

CASTLE SCHOOL

EXCLUSION 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 welfare of the student or others in the School.

Exclusion is an extreme sanction and is only administered by the Principal (or, in the absence of the Principal, the Headteacher).

Exclusion, whether fixed term or permanent may be used for any of the following, all of which constitute examples of unacceptable conduct:

- 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 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 Principal or the Headteacher makes the judgment that exclusion is an appropriate sanction.

Exclusion procedure

- Most exclusions will be of a fixed term nature and are of short duration (usually between one and three days).
- Parents will be contacted immediately if exclusion has become the only appropriate course of action.
- A return to School meeting will be held following the expiry of the fixed term exclusion.
- 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 School premises, and that daytime supervision is their responsibility, as parents/guardians.

Permanent Exclusion

The decision to exclude a student permanently is a serious one. There are two main types of situation 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 (which would include racist or homophobic 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 School will consider police involvement for any of the above offences.

General factors the School will consider 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 Head will:

- Ensure appropriate investigations have been carried out.
- Consider all the evidence available to support the allegations.
- Allow the student to give her/his version of events.
- Check whether the incident may have been provoked for example by bullying or by racial or sexual harassment.

If the 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.

Castle School will aim to conform to natural justice and will take all reasonable steps to safeguard and protect the human rights and freedom of a pupil. In all investigations the school will ensure that:

- The pupil is not pre-judged.
- The procedures are fair, unbiased and impartial.
- Measures are taken to ensure proper care for the well-being of the pupil.
- The pupil is not intimidated or subjected to unacceptable pressure.
- All investigations that appear necessary are carried out thoroughly.
- The pupil and parents are given a proper opportunity to be heard.
- All investigations adhere to the school's policy of equal opportunities and that there is no bias based on ethnicity, gender or religion.
- In the case of suspension, that parents are informed that they may contact the principal/headteacher.
- In the case of permanent expulsion, the pupil and parents are informed of the appeals procedure.

A decision to permanently exclude a pupil due to persistent disciplinary offences will be made after the school has shown that it has implemented a pastoral support programme and a consistent and genuine effort to support the pupil and modify his/her behaviour over a period of time.

Parents will be given a right to appeal against a decision to expel a pupil. If necessary, a panel may be convened to assess this appeal. The panel will include one wholly independent person.