

1. Rationale

Exclusion from school is used as a sanction for serious or repeated breaches of school discipline. In such cases, fixed-term exclusions lasting between 1 and 5 days will be used. Permanent exclusion will be used as a last resort when allowing a student to remain in school would be seriously detrimental to the education or welfare of students, or that of others at the school, or where this would seriously undermine the good discipline of the school.

2. Guidance and Counselling

Counselling, support and advice are seen as important behaviour modification measures which will be used both alongside exclusion and as an alternative sanction depending upon individual circumstances.

3. Alternative Sanctions/Actions

A range of sanctions are used as an alternative to fixed-term exclusion or alongside where appropriate:

- Detentions
- 'On Report'
- Exclusion or withdrawal from particular lessons
- Internal Suspension
- IBP (Individual Behaviour Plan)
- PSP (Pastoral Support Plan)

4. Consideration of Preliminary Factors

The individual circumstances of the student are carefully considered when a decision to exclude is made. This includes taking account of:

- Students age and health
- Previous behaviour record
- Extenuating domestic, medical, disability or other circumstances
- Disability Discrimination guidance and legislation
- The student is a 'child in care'
- Degree of severity and frequency of the behaviour and likelihood of it recurring
- Effects on other students, including any possible risks to the health and safety of others

5. Behaviour which may lead to exclusion

The nature and length of the exclusion will depend on the nature of the incident and preliminary factors listed above.

5.1 Unacceptable Language

5.1.1 Swearing

If a student swears at a member of staff or makes personal/abusive comments to a member of staff, he/she will normally be excluded from school for 1 day.

In a situation where a student misbehaves and is reprimanded by the teacher and the student then swears at or in earshot of the teacher, he/she will normally be excluded from school for 1 day.

Students who swear and use foul language in and around the school may be excluded in extreme cases.

5.1.2 Abusive comments

Students who verbally abuse other students, their friends or members of their family with the intention of causing insult, hurt or upset will be excluded. Where there is an element of provocation, the Headteacher will decide whether or not exclusion is a suitable sanction.

5.1.3 Racist and Homophobic language

Students who use racist and homophobic language to insult, hurt or upset others will be excluded. Where there is an element of provocation, the Headteacher will decide whether or not exclusion is a suitable sanction. All racist incidents are reported to the LA in line with policy.

5.2 Bullying

All forms of bullying – verbal, physical, racist, homophobic and cyber bullying – will, if carried out persistently, result in exclusion from school. Racist and homophobic bullying will result in a fixed-term exclusion.

5.3 Drugs

The school takes a zero tolerance approach to illegal drugs. Students will be permanently excluded from school if they are found in possession of illegal drugs in school or supplying drugs to other students on the school premises.

5.3.1 Smoking

Students who are caught smoking for a second time will be excluded from school for 1 day and up to 2 days for subsequent incidents.

5.4 Disruption to teaching and learning

Deliberate and persistent disruption to teaching and the learning of others seriously undermines the good discipline of the school and limits the progress of other students. A full range of supportive measures and sanctions will be used in response to such disruption. At this stage, the class teacher and Subject Leader or Head of Department will manage the supportive measures or sanctions. However, where such disruption becomes sustained and persistent despite a range of strategies implemented by the department, the student may be excluded on a fixed term basis. If disruption continues across a range of lessons and at break/lunch times, despite intervention measures in place, the student may be permanently excluded from school.

If a student refuses to accept the authority of a teacher by refusing a reasonable request or instruction, the student undermines the teacher's authority. The seriousness of this behaviour depends on the audience and context. It is, however, likely to lead to a sanction and in more serious cases, exclusion from school.

5.5 Exceptional circumstances

Exceptional circumstances are those where it is, in the Headteacher's judgement, appropriate to permanently exclude a student for a first or 'one-off' offence. These include:

- (a) Serious, actual/threatened violence against another student or member of staff
- (b) Sexual abuse or assault
- (c) Supplying or in possession of an illegal drug
- (d) Carrying an offensive weapon

The school will inform the Police where a criminal offence has taken place. The school will also consider informing other agencies such as Social Care.

These instances are not exhaustive, but indicate the severity of such offences and the fact that such behaviour can affect the discipline and well-being of the school community.

In cases where the Headteacher has permanently excluded a student for:

1. one of the offences above, or
2. persistent and defiant misbehaviour including bullying (which includes racist or homophobic bullying), or
3. possession, supplying and/or use of an illegal drug on school premises

The Secretary of State for Education would not normally expect the Governing Body or an Independent Appeals Panel to reinstate the student.

5.6 Period of Exclusion

The majority of exclusions will last from 1 to 5 school days, the length of the exclusion being commensurate with the severity of the offence and the individual circumstances of the student. The Headteacher will decide on the period of exclusion. An exclusion of more than 5 days will only be used in response to very serious cases of misbehaviour. In such cases, the Assistant Head (Pastoral) and the Head of Upper or Lower School, or Head of Year 7, will plan for the student's return in order to minimize the chances of the previous poor behaviour recurring and the student's progress will be carefully monitored. Where there have been issues around a particular subject or lesson, the teacher or Head of Department should, ideally, be involved in the re-integration.

Students returning from exclusion will be seen, together with their parents, by the Headteacher or member of the Senior Leadership Team. Students with a number of fixed-term exclusions are likely to be put onto a PSP. Students may be put 'on report' on their return to school, or in more serious cases on a 'Student Contract'. Failure to adhere to the terms and conditions of the Student Contract may result in permanent exclusion.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Governing Body

A copy of every exclusion letter is passed to the Chair of Governors and letters indicate that (i) the Chair of Governors has been informed and (ii) the parent has the right to appeal against the exclusion to the Governing Body via the Clerk to the Governors.

A meeting of the Governors Disciplinary Panel will be arranged when a student has had more than 15 days of fixed-term exclusions in a term. The student will be asked to attend this meeting along with his/her parents. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the exclusions, student's behaviour and the terms and conditions of their continued placement at the school.

In the case of a permanent exclusion, the Governors Disciplinary Panel has the power to decide whether to uphold the exclusion or to direct reinstatement.

6.2 Headteacher and Deputy Head

Only the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher has the power to exclude a student. The Head will also ensure that staff and students are periodically reminded of the school policy in relation to issues which might lead to exclusion.

Reviewed and approved by Governing Body September 2010.