



FERRYHILL SCHOOL

SCHOOL SUSPENSION POLICY

KEY STAFF INVOLVED IN THE POLICY

ROLE	NAME(S)
Head of School	Mrs K Picard
Associate to ULT Pastoral	Mr C Elliott

SUSPENSION

Suspension is an extreme sanction. Any suspension may ONLY be sanctioned by the Head of School. (In the case of absence of the Head of School, the designated member of Leadership Group adopts the role of "Teacher in Charge" and therefore authority of the Head of School - this will be the Associate Assistant Headteacher responsible for behaviour.

THE HEAD OF SCHOOL WILL USE DISCRETION IN DETERMINING WHETHER SUSPENSION IS THE MOST APPROPRIATE SANCTION IN EACH CASE, AND WILL DETERMINE THE LENGTH AND NATURE OF THE SUSPENSION.

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

- Verbal abuse of staff and/or others
- Verbal abuse of students
- Physical abuse of /attack on staff
- Physical abuse of /attack on students
- Indecent behaviour
- Damage to property
- Misuse of illegal drugs
- Misuse of other substances
- Vaping or smoking on school site
- Theft
- Malicious accusations against school staff
- Serious actual or threatened violence against another student or a member of staff
- Sexual abuse or assault
- Supplying vape pens to other students
- Supplying an illegal drug
- Carrying an offensive weapon
- Arson
- Any other illegal activity
- Unacceptable behaviour which has previously been identified and reported and for which school sanctions and other interventions have not been successful in modifying the student's behaviour.

- Unacceptable behaviour outside of school, whilst wearing the school uniform or representing the school at an event.

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

EACH CASE WILL BE JUDGED INDIVIDUALLY – AND THEREFORE A SIMPLE TARIFF SYSTEM WILL NOT BE ADOPTED FOR PARTICULAR OFFENCES. THE STANDARD OF PROOF TO BE APPLIED IS THE BALANCE OF PROBABILITIES, I.E. IF IT IS MORE PROBABLE THAN NOT THAT THE STUDENT DID WHAT THEY ARE ALLEGED TO HAVE DONE, THE HEAD OF SCHOOL MAY SUSPEND THE STUDENT.

BEFORE MAKING A DECISION TO SUSPEND, THE HEAD OF SCHOOL WILL:

- Ensure that a thorough investigation has been carried out
- Ensure that the student has been allowed to give their version of events
- Check whether or not the incident had been provoked, e.g. by bullying, racial harassment or sexual harassment
- Consider all the evidence available, taking account of other relevant policies including equal opportunities
- Ensure that a written record of the actions taken is kept including details of any interview with the student and any witness statements
- Ensure that the school is meeting its duty of care towards the student in particular with due regard to any Child Protection issues

SUSPENSION PROCEDURES – FIXED TERM

The Department for Education regulations permit the Head of School to suspend a student for one or more fixed periods not exceeding 45 school days in any one school year

Most suspensions are of a fixed term nature and are of short duration (usually between one and three days), however, longer fixed term suspensions may be imposed at the discretion of the Head of School.

Once a decision has been made to suspend, parents will be contacted immediately by telephone where possible. Written notification of the suspension will be sent home by post.

The notification letter will contain the following information:

- The reason for the suspension
- The nature and duration of the suspension
- The date and time that the suspension ends
- The readmission procedures

- Readmission timing will be set at 8.30am – failure to attend the time set for a readmission meeting will result in the student being isolated until the arranged meeting can take place.
- A statement detailing the parental right to make representations to the Governors and/or the LA including the contact detail
- A statement outlining the parental responsibility for the daytime supervision of their son / daughter for the duration of the suspension
- Notice that the parent may be prosecuted or given a fixed penalty notice, if their son / daughter is unsupervised during school hours and is present in a public place without justification
- Notification that the student is not allowed on the school site for the duration of the suspension, unless the Head of School has given prior consent

Where the pupil is suspended at the end of the afternoon session and the suspension takes effect the next school day, notice must be given before the start of the afternoon session. Where the pupil is suspended in the morning session and the suspension takes effect that afternoon, the notice must be given by the end of the afternoon session.

A readmission meeting will be held following the expiry of the fixed term suspension, involving the student, the parents, the Head of Year and other staff where appropriate. At this meeting the following should be discussed:

- The reason for the suspension
- The continued partnership between the school and parents in terms of taking responsibility for behaviour issues
- An agreement on how the student's education should continue and measures that will be put in place
- Any wider issues or circumstances that may affect the student's behaviour

The school will endeavour to set the time and date for the meeting at a time convenient to the parent. This will usually be on the day that the student returns to school, and will be between the first and fifteenth school day following the return to school. The school will keep a record of all times and dates of the meetings set. At least one parent should attend the meeting, and usually the student will be present for at least part of the meeting.

Please note: A parent's failure to attend a meeting will be one factor taken into account by a magistrates' court when deciding whether to impose a parenting order if at any future point a parenting order has been applied for by the school or local authority.

If the fixed term suspension is greater than five days or an accumulation of suspensions exceed five days, a Pastoral Support Plan will be drawn up which will be agreed with the school, student and parents.

Any fixed term suspension that would lead to a student being suspended for over 15 days in a school term or missing a public examination will be reviewed promptly by the Governors.

The Governors will 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.

PERMANENT EXCLUSION

There are two main types of situation in which permanent exclusion may be considered.

1. The first is a final, formal step in an extended process for dealing with misbehaviour following the use of a wide range of other strategies and external agency support where appropriate, which have been used without success. It is an acknowledgement that all available strategies have been exhausted and is used as a last resort.
2. The second is where there are exceptional circumstances and it is inappropriate to implement other strategies. In these circumstances it may be appropriate to permanently suspend 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
 - Where criminal behaviour outside of school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the student or others in the school if they were to remain in school.

In considering whether permanent suspension is the most appropriate sanction, the Executive Headteacher will consider;

- the nature and gravity of the incident, or series of incidents
- the effect that the student remaining in the School would have on the education and welfare of other students and / or staff

In line with its statutory duty, these same two tests of appropriateness will form the basis of the deliberations of the Governors' Discipline Committee, when it meets to consider the Executive Headteacher's decision to suspend. This Committee will require the Executive Headteacher to explain the reasons for the decision and will look at appropriate evidence, such as the student's behaviour record, witness statements and the strategies and interventions already used by the school to support the student prior to suspension.

