



St Catherine's
School & College

*Specialists in Speech, Language and
Communication Needs*

SUSPENSION AND PERMANENT EXCLUSION POLICY September 2024

Document Information

Title:	Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy
Remit:	School and Sixth Form College only – please note all subsequent references to school apply to school and college
Revisions:	-Changes re post suspension procedures
Review Frequency	Annually
Date of next review	September 2025

SUSPENSIONS AND PERMANENT EXCLUSION POLICY

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF SCHOOL POLICY ON SUSPENSIONS AND PERMANENT EXCLUSIONS

- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students.
- To ensure that every young person is respected and that their difficulties are properly addressed.
- To ensure the process is applied fairly and consistently but may take into account a young person's Special Education Needs (SEND) and previous behaviours/support already in place.
- To ensure that the parents/carers of a young person with behavioural difficulties are fully informed about the challenges the school is facing in relation to their child.
- To ensure that early intervention is explored and, if necessary, external help sought for both the young person and the family by our Family Liaison Officer
- To eradicate as far as possible all forms of bullying and tackle seriously any bullying which occurs
- To involve parents and carers in a supportive way and as fully as possible at all times and not just when there are incidents of unacceptable behaviour.
- To ensure that a student is suspended or permanently excluded only when there is no other appropriate sanction.

LEGISLATION AND STATUTORY GUIDANCE

This policy is based on statutory guidance from the Department for Education: School suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units (PRUs) in England 2023. Also Non-Maintained Special Schools Regulations 2015

It is based on the following legislation, which outline schools' powers to exclude pupils:

- The Education Act 2002, as amended by the Education Act 2011
- The School Discipline (Pupil Suspensions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012

In addition, the policy is based on:

- Part 7, chapter 2 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, which looks at parental responsibility for suspended/excluded pupils
- Section 579 of the Education Act 1996, which defines 'school day'
- The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Suspended/Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended by The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Suspended/Excluded Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Governors and staff will ensure that the Diversity and Equalities policy is implemented and that no young person, as far as is possible, is subjected to racist, sexist or other comments or behaviour which could lead to a violent or aggressive response.

CRITERIA FOR SUSPENSIONS

Before determining a response to unacceptable behaviour, there are a number of factors we will consider, including the serious consequences of suspension for students and the difficulties of re-integration. This may include:

- whether there are suitable alternatives to suspension;
- the nature of the incident and its effects on the rest of the school community;
- the safety of the school community; and
- the special needs of the young person.
- the safeguarding needs of the young person

In general, criminal acts, and those which impinge on the safety of others or self, are those which will lead to suspension. Incidents may include:

- possession of a weapon;
- threat to use a weapon;
- use of a weapon;
- extortion;
- fire raising;
- physical assault on another student;
- sexual assault;
- physical assault on staff;
- racist or prejudicial language and/or abuse
- abuse relating to disability
- abuse against sexual orientation or gender identity/reassignment
- theft
- letting off fireworks/possession of fireworks without permission;
- possession of, or dealing in drugs;
- smoking (including E-cigarette use/vaping) on school premises;
- bringing alcohol on to the school site;
- repeatedly putting self or others at significant risk of harm; and
- continued and persistent refusal to comply with staff requests, which are reasonable.

Other unacceptable behaviour may in the first instance be dealt with in accordance with the school's Positive behaviour management and Physical Intervention policies. This could include internal isolation. Incidents in this category may include:

- verbal abuse of staff;
- bullying; and
- damage to property

Students should understand that incidents which occur outside school, during lunchtime and on the way to/from school but which have repercussions for the school may also be included, for example online bullying.

PROCEDURES

Only the Principal, Vice Principal or someone acting in their place, can suspend or exclude a pupil from school. A permanent exclusion will be taken as a last resort.

Our school is aware that off-rolling is unlawful. Ofsted defines off-rolling as:

“...the practice of removing a pupil from the school roll without a formal, permanent suspension or by encouraging a parent to remove their child from the school roll, when the

removal is primarily in the interests of the school rather than in the best interests of the pupil.”

We are committed to following all statutory suspensions procedures to ensure that every child receives an education in a safe and caring environment.

A decision to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil will be taken only:

- In response to serious or persistent breaches of the school’s positive behaviour policy, **and** if allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others

Before deciding whether to suspend a pupil, either permanently or for a fixed period, the Principal will:

- Consider all the relevant facts and evidence, including whether the incident(s) leading to the suspension were provoked
- Support the pupil to communicate their thoughts and feelings about the incident
- Consider the pupils special educational needs (SEN)

Parents must be informed of the suspension, whether fixed or permanent, without delay, i.e. on the day the decision is taken. They must be told the length of the suspension and the reasons for it. This will be done in writing in as supportive and helpful a way as possible and will include a statement about their right of appeal if the suspension is for more than five days. The Principal will also notify parents that while their child is suspended, that for the first 5 school days of a suspension, or until the start date of any alternative provision where this is earlier, parents are legally required to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours without a good reason. Parents may be given a fixed penalty notice or prosecuted if they fail to do this.

The Principal will inform the Governing Body and the local authority of any suspension, permanent or fixed term. Parents will also be told of their right to make representation to the Governing Body in the case of a permanent suspension or suspension of more than five days. The Governing Body will appoint a committee to hear such representations. A meeting will be arranged within 15 school days of the suspension. Such meetings will be as informal as possible and will take place at a time and place convenient to the parents. The child may also be invited and his/her views recorded. The Governing Body has the right to reinstate the student.

In the event of a permanent exclusion being upheld the parents will be informed immediately and told of their right to appeal to an independent panel.

For permanent exclusions, the LA is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education to begin no later than the sixth day of the suspension.

While a student is suspended the register will be marked with the code E.

SUSPENSION PROCESSES

The use of suspensions will always be applied consistently and fairly and in line with the needs of the pupil and the wider school community. Whilst we will always respond to behavioural incidents in a supportive and understanding manner; we will also apply a clear process if disruptive behaviour continues, despite agreed interventions and supported measures being put into place.

This may include:

- Two student ‘on calls’ in a week will result in a supported internal isolation
- Two student internal isolations over a two week period will result in a fixed term suspension of 0.5

days

- Continued and persistent inappropriate behaviour will then be subject to suspensions that will increase from 1 day to a maximum of 5. At this point, our Governing body will be informed as well as the student's local authority and a placement discussion may then take place
- Isolated and serious behavioural incidents may result directly in suspension

POST SUSPENSION PROCEDURES

When returning from suspension the student and their parent or carer will have a re-integration interview/meeting with the appropriate staff. In some instances these may be held separately or over the phone to support parents attending.

Restorative discussion will take place:

- about the incident which led to suspension;
- about strategies for the future;
- school expectations in terms of work and behaviour will be agreed;
- staff will be informed of agreements made with the student and of the date of return.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE POLICY

The policy will be reviewed and monitored regularly by the Governing Body and staff.

GUIDELINES FOR GOOD PRACTICE BEFORE PERMANENT SUSPENSION

1. Has consultation taken place about the student with:
 - The tutor;
 - Head of School;
 - The parents/carers;
 - The integrated class team
 - Family Liaison Officer
 - Residential staff (if applicable)
2. Have other possible strategies within the school been discussed and supported with the student which might prevent the inappropriate behaviour continuing? This may include:
 - checking appropriateness of class/homework;
 - change of tutor group;
 - internally supported isolation;
 - supervised support to complete work
 - multi-disciplinary team meeting and creation of a positive behaviour management plan
 - other strategies as proposed in the Positive Behaviour policy.
3. Have all appropriate agencies been consulted, and their advice acted upon?
 - Educational and inclusion service
 - Behaviour Support team;
 - Social Services;
 - Child Health Service;
 - Educational Psychologist.
 - Any other external service working with the child/family or that which could be signposted to for support

FACTORS TO CONSIDER BEFORE SUSPENSION

Each incident of poor behaviour needs to be examined in the context of school behaviour policies. Suspension should be used in accordance with the principles set out above and after due consideration of the factors given below.

- the age and health needs of the student;
- the student's previous record at the school;
- any particular circumstances unique to the student which might sensibly be taken into account in connection with the behaviour; for example safeguarding and external service involvement
- the extent to which parental, peer or other pressure may have contributed to the behaviour;
- the degree of severity of the behaviour, the frequency of its occurrence and the likelihood of it recurring;
- whether or not the behaviour impaired or will impair the normal functioning of the student or other students in the school;
- whether or not the behaviour occurred on school premises or when the student was otherwise in the charge of school staff or when the student was on the way to or from school.

An important consideration in cases of doubt is the extent to which behaviour away from school had a serious impact on the life of the school.

- the degree to which the behaviour was a violation of one or more rules and the relative importance of the rule(s);
- whether the incident was perpetrated by the student on his or her own or as part of a group;
- whether consideration has been given to seek the support of other agencies, such as the education welfare service or educational psychology service;
- whether a different approach may be needed because the behaviour might be an emerging sign of emotional and behavioural difficulty. The fact that a child has social, emotional and behavioural difficulties is not in itself adequate grounds for suspension unless the child is likely to cause injury to other students or staff. It is never appropriate to attempt to use suspension as a means of speeding up the statutory assessment process in relation to the making of an EHCP;
- whether the school feels it has insufficient resources to cope with the child's behaviour - in this case there should be discussions with the Governing body;
- whether the incident would not normally be considered serious enough for suspension had the student concerned not had a history of poor behaviour.

TIME SCALES FOR SUSPENSION

The final decision about suspensions and their length rest with the Principal. All factors will be considered, including the impact on the young person and the impact upon the other students in the school, before a decision is reached.

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

Monitored by Governors Mar 2010 / Jan 2018 / July 2023/September 2024

Reviewed Feb 2008 / May 2010 / Sep 2015 / Sep 2016 / Sep 2017 / Jan 2018 / Apr 2021/
November 2021/November 2022/ July 2023/September 2024