



Bexhill
Academy

Exclusion Policy 2023-2024

Updated: September 2023

Next Review: September 2024

EXCLUSION POLICY

This policy is underpinned by the Culture for Learning policy that clearly states the level of consequences applied should students fail to adhere to our high expectations of student behaviour for learning that helps to maximise learning and enable all students to benefit from all the opportunities provided to them.

The policy must also ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the academy community.

This policy requires students to make the correct behaviour choices. If academy expectations are not being met then a range of consequences are applied. Students who persistently behave in an inappropriate manner or those who are involved in “one off” incidents may be at risk of suspension.

Suspension, whether fixed term or permanent exclusion, may be used for any of the following, all of which constitute examples of unacceptable conduct and are infringements of the Academy’s’ Culture for Learning policy:-

- Verbal abuse to staff.
- Verbal abuse to pupils
- Major disruption to the academy
- Physical abuse to/attack on staff
- Physical abuse to/attack on pupils
- Repeated bullying and intimidation – physical, verbal, online
- Indecent behaviour
- Damage to property
- Misuse of illegal drugs/abuse
- Possession or supply of illegal substances and banned items (reference to Culture for learning policy)
- Misuse of other substances
- Theft
- Serious actual or threatened violence against another pupil or a member of staff
- Sexual harassment, abuse or assault (refer to sexual harassment & violence policy)
- Possession of an offensive or imitation weapon*
- Arson
- Inappropriate use of ICT, including social media and mobile phones (see ICT /online safety Policy)

- Unacceptable behaviour which has previously been reported and for which Academy sanctions and other interventions have not been successful in modifying the student's behaviour
 - Breach of academy values and conduct outside of the academy including anti-social behaviour

This is not an exhaustive list and there may be other situations where the Principal makes the judgment that suspension is an appropriate sanction.

EXTERNAL SUSPENSION/EXCLUSION

The decision to suspend a pupil will be taken in the following circumstances:-

- In response to a serious breach of the Culture for Learning Policy,
- If allowing the pupil to remain in the academy would seriously harm the education, safety or welfare of the student or others in the Academy.

Bexhill Academy will ensure that in all cases the decision to suspend is lawful, reasonable and fair. Suspension is an extreme sanction and is only authorised by the Co-Principals, in the absence of the Co -Principals, the Vice Principals or Senior Assistant Principal who is deputising for the Co-Principals may make the decision to suspend a student.

SUSPENSION PROCEDURE

Most suspension are of a fixed term nature and of short duration. This type of suspension is free standing. It can be used by the Co-Principals as a method of punishment usually used in conjunction with the stages outlined in the Culture Learning Policy.

The DCSF regulations allow the Principal to suspend a pupil for one or more fixed periods not exceeding 45 school days in any one academy year.

The Trust Board have established arrangements to promptly review all permanent exclusions from the Academy and all fixed term suspension that would lead to a pupil being suspended for over 15 days in a school term or missing a public examination.

The Trust Board have established arrangements to review fixed term suspensions which would lead to a student being suspended for over five days but not over 15 days in a school term where a parent has expressed a wish to make representations.

Following suspension or permanent exclusion, parents and Local Authority are contacted immediately where possible about the suspension and reason(s). If the student has a social

worker or is Looked After (CLA) then they also need to notify the VSH. A letter will be sent by post giving details of the suspension and the date the suspension ends. Parents have a right to make representations to the Governing Body and the sponsor.

If the suspension is more than five days, the academy needs to arrange full time alternative provision for the student. The academy will notify parents of the alternative provisions start/ finish date, address and information required by the student so they can report there on the first day. This should be notified to parents as soon as humanly possible.

A reintegration meeting will be held following the expiry of the fixed term suspension of one or more days and this will involve a member of the Senior Leadership Team or Learning Leader.

It is academy practice to closely monitor the student's behaviour on return to academy following fixed term suspension. This can take a variety of forms including being placed on an SLT report, placed in ACE Re Engagement as an alternative to a suspension. Where it is deemed appropriate, a Pastoral Support Plan and risk reduction plan where appropriate will be drawn up and agreed with the academy, student and parents. Time in either the academy's alternative provision at the ACE or in some form of internal suspension is also often used as a means to reintegrate a pupil who has served an external suspension. On occasions a school to school may also be used as an alternative to a permanent exclusion. This could also include a referral to an alternative external provision such as Workplace, College Central, SWP and early college provision.

During the course of fixed term suspension parents are advised that the student is not allowed on the academy premises or within one mile of the academy site, and that daytime supervision is their responsibility as parents/guardians. This could lead to an increase in the suspension length. Parents could face a fixed penalty notice if their child is found in a public place during academy hours without reasonable justification.

The principal can cancel a suspension or exclusion if it has not be reviewed by the governing body. If it occurs then the academy should let the parents, governing body and local authority know about this.

Students can access work through the learning platforms of Google classroom, Class Charts, Reading Plus and Sparx. Alternative work can be set if access to the internet is an issue.

PERMANENT EXCLUSION

The decision to exclude a pupil permanently is a serious one. There are two main types of situation in which permanent exclusion may be considered:

1. 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).

2. The second is where there are exceptional circumstances and it is not appropriate to implement other strategies and where it is appropriate to permanently exclude a pupil for a first or 'one off' offence. These might include: serious actual, or threatened violence against another pupil, or a member of staff; sexual abuse or assault; possession or supply of illegal substances; carrying an offensive/imitation weapon or Arson. This can also include a serious breach of health and safety towards staff, students and the community.

The Academy will consider police involvement for any of the above offences.

These instances are not exhaustive list but indicate the severity of such offences for which permanent exclusion would be considered.

On the sixth day (or earlier) the academy should have arranged alternative provision (full time education) for the student to attend.

GENERAL FACTORS THE ACADEMY CONSIDERS BEFORE MAKING A DECISION TO SUSPEND/EXCLUDE

Suspension will not be imposed instantly unless there is an immediate threat to the safety, severe disruption of others in the academy or the pupil concerned. Before deciding whether to suspend/exclude a pupil either permanently or for a fixed period the Co-Principals will:

- Ensure appropriate investigations have been carried out
- Consider all the evidence available to support the allegations taking into account the Culture for Learning and Equality Policies.
- Allow the student to give their version of events (in a serious incident a statement must be taken from all parties)

EXERCISE OF DISCRETION

In reaching a decision, the Co-Principals will always look at each case on its own merits. Therefore, a tariff system, fixing a standard penalty for a particular action, is both unfair and inappropriate.

In considering whether permanent exclusion is the most appropriate sanction, the Co-Principals will consider: the gravity of the incident or series of incidents, and whether it constitutes a serious breach of the academy's Culture for Learning Policy and the effect that the pupil remaining in the academy would have on the education and welfare of other pupils and staff. Nonetheless, in the case of a student found in possession of an offensive weapon, whether there is an intention to use it or not, it is the academy's usual policy in this particularly serious matter to issue a permanent exclusion.

In line with its statutory duty, these same two tests of appropriateness will form the basis of the deliberations of the Trust Board "Students' Discipline Panel", when it meets to consider the Co-Principal's decision to exclude. This Panel will require the Co-Principal to explain the reasons for the decision and will look at additional appropriate evidence, such as the student's academy record, witness statements and the strategies used by the academy to support the student prior to exclusion.

ALTERNATIVES TO SUSPENSION/EXCLUSION

Involvement of outside Agencies.

The Academy works positively with all external agencies and will seek appropriate support from them to ensure that the needs of all students are met by using the range of external support available.

The academy also works closely with the Local Authority, other secondary schools and the Hastings and Rother Behaviour and Attendance Partnership to undertake 'managed moves' where such a course of action would be of benefit both to the pupil and the two schools concerned.

Bexhill Academy has signed up to East Sussex Fair Access Protocol which specifically relates to the admissions of vulnerable students.

LUNCHTIME SUSPENSION

Students, whose behaviour at lunchtime is disruptive, may be suspended from the academy premises for the duration of the lunchtime period. This will be treated as fixed term suspension and parents will have the same right to gain information and to appeal.

BEHAVIOUR OUTSIDE THE ACADEMY

Students' behaviour outside the academy, including on the way to and from the academy, on academy "business" for example academy trips and journeys, away school sports fixtures or a work experience placement is subject to the academy's Culture for Learning Policy. Poor behaviour in these circumstances will be dealt with as if it had taken place in school. For behaviour outside the academy this policy will still have effect if there is a clear link between that behaviour and maintaining good behaviour and discipline among the student body as a whole. If students' behaviour in the immediate vicinity of the academy or on a journey to and from the academy is poor and meets the academy criteria for suspension/exclusion then the Principal may decide to suspend/exclude.