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BRADFORD GIRLS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Co-educational up to 11, Girls only 11-16

SUSPENSION AND EXCLUSIONS POLICY

Approved by: Governors

Date: September 2023

Last reviewed on: September 2023

Next review due by: September 2024

School Values

Bradford Girls' Grammar School and Lady Royd Primary treat all members of the community with respect which is not conditional on past experience or current behaviour. The school staff work with students to demonstrate all aspects of our 6 School Values:

Accountability - Take responsibility for own actions, behaviour and learning, belongings and surroundings and support others in doing the same.

Self-Confidence - Celebrate your individuality and demonstrate the self confidence in your own ability to make the right choices.

Perseverance - Apply yourself to every aspect of school life with positivity and determination to do your very best.

Integrity - Always be truthful and act with kindness, honesty and integrity.

Respect - Treat people with the same levels of respect, courtesy and fairness you would expect from others.

Empathy - Understand and share another person's experiences and emotions.

Students at all stages of their education are encouraged to develop these values through explicit teaching and rewards. The behaviour demonstrated by applying these values underpins an atmosphere in school which supports and develops a positive learning environment.

The school is committed to:

- Promoting desired behaviour.
- Promoting self-esteem, self-discipline, proper regard for authority, and positive relationships based on mutual respect.
- Ensuring equality and fair treatment for all.
- Praising and rewarding good behaviour.
- Challenging and disciplining misbehaviour.
- Providing a safe environment, free from disruption, violence, discrimination, bullying and any form of harassment.
- Encouraging positive relationships with parents.
- Developing positive relationships with students to enable early intervention.
- Promoting a culture of praise and encouragement in which all students can achieve.

'Good behaviour in schools is essential to ensure that all pupils benefit from the opportunities provided by education. Therefore, the government recognises that school exclusions, managed moves and off-site direction are essential behaviour management tools for headteachers and can be used to establish high standards of behaviour in schools and maintain the safety of school communities'. (DFE Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance 2023).

The Need for a Policy

All members of the school community have a role to play in ensuring that behaviour in school supports a positive atmosphere which allows all students to flourish, develop and learn and we promote positive behaviour through the examples set by adults and students, our behaviour policy and by having high expectations. Our behaviour policy ensures that students learn that there are consequences to inappropriate behaviour and there are clear sanctions for when a pupil does not meet the expected standard.

There are occasions when it is necessary and appropriate to suspend students for a fixed period, or, in very rare cases, permanently exclude. In most cases permanent exclusion will be the last resort after a full range of measures have been tried to improve a student's behaviour and engender a sense of personal responsibility. Whenever suspensions or permanent exclusions are used the DFE'S Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance (Sept 2023) is followed.

At Bradford Girls' Grammar School, students identified as being at risk of suspension and permanent exclusion are provided with strategies to meet individual needs so that the school can support the student and their family as much as possible. Permanent exclusion is viewed as the strongest sanction possible and is available to the school only through the authority of the Headteacher, or Deputy/Assistant Headteacher in their absence.

A decision to permanently exclude a student from the school should be taken only a) in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy and b) 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.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the process for fixed term suspensions and permanent exclusions for the benefit of parents, staff and students so as to ensure a consistent and fair process for all concerned.

Parents

The definition of a parent for the purposes of the Education Act is broadly drawn. In addition to the child's birth parents, references to parents in this guidance include any person who has parental responsibility (which includes the local authority where it has a care order in respect of the child) and any person (for example, a foster carer) with whom the child lives.

Prevention of Suspension and Permanent Exclusion

1. The behaviour and attitudes of students is monitored regularly by class teachers, key stage leaders and SLT in the primary phase. In the senior phase, the pastoral team and Senior Leader for Behaviour regularly monitor behaviour and attitudes using Class Charts, SIMS and Power Bi. These systems identify students who are gaining large numbers of negative points. Once identified students are supported in a number of different ways including: report cards, mentoring and pupil support plans (PSPs). Identified students may also be referred to external agencies such as Early Help and CAMHS.
2. When a student has received intervention and concerns still remain regarding behaviour, they may be referred to BACS panel for consideration of a managed move to avoid permanent exclusion. This offers the student a fresh start in a new school, which if successful will lead to a permanent transfer to the new school.

In senior phase, where appropriate, and in line with the Behaviour Policy, the school will use the sanction of internal isolation for a fixed number of days whereby students will be placed in the isolation room and kept out of circulation with high quality. Relevant curriculum-based work provided. Parents/carers will always be informed of this sanction at the earliest opportunity. In the primary phase, pupils may spend time out of class with a Key Stage Leader or SLT member.

Fixed Term Suspension

Fixed-term suspension means that a student is not allowed to come to the school for a fixed period of time.. Students can also be suspended for lunchtime periods if behaviour at lunchtime is disruptive. A student may be suspended for one or more fixed periods (up to a maximum of 45 school days in an academic year).

Situations leading to a fixed term suspension

The school's Behaviour Policy clearly states the situations which will normally lead to fixed-term suspension but it is also at the discretion of the Headteacher, or the Deputy Headteacher (Senior Phase) Assistant Head (Primary Phase) in their absence, to suspend for an incident which may not be covered by the behaviour policy and which is deemed to be of equal seriousness. Suspension will not be used for minor incidents; poor academic performance, punctuality concerns or breaches of uniform rules (except where the latter is resulting in persistent and open defiance of such rules). The length of fixed term suspension is at the discretion of the Headteacher but will be for the shortest time deemed appropriate.

Procedure after a decision to fixed term suspend a student has been made

1. Parents/carers will be informed by telephone where possible that a decision to suspend has been made. This will be followed by a letter of confirmation outlining the reasons for the decision and the Governors' Pupil Disciplinary Committee process.
2. Any suspension that leads to a student totalling over 15 school days suspension in a term must be referred to the Governors' Pupil Disciplinary Committee. This Committee must meet within 15 school days of receiving notice of the suspension. The Headteacher and parents/carers will be invited to make representations to the Committee. The Committee will consider whether the Headteacher's decision to suspend was lawful, reasonable, procedurally fair, and proportionate, and will make a decision on whether or not to reinstate the pupil i.e. whether or not to uphold the suspension which lead to the student totalling over 15 school days suspension in a term. The clerk will inform parents/carers in writing of the Governors' decision within 1 school day.
3. This Committee must also convene if parents/carers request such a meeting for a suspension that leads to a student totalling over 5 school days suspension in a term or up to 15. This Committee must meet within 50 school days of receiving notice of the suspension.
4. If parents/carers request a Committee meeting in relation to a suspension that leads to a student totalling 5 school days suspension in a term or less, the Committee must consider any representations made by parents/carers, but it cannot direct reinstatement and is not required to arrange a meeting with parents/carers.
5. Before a meeting of the Governors' Pupil Disciplinary Committee the school will send all the relevant material to the parents/carers and the governors on the panel 5 school days in advance of the meeting. Parents/carers have the right to be accompanied by a friend or representative.
6. Students will have a return to education meeting after a fixed-term suspension (normally with the Deputy Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher for behaviour) where it is expected that parents/carers will attend with the pupil in question. The purpose of the meeting is to promote an improvement in behaviour, to emphasise the joint responsibility between school and parents/carers regarding the student and to explore measures to prevent further misbehaviour.
7. The student, parent and school all sign the return to education form, which sets our clear targets to achieve.
8. The school will keep a formal record of all fixed-term suspensions

Student welfare during suspension.

1. The parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that the pupil is not present in a public place e.g. parks, shopping centres at any time during school hours. (Bradford Council may issue fines to parents if this is breached.)
2. The school will set work (either paper based or online – MS Teams/ Google Classroom). If paper based it is the parent/carers' responsibility to collect the work and return it to school.
3. After day 5 of suspension the school will arrange for alternative temporary education – usually at a different local school, or a at a Pupil Referral Unit.
4. If a student is suspended at lunchtimes and is entitled to Free School Meals then the school can make arrangements for a packed lunch to be provided if parents/carers wish.

Permanent Exclusion

The decision to permanently exclude a student is never taken lightly. A permanent exclusion means that a student is never allowed to come back into the school; the responsibility for finding the student their next educational establishment lies with the Local Authority.

Situations leading to permanent exclusion

After all other initiatives to improve behaviour have been exhausted, permanent exclusion may result from serious on-going behaviour problems or the failure of a managed move.

There will, however, be exceptional circumstances where, in the Headteacher's judgment, it is appropriate to permanently exclude a student for a first or 'one-off' offence. These may include:

- a) Serious actual or threatened violence against another student or a member of staff.
- b) Sexual abuse or assault.
- c) Supplying or being in possession of drugs or illegal substances (including alcohol) on the premises or on the way to or from school in the community.
- d) Students who have a dangerous weapon on the premises or on the way to or from school in the community.
- e) Students who purposely tamper with or set off the fire alarm.

These instances are not exhaustive but indicate the severity of such offences and the fact that such behaviour can affect the discipline and well-being of the school community. The decision to permanently exclude a student is never taken lightly.

DFE statutory exclusions guidance (2023) also states on page 11 that 'the behaviour of a pupil outside school can be considered grounds for a suspension or permanent exclusion.'

Procedure for decision making

The decision to permanently exclude may only be taken by the Headteacher. The standard of proof to be applied is the civil standard of proof i.e. on the balance of probabilities, if it is more probable than not that the student did what they are alleged to have done, the Headteacher may permanently exclude the student.

Permanent exclusion will not be imposed in the heat of the moment. In exceptional circumstances, usually where further evidence has come to light through an investigation, the Headteacher may issue a permanent

exclusion to begin immediately after the end of a suspension. Before deciding whether to exclude a student permanently the Headteacher will:

- a) Ensure that a thorough investigation has been carried out;
- b) Consider all the evidence available to support the allegations, taking account of the school's behaviour and equal opportunities policies, and, where applicable, Race Relations legislation and Disability Discrimination legislation;
- c) Allow the student to give their version of events;
- d) Check whether the incident may have been provoked, for example by bullying or by racial or sexual harassment;
- e) If necessary, consult others, but not anyone who may later have a role in reviewing the Headteacher's decision, for example a member of the Governing Body.

Procedure after a decision to permanently exclude has been made

1. Parents/carers will be informed without delay that a decision to permanently exclude has been made – either by telephone or in a meeting with the Headteacher. This will be followed by a letter of confirmation outlining the reasons for the decision as stated on the Ex1/Ex3 form and the Governors' Pupil Disciplinary Committee process (sent electronically or via the post).
2. The school will inform the parent/carer of the date of the Governors' Pupil Disciplinary Committee meeting at which governors will hear the school's case and the parents/carers/student's case.
3. Before the meeting the school will send all the relevant material to the parents/carers and the Governors on the Committee 5 school days in advance of the meeting.
4. The Governors will hear the case, at which parents/carers may be accompanied by a friend or representative. Governors will consider whether the Headteacher's decision to permanently exclude was lawful, reasonable, procedurally fair, and proportionate, and will make a decision on whether or not to reinstate the pupil i.e. whether or not to uphold the permanent exclusion. The clerk will inform parents/carers in writing of the Governors' decision within 1 school day.
5. Parents/carers do have a right of appeal to an independent review panel in the event that Governors uphold the permanent exclusion and information regarding this will be included in the letter sent to parents/carers. Parents must make this request within 15 school days of receiving notification of the permanent exclusion, and the panel should meet to review the case within 15 school days of the parents' request. Parents have a right to require the Trust to appoint a SEND expert to attend the review, regardless of whether the pupil has recognised special educational needs.

The panel may make one of three decisions:

- uphold the governing board's decision not to reinstate;
- recommend that the governing body reconsiders reinstatement; or
- quash the governing board's decision and direct that the governing body board reconsiders reinstatement.

Student welfare following a permanent exclusion

1. The student may not come to the school or into the school grounds unless invited in.

2. The parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that the pupil is not present in a public place e.g. parks, shopping centres at any time during school hours. (Bradford Council may issue fines to parents if this is breached.)
3. From day 6 onwards of permanent exclusion the Local Authority will arrange for alternative temporary education – usually at a Pupil Referral Unit.