Bradford Girls' Grammar School

Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy 2025-26

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Aspire – Succeed – Lead

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School Values

Bradford Girls' Grammar School treats 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.

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1. The Need for a Policy

"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 offsite 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."

(*Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement, August 2024*).

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, suspension and 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 current guidance is used: "Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement" (August 2024).

At Bradford Girls' Grammar School, students identified as being at risk of suspension or 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.

A suspension may be used as a clear signal of what is unacceptable behaviour as part of the school's behaviour policy and show a pupil that their current behaviour is putting them at risk of permanent exclusion.

A permanent exclusion is when a pupil is no longer allowed to attend a school (unless the pupil is reinstated). The 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 pupils in the school.

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2. 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.

3. 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.

4. Prevention of Suspension and Permanent Exclusion

1. The behaviour and attitudes of students is monitored regularly by the pastoral team and Senior Leader for Behaviour who will 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 the BACS panel for consideration of a direction off-site (previously 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.
3. Where appropriate, and in line with the Behaviour Policy, the school will use the sanction of internal removal from lessons for a fixed period whereby students will be placed in the reset room and kept out of circulation. Relevant curriculum-based work will be provided in all cases. Parents/carers will always be informed of this sanction at the earliest opportunity.

4.2 Special Educational Needs

The Academy recognises that students' behaviour may be impacted by a special educational need or disability (SEND).

When incidents of misbehaviour arise, we will consider them in relation to a student's SEND, although we recognise that not every incident of misbehaviour will be connected to their SEND. Decisions on

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whether a student's SEND had an impact on an incident of misbehaviour will be made on a case-bycase basis.

When dealing with misbehaviour from students with SEND, especially where their SEND affects their behaviour, the Academy will balance their legal duties when making decisions about enforcing the behaviour policy. The legal duties include:

- Taking reasonable steps to avoid causing any substantial disadvantage to a disabled student caused by the Academy's policies or practices (Equality Act 2010)
- Using our best endeavours to meet the needs of students with SEND (Children and Families Act 2014)
- If a student has an education, health and care (EHC) plan, the provisions set out in that plan must be secured and the Academy must co-operate with the local authority and other bodies.
- As part of meeting these duties, the Academy will anticipate, as far as possible, all likely triggers of misbehaviour, and put in place support to prevent these from occurring.

5. 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 fixed term suspension can be for a fixed period of 1 to 45 days in an academic year but any suspensions over 15 days in a term must be referred to the Governors' Pupil Discipline Committee and this committee must convene if parents/carers request a meeting of this committee for any suspensions amounting to 6 days or over.

6. 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 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; this may include incidents occurring outside the school grounds. 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 given the nature of the incident.

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

1. Parents/carers will be informed by telephone, without delay, that a decision to suspend has been made. Where the student has involvement from a social worker, the social worker and Virtual School Head (VSH) will also be informed. This will be followed by a letter of confirmation outlining the reasons for the decision and the appeal 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 face-to-face reintegration meeting after a fixed-term suspension 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. The student may be required to sign a formal behaviour contract or further steps, including a direction off site, may be discussed.
8. The school will keep a formal record of all fixed-term suspensions.

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8. Student welfare during suspension

1. The pupil may not enter the school or go into the school grounds. Parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure this does not happen.
2. Parents/carers 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. The school will set work (either paper based or online). If paper based it is the parent/carers' responsibility to collect the work and return it to school.
4. After day 5 of suspension the school will arrange for alternative temporary education – usually at a different local school, or at a Pupil Referral Unit.
5. 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.

9. 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.

10. 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.

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. Producing or sharing material, digital or otherwise, which is inappropriate or which risks the safety or wellbeing of others.

d. Where a criminal investigation into sexual assault leads to a conviction or caution, the school or college should, if it has not already, consider any suitable sanctions in light of their behaviour policy, including consideration of permanent exclusion (KCSIE 2024, p.130)

e. 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.

f. Students who have a dangerous weapon on the premises or on the way to or from school in the community.

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g. Carrying an offensive weapon (including replica items)
h. Purposely tampering with, or setting off, the fire alarm or other safety equipment.

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.

11. 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.

12. 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 and the appeal process.
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 representation from parents/carers and the student.

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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. New material cannot be introduced by the school at 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. However, under the Education Act 2011 this panel can only suggest a reinstatement of the student and not overturn the Governor's decision.

13. 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.

14. Independent Review Panel

In the extremely rare event of a student being permanently excluded, parents have the right to ask the Trust to convene an independent review panel, regardless of whether or not they have appealed to the governing body. Parents must make this request within 15 school days of receiving notification of the exclusion, and the panel should meet to review the case within 15 days of the notification. Parents have a right to require the Trust to appoint an SEN expert to attend the review, regardless of whether the student has recognised special educational needs.

The panel may make one of three decisions:

- To uphold the exclusion
- To recommend that the governing body reconsiders its decision
- To quash the decision and direct that the governing body reconsiders the exclusion

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The panel may only quash the decision where it considers that it was flawed when viewed in light of the principles applicable for application for a judicial review (i.e. the decision was illegal, irrational or there was procedural impropriety).

The panel, however, cannot redirect reinstatement, but it can remove the permanent exclusion from a student's record. It may also deduct £4,000 from the school's budget to support the Local Authority in making alternative provision.

15. Separation of Pupils for Safeguarding Purposes

In exceptional circumstances, the school may separate pupils from one another where it is necessary and proportionate to do so in order to safeguard one or more pupils and maintain a safe learning environment. Separation for safeguarding purposes is not a disciplinary sanction and must not be used as a substitute for suspension, exclusion, or other behaviour management measures.

Any decision to separate pupils will be based on a clear assessment of risk, taking into account the welfare, safety, and educational needs of all pupils involved. The school will ensure that any arrangement is lawful, proportionate, time-limited, and subject to regular review. Parents/carers will normally be informed of any separation arrangements unless doing so would place a child at greater risk of harm.

Where a decision is made to separate pupils, the school will consider and implement appropriate support for all pupils affected and will work collaboratively with parents/carers and, where appropriate, external agencies. Detailed guidance on the use of separation for safeguarding purposes can be found in the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

This approach is consistent with the Department for Education guidance on suspensions and permanent exclusions and the school's statutory safeguarding duties.

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