



EXCLUSION POLICY

Schools must maintain discipline and good conduct to secure an orderly learning environment so that teaching and learning can take place. Schools will therefore need to adopt a range of strategies, including exclusion, to ensure they are providing a sound learning environment for all pupils.

A decision to exclude a pupil for a fixed period or permanently should be taken only:

- in response to serious breaches of a school's discipline policy; and
- once a range of alternative strategies have been tried and failed; and
- allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or of others in the school.

The Role of the Headmistress

It is the responsibility of the Headmistress, under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, to implement the school behaviour policy consistently throughout the school, and to report to Trustees, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy. It is also the responsibility of the Headmistress to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all pupils in the school.

The Headmistress supports the staff by implementing the policy, by setting the standards of behaviour, and by supporting staff in the implementation of the policy.

The Headmistress keeps records of all reported serious incidents of misbehaviour.

The Headmistress has the responsibility for giving fixed-term suspensions to individual children for serious acts of misbehaviour. For repeated or very serious acts of anti-social behaviour, the Headmistress may permanently exclude a child. Both these actions are only taken after the School Trustees have been informed.

Before reaching a decision the Headmistress should:

- consider all the relevant facts and firm evidence to support the allegations made, and take into account the School's policy on Equal Opportunities. If there is doubt that the pupil actually did what is alleged, the Headmistress should not exclude the pupil.
- allow the pupil to give their version of events;
- check whether an incident appeared to be provoked by racial or sexual harassment.
- if necessary consult others.

The role of the Parents

The School works collaboratively with parents, so pupils receive consistent messages about how to behave at home and at school.

We explain the School rules in the Parents' Handbook and the Home School Contract, and we expect parents to read these and support them.

We expect parents to support their child's learning, and to co-operate with the school, as set out in the Home School Contract. We try to build a supportive dialogue between the home and the School, and we inform parents immediately if we have concerns about their child's welfare or behaviour.

If the school has to use reasonable sanctions to punish a pupil, parents should support the actions of the school. If parents have any concern about the way that their child has been treated, they should initially contact the Form Teacher. The School will plan to enable an excluded pupil to continue her education at home.

In certain circumstances the School also operates a system of internal exclusion whereby pupils work by themselves for a fixed period.

The role of the Trustees

The governing body has the responsibility of setting down these general guidelines on standards of discipline and behaviour, and of reviewing their effectiveness. The Trustees support the Headmistress in carrying out these guidelines.

The Headmistress has the day to day authority to implement the school behaviour and discipline policy, but Trustees may give advice to the Headmistress about particular disciplinary issues. The Headmistress must take this into account when making decisions about matters on behaviour.

Fixed term and permanent exclusions

Only the Headmistress (or the acting Headmistress) has the power to exclude a pupil from school. The Headmistress may exclude a pupil for one or more fixed periods, for up to 45 days in any one school year. The Headmistress may also exclude a pupil permanently. It is also possible for the Headmistress to convert fixed-term exclusion into a permanent exclusion if the circumstances warrant this.

It is for the Headmistress to decide whether exclusion will be permanent in cases of drugs related offences.

If the Headmistress excludes a pupil s/he informs the parents immediately, giving reasons for the exclusion. At the same time, the Headmistress makes it clear to the parents that they can, if they wish, appeal against the decision to the Trustees. The school informs the parents how to make any such appeal.

The Headmistress informs the Trustees about any permanent exclusion, and about any fixed term exclusions beyond five days in any one term.

The Trustees have a Discipline Committee which is made up of between three and five members. This committee considers any exclusion appeals on behalf of the Trustees.

When an appeals panel meets to consider an exclusion, they consider the circumstances in which the pupil was excluded, consider any representation by parents and consider whether the pupil should be reinstated.

If the Trustees' appeals panel decides that a pupil should be reinstated, the Headmistress must comply with this ruling.

Monitoring

The Headmistress monitors the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis. The Headmistress also reports to the Trustees on the effectiveness of the policy and, if necessary, make recommendations for further improvements.

The School keeps a variety of records of incidents of misbehavior. The Form Teacher records minor classroom incidents on pupil files. The Headmistress records those incidents where a child is sent to him/her on account of bad behaviour.

The Headmistress keeps a record of any pupil who is suspended for a fixed-term, or who is permanently excluded.

It is the responsibility of the Trustees to monitor the rate of suspensions and exclusions, and to ensure that the school policy is administered fairly and consistently.

Approved by Trustees: June 2008

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