

Suspension and Exclusion Policy

Date of review	September 2024	Review period	Annually
Date of next review	September 2025	Author	Mrs L Baty
Type of policy	Statutory	Approval	Governing Body

At Boldon School we understand that good behaviour and discipline is essential for promoting a high-quality education.

Amongst other disciplinary sanctions, the school recognises that suspension and exclusion of students may be necessary where there has been a serious breach, or consistent breaches, of the school's Behaviour Policy. Suspending or excluding a student may also be required in instances where allowing the student to remain in school would be damaging to the education and welfare of themselves or others; in all cases, suspending or excluding students should only be used as a means of last resort.

The school has created this policy to clearly define the legal responsibilities of the headteacher, governing board and LA when responding to student suspensions and exclusions, to ensure that they are dealt with both fairly and lawfully, and in line with DfE statutory guidance.

A “**suspension**” is defined as the temporary removal of a student from the school for behaviour management purposes. A student may be suspended for one or more fixed periods, up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year. A suspension does not have to be for a continuous period.

An “**exclusion**” is defined as the permanent removal of a student from the school, in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's Behaviour Policy, and where allowing the student to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the students or staff in the school.

The school will only suspend or exclude a student where it is absolutely necessary, and where all other possible disciplinary sanctions, as detailed in the school's Behaviour Policy, have failed to be successful.

Students can be suspended on a fixed-period basis, i.e. for up to 45 school days within a year, or permanently excluded. Similarly, students can be permanently excluded following a suspension, where further evidence is presented. In all cases, the headteacher will decide whether a student will be subject to a suspension or an exclusion, depending on what the circumstances warrant.

The school has the power to direct a student off-site to improve their behaviour.

Suspensions:

Only the headteacher (or those designated by the Head Teacher- Deputy Headteacher & Assistant Headteacher Behaviour) have the power to suspend a student from the school. Only the headteacher has the power to decide whether an exclusion is appropriate. All suspensions and exclusions will only be issued on disciplinary grounds.

When sending a student home following any suspension or exclusion, the headteacher or those designated will ensure that they exercise their duty of care at all times and will always inform the parents. A suspension, where a student is temporarily removed from the school, is an essential behaviour management tool that should be set out within a school's behaviour policy.

A student may be suspended for one or more fixed periods¹⁷ (up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year). A suspension does not have to be for a continuous period.

A suspension may be used to provide a clear signal of what is unacceptable behaviour as part of the school's behaviour policy and show a student that their current behaviour is putting them at risk of permanent exclusion. Where suspensions are becoming a regular occurrence for a student, headteachers and schools should consider whether suspension alone is an effective sanction for the student and whether additional strategies need to be put in place to address behaviour.

Parents will be informed of any suspensions made by the headteacher through a letter including the length of suspension, reason and date/ time of the reintegration meeting to reinstate the student back into school. Initial contact will be made by phone by the pastoral team or senior leadership team.

Students will be reinstated once the reintegration meeting has convened and behaviours discussed with a clear and positive way forward to try and avoid any repeat behaviours in the future.

Interventions will be discussed if appropriate and follow the Phases of Behavior Tracking stated in Boldon School Behaviour Policy.

Exclusions:

Only the headteacher has the power to decide whether an exclusion is appropriate. All suspensions and exclusions will only be issued on disciplinary grounds.

A permanent exclusion is when a student is no longer allowed to attend a school (unless the student is reinstated). The decision to exclude a student permanently should only be taken:

- in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy;
- and • where allowing the student to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the student or others such as staff or students in the school.

The Headteacher must determine measures to be taken with a view to:

- promoting self discipline and proper regard for authority among students,
- encouraging good behaviour and respect for others on the part of students and, in particular, preventing all forms of bullying among students,
- securing that the standard of behaviour of students is acceptable,
- securing that students complete any tasks reasonably assigned to them in connection with their education, and
- otherwise regulating the conduct of students.

Permanent exclusions can be used to help achieve these aims when they are absolutely necessary, as a last resort.

The government trusts headteachers to use their professional judgement based on the individual circumstances of the case when considering whether to exclude a student. The reasons below are examples of the types of circumstances that may warrant a suspension or permanent exclusion.

- Physical assault against a student
- Physical assault against an adult
- False allegations towards a member of staff
- Verbal abuse or threatening behaviour against a student
- Verbal abuse or threatening behaviour against an adult
- Use, or threat of use, of an offensive weapon or prohibited item
- Bullying
- Discriminatory abuse, e.g. racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic or ableist abuse
- Sexual abuse or inappropriate sexualised behaviour

Any exclusion must be made in line with the principles of administrative law, in that it is rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate. The Headteacher will refer to DfE statutory guidance.

Dfe Suspensions & Exclusions Guidance