

Exclusion Policy

This policy contains guidelines, which will be adapted as necessary, explaining the circumstances under which a pupil may be excluded from the School, or required to leave permanently for misconduct or other reasons, The policy applies to all pupils at the School but does not cover cases when a pupil has to leave because of ill-health, non-payment of fees, or withdrawal by her parents.

Terms used:

"Parent" includes one or both of the parents, a legal guardian or education guardian. *"Removal"* means that a pupil has been required to leave, but without the stigma of expulsion.

Aims: The aims of this policy are:

- To support the School's behaviour and discipline code
- To ensure procedural fairness and natural justice.
- To promote co-operation between the School and parents when it is necessary for a pupil to leave earlier than expected.

Misconduct: The main categories of misconduct which may result in expulsion or removal are:

1. Persistent attitudes or behaviour which is inconsistent with the School's ethos.
2. Bullying, theft, blackmail, physical violence, intimidation, racism and persistent anti-social behaviour.
3. Supply/possession/use of certain drugs and solvents or their paraphernalia or substances intended to resemble them, and alcohol and tobacco.
4. Misconduct of a sexual nature; supply and possession of pornography.
5. Vandalism and computer hacking
6. Possession or use of unauthorised firearms or other weapons.
7. Other serious misconduct towards a member of the school community or which brings the School into disrepute (single or repeated episodes) on or off school premises.

Other Circumstances: A pupil may be required to leave if, after all appropriate consultation the Headteacher is satisfied that it is not in the best interests of the pupil, or the School, that she remains at the School.

INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE

Complaints: Investigation of a complaint or rumour about serious misconduct will normally be co-ordinated by the Head or other member of the Senior Management Team, and its outcome will be reported to the Head.

Suspension: A pupil may be suspended while a complaint is being investigated [alternatively, she may be placed under a segregated regime at school premises].

Search: We may decide to search a pupil's space and belongings, and ask her to turn out the contents of pockets or a bag, if we consider there is reasonable cause to do so. Clothing will not be searched until it has been removed from the wearer and care will be taken to ensure reasonable privacy. This policy does not authorise an intimate search or physical compulsion in removing clothing. If necessary, the police would be called.

Interview: If a pupil is interviewed formally about a complaint, arrangements will be made for her to be accompanied or visited regularly by a member of staff, and given access to a toilet, telephone (in order to contact Parents Guardian or other relative) and adequate food and drink. Mobile telephones may be removed from the pupil's possession.

Ethos: An investigation and any subsequent meetings will be conducted fairly and in a way in which is appropriate to a school, without formal legal procedures.

DISCIPLINARY MEETINGS

Preparation: The Headteacher will discuss the matter with the School Advisory Board. He will inform them of the investigation and the following details

1. The points of complaint against the pupil.
2. The evidence supporting the complaint, and any relevant correspondence.
3. The investigation outcome.
4. The pupil's school personnel file and conduct record.
5. The relevant school policies and procedures.

Meeting: The pupil and her parents (if available) will be asked to attend the disciplinary meeting with the Head at which another member of the Senior Management Team may be present. They will explain the circumstances of the complaint and investigation. The pupil and her parents will have and opportunity to state their side of the case. Members of staff will be on hand to join the meeting if needed, and their statements will be disclosed but, in most cases, the anonymity of pupils will be preserved.

Proceedings: There are potentially three distinct stages of a disciplinary meeting:

The complaints - the Head will consider the complaints and the evidence, including statements made by and/or on behalf of the pupil. Unless the Head considers that further investigation is needed, he will decide whether the complaint has been sufficiently proved.

The sanction - if the complaint has been proved the Head will outline the range of disciplinary sanctions which she considers is open to her. She will take into account any further statement which the pupil and/or others present on her behalf wish to make. The pupil's disciplinary record will be taken into account. Then, or at some later time within 24 hours, the Head will give her decision, with reasons.

Leaving status - if the Head decides that the pupil must leave the School, he will consult with the parent before deciding on the pupil's leaving status (see below).

LEAVING STATUS

Explanation: If a pupil is expelled or required to leave, her parents leaving status will be one of the following: "expelled", "removed" or "withdrawn by parents".

Additional information: Some issues may need to be discussed or explained to the parents and pupil.

- How the school will announce that the pupil has left.
- The form of reference which will be supplied for the pupil.
- Arrangements for transfer of any course and project to the pupil, her parents or another school.
- Whether (if relevant) the pupil will be permitted to return to school premises to sit public examinations. ,
- Whether (if relevant) the School can offer assistance in finding an alternative placement for the pupil.
- The conditions under which the pupil may re-enter school premises in the future.
- Financial aspects: payment of outstanding fees and extras: whether the deposit will be returned or credited; refund of prepaid fees.

REVIEW

Request for Review: A pupil or her parents, aggrieved at the Head's decision, may make a written application for a Review. The application must be received within 72 hours of the decision being notified to a parent, or longer by agreement.

Grounds for Review: In their application the parents must state the grounds on which they are asking for a review and the outcome which they seek.

Review Panel: The Review will be undertaken by a three members of the school advisory committee.

Review Meeting: The meeting will take place at the school premises; normally between 3 and 10 days after the parents' application has been received. A Review will not take place during school holidays. A Review Meeting is a private procedure and all those who are concerned in it are required to keep its proceedings confidential, subject to law.

Attendance: Those present at the Review Meeting will normally be:

Members of the Review Panel, The Head and any relevant member of staff whom the pupil or her parents have asked should attend and whom the Head considers should attend in order to secure a fair outcome, the pupil, together with her parents and, if they wish, a member of the school staff who is willing to speak on the pupil's behalf. The parents may be accompanied by a friend or relation, but no formal representation by a lawyer is necessary.

Conduct of Meeting: The meeting will be chaired by one member of the Review Panel and will be conducted in a suitable room and in an informal manner. All statements made at the meeting will be unsworn. The proceedings will not be tape recorded without the consent of both the Chairman of the Review Panel and a parent and any tape-recording will be used only to assist panel members in reaching their decision and formulating their reasons and will belong to the School. Hand-written minutes of the main points which arise at the meeting will be taken. All those present will be entitled, should they wish to write their own notes. Everyone is expected to show courtesy, restraint and good manners. The Chairman of the Review Panel may at his/her discretion adjourn or terminate the meeting. If the meeting is terminated, the original decision will stand.

Procedure: The Panel will consider each of the questions raised by the pupil or her parents. Up to two members of the school staff may speak generally about the pupil's character, conduct and achievements at the School if they are willing to do so.

They will decide whether the sanction was warranted, that is, whether it was proportionate to the breach of discipline or the other events which are found to have occurred and to the legitimate aims of the School's policy.

If having heard all parties, the Panel is minded to confirm the Head's earlier decision; it is open to the Panel, with agreement of the Head, the pupil and her parents to discuss the pupil's leaving status with a view of reaching agreement.

When the Chairman of the Review Panel decides that all issues have been sufficiently discussed and if then there is no consensus, she may adjourn the meeting; alternatively the Chairman of the Review Panel may ask those present to withdraw while the Panel considers its decision. In the absence of a significant procedural regularity, the decision of the Review Panel will be final. It will be notified, with reasons, to the parents by the Chairman of the Review Panel or the School Advisory Board by letter or telephone within three days of the meeting.