



# **EXCLUSIONS POLICY**

**Reviewed:** February 2017

**Next review date:** February 2019

# Exclusions Policy

## Introduction

The decision to exclude a student will be taken in the following circumstances:-

- In response to a serious breach of the school's Behaviour Policy:
- If allowing the student to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the student or others in the school.

Exclusion is an extreme sanction and is only administered by the Executive Principal or, in the case of absence, the Principal.

Exclusion, whether 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:

- Verbal abuse to staff and others
- Verbal abuse to students
- Physical abuse to/attack on staff
- Physical abuse to/attack on students
- Indecent behaviour
- Damage to property
- Misuse of illegal drugs
- Misuse of other substances
- Theft
- Serious actual or threatened violence against another student or a member of staff
- Sexual abuse or assault
- Supplying an illegal drug
- Carrying an offensive weapon
- Arson
- 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 Executive Principal makes the judgement that exclusion is an appropriate sanction.

## Exclusion Procedure

- Most exclusions are of a fixed term nature and are of a short duration (usually between one and three days).
- The DfE regulations allow the Executive Principal to exclude a student for one or more fixed periods not exceeding 45 school days in any one school year.
- The Governors review promptly all permanent exclusions from the school and all fixed term exclusions that would lead to a student being excluded for over 15 days in a school term or missing a public examination.
- The Governors review fixed term exclusions which would lead to a student being excluded for over 5 days, but not over 15 days in a school term, where a parent has expressed a wish to make representations.
- Following exclusion parents are contacted immediately where possible. A letter will be sent by post giving details of the exclusion and the date the exclusion ends. Parents have a right to make representations to the Governing Body and the LA as directed in the letter.
- A Return to School meeting will be held following the expiry of the fixed term exclusion and this will involve a member of the Senior Leadership Team and other staff where appropriate.

- Upon return to school the excluded student will be placed in isolation for the number of days equal to the fixed term exclusion.
- It is Federation practice to place the student on report to the relevant Vice Principal usually for one week to monitor behaviour and work. If the fixed term exclusion is greater than 5 days or an accumulation of exclusions exceed 5 days, a Pastoral Support Plan will be drawn up. This needs to be agreed with the school, student and parents.
- During the course of a fixed term exclusion where the student is to be at home, parents are advised that the student is not allowed on the Federation premises, and that daytime supervision is their responsibility as parents/guardians. The school will set work, but it is up to you to make sure it is collected and returned when completed for marking.

## **Permanent Exclusion**

The decision to exclude a student permanently is a serious one. There are two main types of situations in which permanent exclusion may be considered.

The first is a final, formal step in a concerted process for dealing with disciplinary offences following the use of a wide range of other strategies, which have been used without success. It is an acknowledgement that all available strategies have been exhausted and is used as a last resort. This would include persistent and defiant misbehaviour including bullying or repeated possession and or use of an illegal drug on school premises.

The second is 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:

- Serious actual or threatened violence against another student or a member of staff
- Sexual abuse or assault
- Supplying an illegal drug
- Carrying an offensive weapon
- Arson

The Federation will consider police involvement for any of the above offences.

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.

## **General factors the Federation considers before making a decision to exclude**

Exclusion will not be imposed instantly unless there is an immediate threat to the safety of others in the school or the student concerned. Before deciding whether to exclude a student either permanently or for a fixed period, the Executive Principal will:

- Ensure appropriate investigations have been carried out.
- Consider all the evidence available to support the allegations taking into the account the Behaviour, Equal Opportunity and Race Equality Policies.
- Allow the student to give his/her version of events.
- Check whether the incident may have been provoked for example by bullying or by racial or sexual harassment.

If the Executive 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, the Executive Principal 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 Executive Principal will consider a) the gravity of the incident or series of incidents and whether it constitutes a serious breach of the School's Behaviour Policy and b) the effect that the student remaining in 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 Federation'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' Discipline Committee when it meets to consider the Executive Principal's decision to exclude. This committee will require the Executive 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 Federation to support the student prior to exclusion.

## **Alternatives to Exclusion**

Alternative strategies to exclusion are included in the Behaviour Policy. The Federation works closely with the Local Authority and other Secondary School to undertake managed moves where such a course of action would be of benefit both to the student and the two schools concerned. However, 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**

Students' behaviour outside school on school "business" for example trips and journeys away school sports fixtures or a work experience placement 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. For behaviour outside School but not on school business this policy will still have effect if there is a clear link between that behaviour and maintaining good behaviour and discipline among the student body as a whole. If students' behaviour in the immediate vicinity of the school or on a journey to and from school is poor and meets the Federation criteria for exclusion then the Executive Principal may decide to exclude.

## **Drug Related Exclusions**

In making a decision on whether or not to exclude for a drug-related offence the Executive Principal will have regard to the Federation's published policy on Drugs, Tobacco & Alcohol. The decision will depend on the precise circumstances of the case and the evidence available. In some cases fixed term exclusion will be more appropriate than permanent exclusion.