

Exclusions Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Behaviour Policy. It deals with the policy and practice which informs the school's use of exclusion. It is underpinned by the shared commitment of all members of the school community to achieve two important aims:

- The first is to ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the School community, and to maintain an appropriate educational environment in which all can learn and succeed;
- The second is to realise the aim of reducing the need to use exclusion as a sanction.

INTRODUCTION

The decision to exclude a student will be taken in the following circumstances: -

- In response to a serious breach of the School's Behaviour Policy;
- If allowing the student to remain in School would seriously harm the education or welfare of the student or others in the school.

Exclusion is an extreme sanction and is only administered by the Headteacher and Governors.

Exclusion whether fixed term or permanent may be used for any of the following, all of which constitute examples of unacceptable conducts and are infringements of the School's Behaviour Policy:

- Verbal abuse to Staff and others
- Verbal abuse to students
- Physical abuse to/attack on Staff
- Physical abuse to/attack on students
- Indecent behaviour
- Damage to property
- Misuse of illegal drugs
- Misuse of other substances
- Theft
- Serious actual or threatened violence against another student or a member of staff.
- Sexual abuse or assault
- Supplying an illegal drug
- Carrying an offensive weapon
- Arson
- Unacceptable behaviour which has previously been reported and for which School sanctions
- When other interventions have not been successful in modifying the student's behaviour

This is not an exhaustive list and there may be other situations where the Headteacher makes the judgement that exclusion is an appropriate sanction.

Alternative strategies to exclusion are included in the School's Behaviour Policy.

EXCLUSION PROCEDURE

- Most exclusions are of a fixed term nature and are of short duration (usually between one and three days).
- The DfE regulations allow the Principal to exclude a student for one or more fixed periods not exceeding 45 school days in any one school year.
- Arrangements will be established to review promptly any permanent exclusion from the School and all fixed term exclusions that would lead to a student being excluded for over 15 days in a school term.
- Following exclusion parents are contacted immediately where possible. A letter will be sent by post giving details of the exclusion and the date the exclusion ends. Parents have a right to make representations to the Senior Management Team / Governors
- A return to School meeting will be held following the expiry of the fixed term exclusion and this will involve a member of the Senior Management Team, the Head of Department and other staff where appropriate.
- The School will place the student on report to the Head of Department, usually for one week, to monitor behaviour and work.
- If the fixed term exclusion is greater than five days or an accumulation of exclusions exceed five days, a Pastoral Support Plan will be drawn up. This needs to be agreed with the School, student and parents.
- A fixed term exclusion will result in the student being required to remain at home because of the severity of the incident or because of practical and logistical constraints
- During the course of this fixed term exclusion where the student is to be at home, parents are advised that the student is not allowed on the School premises, and that daytime supervision is their responsibility, as parents/guardians.

PERMANENT EXCLUSION

The decision to exclude a student permanently is a serious one. There are two main types of situations in which permanent exclusion may be considered:

- The first is a final, formal step in a concerted process for dealing with disciplinary offences following the use of a wide range of other strategies, which have been used without success.
It is an acknowledgement that all available strategies have been exhausted and is used as a last resort. This would include persistent and defiant misbehaviour including bullying (which would include racist or homophobic bullying) or repeated possession and or use of an illegal drug on School premises.
- The second is where there are exceptional circumstances and it is not appropriate to implement other strategies and where it could be appropriate to permanently exclude a student for a first or 'one off' offence. These might include:
 - Serious actual or threatened violence against another student or a member of staff.
 - Sexual abuse or assault.
 - Supplying an illegal drug.
 - Carrying an offensive weapon *.
 - Arson.

The School will consider police involvement for any of the above offences.

These instances are not exhaustive but indicate the severity of such offences and the fact that such behaviour seriously affects the discipline and well being of the School.

* Offensive weapons are defined in the Prevention of Crime Act 1953 as “any article made or adapted for causing injury to the person; or intended by the person having it with him for such use by him.”

GENERAL FACTORS THE SCHOOL CONSIDERS BEFORE MAKING A DECISION TO EXCLUDE

Exclusion will not be imposed instantly unless there is an immediate threat to the safety of others in the school or the student concerned. Before deciding whether to exclude a student either permanently or for a fixed period the Headteacher will:

- Ensure appropriate investigations have been carried out.
- Consider all the evidence available to support the allegations taking into account the Behaviour, Equal Opportunity and Equality Policies.
- Allow the student to give her/his version of events.
- Check whether the incident may have been provoked for example by bullying or by racial or sexual harassment.
- If the Headteacher is satisfied that on the balance of probabilities the student did what he or she is alleged to have done, exclusion will be the outcome.

EXERCISE OF DISCRETION

In reaching a decision, the Headteacher will always look at each case on its own merits. Therefore, fixing a standard penalty for a particular action is both unfair and inappropriate.

In considering whether permanent exclusion is the most appropriate sanction, the Headteacher and Senior Management Team when it meets to consider the Headteacher’s decision to exclude, will consider:

- The gravity of the incident, or series of incidents, and whether it constitutes a serious breach of the School’s Behaviour Policy and
- The effect that the student remaining in the School would have on the education and welfare of other students and staff. Nonetheless, in the case of a student found in possession of an offensive weapon, whether there is an intention to use it or not, it is the School’s usual policy in this particularly serious matter to issue a permanent exclusion.

This committee will require the Headteacher to explain the reasons for the decision and will look at appropriate evidence, such as the witness statements and the strategies used by the School to support the student prior to exclusion.

LUNCHTIME EXCLUSION

Students whose behaviour at lunchtime is disruptive may be excluded from the School premises for the duration of the lunchtime period. This will be treated as fixed term exclusion and parents will have the same right to gain information and to appeal.

BEHAVIOUR OUTSIDE SCHOOL

Students' behaviour outside School on school "business" for example school trips and journeys, games lessons or a work experience placement is subject to the School's Behaviour Policy. Bad behaviour in these circumstances will be dealt with as if it had taken place in School. For behaviour outside School but not on school business this policy will still have effect if there is a clear link between that behaviour and maintaining good behaviour and discipline among the student body as a whole. If students' behaviour in the immediate vicinity of the School or on a journey to and from school is poor and meets the School criteria for exclusion then the Principal may decide to exclude.

DRUG RELATED EXCLUSIONS

In making a decision on whether or not to exclude for a drug-related offence the Headteacher may seek advice from the LEA's Drugs Education Advisor if appropriate.

See the school's Misuse of Substances and Drugs Policy

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