

SUSPENSION and EXCLUSION POLICY

Philosophy

Both permanent exclusion and temporary suspension from school should only be used as a last resort when all other avenues of behaviour modification have failed. The school should progressively move towards a position where systems exist, which means that we can achieve zero suspension from school.

Objectives

Given this philosophy, the aims of suspension from school are to:

- Send a clear signal to pupils, parents and staff that a particular behaviour or behaviour in general is unacceptable and cannot be contained within the school.
- Signal that this poor behaviour has reached a threshold where it is significantly disrupting the education of others or that an incident is of such seriousness that it warrants removal from the school either temporarily or permanently.
- Provide for a period of reflection away from school prior to re admission and a programme of continued counselling and behaviour modification on return.

We will know we have been successful when:

- Suspensions run at **reduced levels year on year**.
- Students return from exclusion and enter successful behaviour modification programmes which result in positive self-esteem, improved behaviour (no re-offending) and improved learning performance.

Exercise of discretion

In reaching a decision, the Headteacher will always look at each case on its own merits. Therefore, a tariff system, 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 will consider:

- a) The gravity of the incident, or series of incidents, and whether it constitutes a serious breach of the school's [Behaviour Management Policy](#) and
- b) 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. In line with its statutory duty, these same two tests of appropriateness will form the basis of the deliberations of the Governors' 'Advisory Committee' when it meets to consider the Headteacher's decision to exclude. The 'Advisory Committee' of governors will require the Headteacher to explain the reasons for the decision and will look at appropriate evidence, such as the student's school record, witness statements and the strategies used by the school to support the student prior to exclusion.

What constitutes a 'Serious Incident'?

This is not and cannot be an exhaustive list and there may be other incidents where the Headteacher may judge exclusion to be an appropriate sanction. A serious incident may include, but is not limited to, issues such as physical assaults on staff or students, indecent or lewd behaviour, abuse, including harassment or sexual abuse, hate related incidents including race or misogyny, serious damage to property, bringing illegal substances on to the school site, supplying an illegal drug, possession of an illegal substance, bringing offensive weapons on to the school site, possession of an offensive weapon, extreme cyber-bullying, serious actual or threatened violence

against staff or students, arson, setting a firework off. 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.'

Date of Next Review: **February 2025**