

Long suspension and expulsion summary 2007

Reports and statistics

These figures are based on the total number of long suspensions in 2007 and include students placed on long suspension on more than one occasion.

Long suspension – state data

Total long suspensions 2007 = 13,406

Table 1: Long suspensions in year bands 2007

Year	% of Total Long Suspensions	Long Suspensions as a Percentage of Student Enrolments
K-6	21%	0.7%
7-10	74%	4.4%
11-12	5%	0.8%
All Grades	Rounded to nearest %	1.8%

- The suspension procedures mandate principals to take strong action in situations where they believe there is a risk to the health and safety of students and staff, particularly for incidents involving violence or weapons.
- The revised policy, effective from the beginning of 2005, strengthened the authority of principals to take strong action to ensure the safety of staff and students.
- Schools remain amongst the safest places for children in our communities.

Table 2: Reasons for long suspensions 2007

	Total	% of Total Long Suspensions
V	6263	47%
PM	5308	40%
CB	948	7%
IS	288	2%
PW	377	3%
UW	222	2%
Total	13406	Rounded to nearest %

- V** Physical Violence
- PM** Persistent Misbehaviour
- CB** Serious criminal behaviour related to the school
- IS** Possession or use of a suspected illegal substance
- PW** Use or possession of a prohibited weapon, firearm or knife
- UW** Use of an implement as a weapon or threatening to use a weapon

Long suspension – regional data

Table 3: Long suspensions in regions 2007

Region	Total Number of Long Suspensions	Long Suspensions as a Percentage of Student Enrolments
Hunter Central Coast	2627	2.43
Illawarra and South East	1417	2.02
New England	720	3.23
North Coast	1629	2.39
Northern Sydney	293	0.36
Riverina	686	2.04
South Western Sydney	2366	1.83
Sydney	753	0.88
Western NSW	1222	3.08
Western Sydney	1693	1.69
Total	13406	

- Long suspension is normally imposed as a result of incidents where serious disciplinary action is required. Incidents involving physical violence will usually result in a long suspension to ensure the safety and welfare of students and staff.
- The comparatively low rate of suspension for weapons related incidents indicates that these incidents are rare in government schools in the context of over 2,200 schools.
- The comparatively low rate of suspension for possession or use of a suspected illegal substance indicates that these incidents are also rare in government schools. The number of long suspensions for use or possession of a suspected illegal substance fell from 467 in 2005 to 288 in 2007, a reduction of nearly 40%.

Table 4: Expulsions, 2007

Expulsion

Misbehaviour	Unsatisfactory Participation	Total
187	121	308

Misbehaviour: Misbehaviour of a student of any age

Unsatisfactory Participation: Unsatisfactory participation of a student of post compulsory school age

- The rate of expulsion has declined and stabilised in recent years.
- The number of expulsions for misbehaviour decreased from 243 in 2005 to 187 in 2007.

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GPO Box 33
Sydney NSW 2000
T 9561 8000
www.det.nsw.edu.au

Good Practice State and Regional Initiatives

Specialist assistance is provided to students with behaviour problems to ensure they have targeted support including plans that address the behaviours that led to their suspension to enable them to continue their learning.

Schools are implementing effective strategies to maximise student engagement in learning, and minimising the likelihood that students will be suspended from school.

Suspension centre programs are having a positive impact. Suspension centres, first established in 2004, focus heavily on addressing the causes of poor behaviour and involve conflict resolution and self esteem building, along with literacy and homework support.

Of 1560 students referred to the State's 22 suspension centres, 1341 benefited from the experience and did not return.

A number of regional and school initiatives aim to improve behaviour, social skills and student welfare outcomes, including reduction in suspensions and the number of days lost to suspension.

For example at

- Mungindi Central School: a program that rewards positive behaviour has resulted in the number of suspension days falling from 528 days in 2005 to 70 days in 2007.
- Plumpton High School: over 1 year the average number of days students attended school increased by 8 days. Over this same period there was a measurable improvement in student literacy.
- La Perouse Public School: part of the *Schools In Partnership* (SIP) initiative, a focus on increasing engagement and participation was accompanied by a reduction in the incidence of suspension of almost 50%.

By April 2008 109 Western Sydney schools will have participated in a training program to foster better behaviour and improved learning. This program, involving 3,350 teachers, has assisted almost 50,000 students.

Schools implementing the program from 2005 to 2007 had a 20% decrease in long suspensions and the number of learning days lost due to long suspensions dropped by 25%.

Professional development programs such as *NonViolent Crisis Intervention* operate state-wide to teach school staff effective behaviour management practices. To date, 124 department staff members have become accredited instructors delivering the training to over 19,000 school staff.