

Longdean School



Exclusion Policy

Reviewed: June 2014
Ratified: June 2014
Next review: June 2015

Exclusion Policy

School context

Longdean is an inclusive school which aims for students to be able to say 'I am proud of who I am and what I have achieved today.'

In order for this to happen the school behaviour & reward policy is designed to encourage students to make appropriate choices. We do however recognise that for a host of reasons some students make poor choices or demonstrate poor behaviour. As an organisation we are committed to supporting these students but there are times when it may be felt necessary to remove these students from school.

This policy is underpinned by the shared commitment of all members of the school community to achieve two important aims:

- 1) The first is to ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community, and to maintain an appropriate educational environment in which all can learn and succeed;
- 2) The second is to realise the aim of reducing the need to use exclusion as a sanction.

Policy statement

- A decision to exclude a student, either for a fixed period or permanently is seen as a last resort by the school
- The school is responsible for communicating to students, parents and staff its expectations of standards of behaviour. A range of policies and procedures are in place to promote good behaviour and appropriate conduct
- No exclusion will be initiated without first exhausting other strategies or, in the case of a serious single incident, a thorough investigation into the circumstances surrounding the incident
- The school uses DfE guidance in all matters pertaining to fixed or permanent exclusion

The Headteacher could exclude for a fixed term period or permanently for:

- Serious breach of the school's rules
- Sexual abuse
- Misuse of technology
- Dangerous behaviour
- Having an offensive weapon
- Vandalism
- Actual or threatened assault of a student or adult
- Verbal assault of a teacher
- Misuse of illicit substances including the possession and dealing of illegal substances
- Arson

Most exclusions will be at the recommendation of the Director of Learning and a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and at the discretion of the Headteacher once all investigations are

completed. In the Headteachers absence the SLT member acting in that role can fixed term exclude but not permanently exclude.

This is not an exhaustive list, and there may be many other situations where the Headteacher feels exclusion is an appropriate sanction after a thorough investigation of the incident. Exclusion can be for persistent problems or a one off incident. Where exclusion is felt to be an appropriate sanction the Headteacher will consider the appropriateness of both fixed period and permanent exclusion.

The decision to exclude

If the Headteacher decides to exclude a student he will:

- Ensure that there is sufficient recorded evidence to support the decision to exclude based on a thorough investigation into the incident leading to the exclusion
- Make a decision to exclude based on the balance of probability. This means that given all the available recorded evidence it is likely that the student did what they are accused of
- Explain the decision to the student
- Contact the parents/guardians, explain the decision and ask that the child to be collected
- Send a letter to the parents confirming the reasons for the exclusion, whether it is a permanent or temporary exclusion, the length of the exclusion and any terms of conditions agreed for the student's return
- Work with appropriate staff to ensure that in cases of more than a day's exclusion, appropriate work is set and that arrangements are in place for it to be marked
- Work with appropriate staff to plan how to address the student's needs on his/her return
- Work with appropriate staff to plan a meeting with parents and student on his/her return
- For issues relating to the possession and dealing of drugs all of the above points and the procedures for investigating incidents will be followed. In addition the school has a three strikes policy. In the first instances of possession of drugs a student will be excluded for 10 days. In the second instance of possession the student will be excluded for 15 days and in the third instance a student will be permanently excluded. If a student is found to be dealing in drugs they will be permanently excluded. In all cases relating to drugs the police will be informed and if appropriate will be involved in reintegration meetings

An exclusion should not be enforced if doing so may put the safety of the student at risk. In cases where parents will not comply by, for example, refusing to collect the child, the child's welfare is the priority.

Procedures for investigating incidents

Incidents will normally be investigated by the Pastoral Manager, Director of Learning or member of SLT. When investigating any incident the member of staff responsible will ensure that the following protocols are adhered to:

- Statements will be taken from the students & adults involved in the incident. In addition statements will be taken from as many students or adults as the member of staff investigating the incident feels is necessary to be satisfied that they have an accurate picture of what transpired

- If necessary photos or CCTV footage of the incident will be viewed as part of the investigation.
- Where a student denies involvement in an incident they will be re-interviewed and a statement taken with two members of staff present
- All statements will be signed and dated by the student to confirm that they have written them themselves and are satisfied with what they have written
- If a student is unable to write their own statement they will dictate it to an appropriate adult. This could be a form tutor, teaching assistant, Director of Learning, Pastoral Manager or another member of the teaching staff or SLT
- Where a statement is dictated to an appropriate adult this will be indicated on the statement but the student will still sign it themselves to indicate that they agree with what has been written
- Once the investigation has been completed and if exclusion is felt to be appropriate the Director of Learning or member of SLT will make a recommendation to the Headteacher

Behaviour outside School

A student in school uniform, wherever they may be, in or out of school is subject to the school's behaviour policy.

Poor behaviour in such circumstances will be dealt with as if it had taken place in the school.

For behaviour outside the school not on school business, the Head may exclude a student if there is a clear link between that behaviour and maintaining good behaviour and discipline among the student body as a whole, or if it is deemed to be damaging to the reputation of the school.

Students with special educational needs and disabled students

The school must take account of any special educational needs when considering whether or not to exclude a student. We have a legal duty under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended not to discriminate against disabled students by excluding them from school for behaviour related to their disability. The Head should ensure that reasonable steps have been taken by the school to respond to a student's disability so the student is not treated less favourably for reasons related to the disability.

Reasonable steps could include:

- Differentiation in the school's behaviour policy
- Developing strategies to prevent the student's behaviour
- Requesting external help with the student
- Staff training

Where reasonable adjustments to policies and practices have been made to accommodate a student's needs and to avoid the necessity for exclusion as far as possible, exclusion may be justified if there is a material and substantial reason for it. A specific incident affecting order the discipline in the school may be such a reason.

Procedure for appeal

If parents/guardians wish to appeal the decision to exclude, the matter will be referred to the Governors. The Chair of Governors will acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as practicable and normally within seven school days of receipt of the appeal.

Records relating to the decision to exclude and the parents/guardians' complaint will be copies to all parties not later than five days prior to the hearing. In no circumstances however, will the school or its staff be required to divulge to parents/guardians or others any confidential information on, or the identities of, students or others who have given information which has led to the exclusion or which the Head has acquired during an investigation.

The parents/guardians may be accompanied to the hearing by one other person. This may be a relative, legal advisor or friend.