



**Castle Hill**

# Exclusion Policy

September 2017



**The school's Exclusions policy operates in conjunction with other policies including those for, Behaviour as well as Inclusion.**

### **Rationale and definitions**

This document 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:

- 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;
- Reduce the need to use exclusion as a sanction.

An Exclusion, within this document may be one of three types:

- Seclusion (when a student is excluded from normal lessons, but remains within the school)
- Fixed-Term Exclusion (when a student is excluded temporarily from the school site)
- Permanent Exclusion (where steps are taken to permanently remove the student from the school)

### **Introduction**

Ordinarily, students whose behaviour transgresses the behaviour standards of the school will follow the schools sanction system. For further details of the school sanction system, please see the school's Behaviour Policy.

Exclusion is an extreme sanction that will only be used as a last resort and will be avoided wherever possible. In most cases, behaviour which may once have resulted in a fixed-term exclusion, will result in referral to the school's Inclusion Team *where parents are expected to work in an open and honest partnership with the school and external agencies in order to identify causal factors behind the inappropriate behaviour and actively seek ways to remedy them. Where a referral to an external agency has been recommended, parents are asked to support this and work in collaboration with all involved parties so as to prevent exclusion.*

With regard to the above, the decision to recommend a student for a fixed-term or permanent exclusion will be taken in the following circumstances:

- In response to a serious breach of the school's Behaviour Policy, beyond that which would result in referral to the Inclusion Team
- If allowing the student to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the student or others in the school.

### **Responsibility for Exclusion**

An external exclusion is only administered by the Principal (or, in the absence of the Principal, the Vice Principal who is acting in that role).



## Causes for Exclusion

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

*\* A series of the grounds below or a serious ground or any ground that is acted upon persistently (more than 4 times within a school term) warrants permanent exclusion.*

*\*Any ground met once warrants either seclusion or fixed term exclusion.*

### Reasonable grounds

- Breach of the school's behaviour policy
- Serious harm to the education or welfare of the pupil or others
- Persistently leaving school premises without authorisation
- Bringing adults or other young people onto school premises with malicious intent
- Bringing the school into disrepute at a public event
- Persistent refusal to co-operate with school staff, verbal aggression towards staff, pupils or other members of the school community
- Bullying, racial, sexual or other harassment of staff, pupils or other members of the school community

### Strong Grounds

- Serious breach of the school's behaviour policy
- Bringing the school into disrepute through inappropriate or dangerous behaviour or seriously endangering the safety of others
- Supplying or using an illegal drug on school premises
- Carrying, threatening to use and or using an offensive weapon (including fireworks)
- Attempted arson on school grounds, destruction or serious damage of school property or buildings
- Repeated threats and highly offensive and abusive language towards school staff, pupils or other members of the school community
- Repeated bullying, racial, sexual or other harassment of staff, pupils or other members of the school community

### Any grounds

- Unacceptable behaviour which has previously been reported and for which school sanctions and 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 Principal makes the judgment that exclusion is an appropriate sanction.

## **Exclusion procedures**

### **Seclusion**

Seclusion will be implemented for a misdemeanour of sufficient seriousness as to warrant a student being removed from lessons, but not so serious as to warrant removal from school. As stated above, all efforts will be made to keep the student in school, so as to support his/her education and it will only be in the most severe circumstances (or a repeat of earlier offences) that will lead to Fixed-Term or Permanent Exclusions.

### **Fixed-Term Exclusion**

A Fixed Term Exclusion is of short duration (usually between half a day and five days) and may be necessary if a student commits an offence which meets one or more of the above listed 'Causes for Exclusion'. In the case of Fixed-Term Exclusions, the Department for Education allows the Principal to exclude a student for one or more fixed periods not exceeding 45 school days in any one school year.

Students on fixed term exclusion will be forbidden from attending school, or being in the vicinity of school for the term of their exclusion. Under current legislation, parents/carers are obliged to take responsibility for their child if s/he is excluded and ensure that they are not in a public place without good reason during school hours within the first five school days of any exclusion.

The school will send work home for students who are excluded, which will be marked when the student returns.

The school will inform parents immediately by phone call when the decision has been taken to 'Fixed-term Exclude' a student. This will be followed, subsequently by a letter (within 1 school day) in which the terms of the Exclusion are set out, together with the time and date of the re-integration meeting. Parents/Carers are also informed that they have a right to make representations to the Executive Principal if they wish to challenge the terms of the exclusion.

### **Lunch Time 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 of half a day.

### **Permanent Exclusion**

The decision to exclude a student permanently is a serious one and will never be taken lightly. In doing so, we recognise that a permanent exclusion may have a serious impact upon a student's life chances. In addition, Permanent Exclusion will not be sought, unless there is an immediate threat to the safety of others in the school or the student concerned.

There are two main types of situations in which permanent exclusion may be considered;

1. It is an acknowledgement that all available strategies have been exhausted and is used as a last resort. This would include repeated persistent and defiant misbehaviour.
2. 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:

*Reasonable grounds (where a series have been met)*

- Breach of the school's behaviour policy
- Serious harm to the education or welfare of the pupil or others
- Persistently leaving school premises without authorisation
- Bringing adults or other young people onto school premises with malicious intent
- Bringing the school into disrepute at a public event
- Persistent refusal to co-operate with school staff, verbal aggression towards staff, pupils or other members of the school community
- Bullying, racial, sexual or other harassment of staff, pupils or other members of the school community

*Strong Grounds (where one or a series have been met)*

- Serious breach of the school's behaviour policy
- Bringing the school into disrepute through inappropriate or dangerous behaviour or seriously endangering the safety of others
- Supplying or using an illegal drug on school premises
- Carrying, threatening to use and or using an offensive weapon (including fireworks)
- Attempted arson on school grounds, destruction or serious damage of school property or buildings
- Repeated threats and highly offensive and abusive language towards school staff, pupils or other members of the school community
- Repeated bullying, racial, sexual or other harassment of staff, pupils or other members of the school community

*Any grounds*

- Unacceptable behaviour which has previously been reported and for which school sanctions and other interventions have not been successful in modifying the student's behaviour.

\* The School will consider police involvement for any of the above offences if deemed necessary.

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.

**Before deciding whether to exclude a student either permanently or for a fixed period the Principal will ensure that:**

- **Appropriate investigations have been carried out.**
- **All evidence available to support the allegations have been collated.**
- **The student has been allowed to give her/his version of events.**

**If the Principal 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 on temporary or permanent exclusion, the Principal will always look at each case on its own merits.

In considering whether permanent exclusion is the most appropriate sanction, the Principal will consider:

- The gravity of the incident, or series of incidents, and whether it constitutes a serious breach of the school expectations
- The effect that the student remaining in the school would have on the education and welfare of other students and staff.

In line with its statutory duty, these same two tests of appropriateness will form the basis of the deliberations of the Exclusion Panel when it meets to consider the Principals decision to permanently exclude. This Committee will require the Principal 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 permanent exclusion.

The school will inform parents immediately by phone call when the decision has been taken to seek 'Permanent Exclusion' for a student. This will be followed, subsequently by a letter in which the terms of the Exclusion are set out.

Parents/Carers are also informed of their rights to attend a hearing regarding the terms of the permanent exclusion.

### **SEN students and Permanent Exclusion**

Whether or not the school recognises that a student has special educational needs (SEN), all parents have the right to request the presence of a SEN expert at an independent review panel, if the Committee uphold the principal's decision. The SEN expert's role is to provide impartial advice to the panel about how SEN could be relevant to the exclusion; for example, whether the school acted reasonably in relation to its legal duties when excluding the student.

### **Request for the committee's decision to be reviewed (*a permanent exclusion*)**

Where parents dispute the decision not to reinstate a permanently excluded pupil, they can ask for this decision to be reviewed by an independent review panel.

An independent review panel does not have the power to direct a committee to reinstate an excluded pupil. However, where a panel decides that a committee's decision is flawed, it can direct them to reconsider its decision.

### **Alternatives to Permanent Exclusion**

As described earlier in this document and in the Behaviour policy, alternative strategies to permanent exclusion are always used if possible and the threat of a permanent exclusion will never be used as the means to coerce parents to move their child to another school.

### **Behaviour outside school**

Student behaviour outside school on school "business" e.g.; school trips, travelling to & from school, secondary school visits or away school sports fixtures etc. 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. Serious infringements of the school's Behaviour Policy that occur 'outside of' the school may lead to a fixed term or permanent exclusion.

### **Review of Exclusions**

The committee will review fixed term exclusions which would lead to a student being excluded for over five days but not over 15 days in a school term where a parent/carer has expressed a wish to make representations.

### **Re-integration Meetings**

Following a Fixed-Term Exclusion, parents/carers are invited into school to attend a re-integration meeting. Under current legislation, parents/carers are expected to attend a reintegration meeting following any fixed period exclusion.

At the meeting, the student will be set specific goals in order to help him/her avoid the behaviour that led to exclusion. Students returning to school following a fixed term exclusion will, as part of their re-integration, serve a further short period in the Den, to enable them to catch up with their education should this be necessary.

It is school practice to place a student returning to school following exclusion on a behavioural achievement chart to monitor their behaviour and work.

If a student has served a fixed term exclusion of greater than five days or an accumulation of exclusions exceed five days, a Pastoral Support Plan will be drawn up. This will be agreed with the schools Inclusion Team, student and parents/carers.



**Castle Hill**

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