuss all issues involved, talk to parties concerned and try to resolve problem in negotiation with the above.
- (d) If infraction is serious enough e.g. on-going bullying, the School Council and make proposals to the School Meeting or hand over the problem to the Meeting to decide a punishment or outcome.
- (e) At stage c and d the child's tutor will be involved as an advocate and intermediary (it doesn't follow that parents will automatically be involved at this stage).
- (f) It is possible that the Meeting will choose to avoid any punishment if the perpetrator can prove that they have gained

enough insight so that the situation will not repeat. It is equally likely that some action will be proposed, but only in extreme cases would a temporary exclusion be used.

(However, for breaking the smoking rule, there is an automatic one day exclusion.)

- (g) When the drug or alcohol rules are broken then there is an automatic one week suspension during which the child will meet with their tutor and parents to discuss the offence and build a case for re-inclusion. Usually this process is instrumental in preventing further infractions. On return, community service is often demanded by the School Meeting.
- (h) Subsequent abuse of the drug, alcohol or bullying rules would eventually lead to further exclusions and expulsion.
- (i) Expulsion requires a week long process:-
 - (a) proposal to school meeting by individual or group
 - (b) vote by Meeting to approve or reject proposal
 - (c) If approved then parents informed, child sent home and week spent in negotiation with child, parents and tutor.
 - (d) School Meeting called to discuss ratifying the expulsion or to find an alternative that allows child to remain in school.

The disciplinary procedure can go through some or all of these stages attempting at each to resolve through non-punitive measures where possible.



NB

Success and Return could include a host of additional consequences from community service, regular tutorials, exclusion from certain classes or just lots of discussion and attempt to give individual insight into their behaviour.

Flow Chart