

EXCLUSIONS/SUSPENSIONS POLICY

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"EVERYONE EXCELS EVERYDAY"

VERSION INFORMATION

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1	Original Policy	S White	September 2014	Full Governors
2	Review and Updates	M Morrell	September 2019	Full Governors
3	Review and Updates	M Morrell	March 2021	Local Governing Board
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EXCLUSIONS AND SUSPENSIONS POLICY

AIM AND SCOPE

Hollingworth Academy, through effective and positive behaviour management, aims to avoid students being excluded/suspended from school and actively seeks ways of reducing suspension rates. It should, however, be recognised that serious or persistent breaches of school discipline are unacceptable, and the school will apply a serious sanction where these occur. This policy aims to give governors, staff, students and parents/carers an understanding of the kinds of behaviours that may well result in suspension and how these are managed.

This policy was drawn up with reference to the following documents:

- Behaviour and Discipline in Schools, a guide for Headteachers and school staff (DfE 2016).
- Behaviour and Discipline in schools, guidance for governing bodies (DfE 2012).
- Exclusions from Mainstream Schools, Academies and Student Referral Units in England (DfE 2017).

FIXED TERM SUSPENSIONS

Exclusions are used where a serious breach of school discipline occurs or where a student is causing persistent disruption to the smooth running of the school. The school has two levels of fixed term suspension to reflect not only the seriousness of the breach of school discipline, but also the previous behaviour of the student concerned and the context. Each situation is judged on a case by case basis.

External Fixed Term Suspensions are used for more serious breaches of school discipline or where a student has a record of previous serious incidents or persistent disruption to learning. Exclusions of this type are for a maximum of five school days. They are recorded on the suspension log and on the child's record in school. Students returning from fixed term suspension will have a readmission meeting in school with their parents/carers and may be subject to a Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) or other interventions designed to prevent further exclusions.

Internal Fixed Term Suspensions are used where a serious breach of school discipline occurs, but the incident is less extreme. Internal fixed term suspensions may also be used where a child would normally be suspended externally, but an external suspension could put them at potential risk.

Decisions about fixed term suspensions are taken by the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher, once they have been presented with the evidence gathered by the Head of Year/Pastoral Directors/SLT about the incident and are satisfied that there is a balance of probability that the student has been responsible for a serious breach of school discipline.

The list below outlines the kinds of serious incidents/behaviour that may result in fixed term suspensions. This is not an exhaustive list but gives an indication of the types of serious breaches of school discipline which may lead to suspension.

SERIOUS INCIDENTS ARE DEFINED AS THE FOLLOWING:

- Verbal abuse, including the use of foul and abusive language either directed at another student or an adult.
- Physical assault, where students are fighting, kicking or hitting each other.
- Racist language or behaviour.
- Homophobic or other discriminatory behaviour.
- Possession of a weapon or dangerous object.
- Possession of drugs or alcohol.
- Unusual behaviour which may be consistent with being under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Threatening behaviour/physical assault on an adult.
- Sexual misconduct.
- Theft of others' property, belongings and school equipment.
- Deliberate vandalism.
- Behaviour which puts themselves or others at risk of serious harm.
- Misuse of social media to bully, intimidate or humiliate others.
- Persistent or general disruptive behaviour.
- Bullying.

The Headteacher, or Deputy Headteacher, will consider alternatives to suspension such as an offsite disciplinary placement to another school in the following circumstances:

- The Headteacher is confident that the child does not represent a threat to the health and safety of students or staff at another mainstream school.
- The student would benefit from a temporary move of school in order to move away from disruptive influences that may have influenced their behaviour.

Any offsite disciplinary placement must meet the criteria set out in the Local Authority guidance and is at the discretion and direction of the Headteacher. If the offsite disciplinary placement is unsuccessful the Headteacher may decide to issue a suspension.

INCIDENTS OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL HOURS

The above sanctions apply to all school activities, trips and visits. If a serious incident occurs whilst on a school trip or visit, then the student(s) concerned may well be suspended from future school trips and visits. If an incident occurs either on the way to or from school, the school has the right to apply sanctions such as suspensions. If an incident occurs which brings the academy into disrepute, the school also has the right to apply sanctions.

If an incident occurs outside of school hours, in the evenings or at weekends, the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher must consider whether the presence of a student in the school building is likely to have an impact on the smooth running of the school or on the safety and wellbeing of other students or staff. If this is the case suspensions may well be applied.

GOVERNORS' STUDENT BEHAVIOUR AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE

The Governors' Student Behaviour and Inclusion Committee meets for three main reasons:

- To discuss with senior members of pastoral staff suspension rates and patterns of behaviour.
- To discuss the behaviour of individual students who have either been brought to the committee's attention for very serious incidents or if a child has been suspended a number of times. They will also meet if a child is suspended for more than fifteen days in a term. These meetings enable the governing body to ensure that appropriate levels of support are in place and to discuss with the student and their parents/carers the steps the Headteacher may have to take if behaviour does not improve.
- To hear the case of a child who is permanently excluded from the school.

Governors do not have the power to overturn the Headteacher's decision to suspend a student unless the suspension results in a student missing a public examination, the suspension is permanent, the suspension results in the student being suspended for more than fifteen days in a school term, or where a student has been suspended for more than five days in a term and where parents/carers have requested a governing body meeting.

Governors must ensure that the correct procedures are in place and be satisfied that the school has done all it can to try and support the student in question.

PERMANENT EXCLUSIONS

Students may be permanently excluded for a very serious one off incident or for persistent breaches of school discipline. The Headteacher, or in his or her absence, the Deputy Headteacher, are the only people who can make a decision to permanently exclude a student.

Where a permanent exclusion is considered, the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher, may exclude for a fixed period initially in order to be sure that all the evidence is considered and to allow the student's record and circumstance to be investigated. This may also include a discussion with parents/carers.

The Headteacher, or Deputy Headteacher, will consider alternatives to permanent exclusion such as an offsite direction to another school in the following circumstances:

- The Headteacher is confident that the child does not represent a threat to the health and safety of students or staff at another mainstream school.
- The student would benefit from a move of school in order to move away from disruptive influences that may have influenced their behaviour.
- When a single serious one-off incident occurs, where returning to the school may have a significant impact on another child or group of children, but in the opinion of the Headteacher is not likely to re-occur in another mainstream school.

Any offsite direction must meet the criteria set out in the Local Authority guidance and is at the discretion and direction of the Headteacher. If the offsite direction is unsuccessful the Headteacher may decide to permanently exclude the student concerned.

This policy will be reviewed at regular intervals by the governing body / Academy Trust and amended in the light of any new published guidelines from the DfE.