



HORNCHURCH

HIGH SCHOOL

EXCELLENCE FOR ALL

SUSPENSION AND PERMANENT EXCLUSION POLICY

SCHOOL NAME:	HORNCHURCH HIGH SCHOOL
DATE OF ADOPTION:	01/09/2024
DATE OF NEXT REVIEW DUE:	01/09/2027
CHAIR OF GOVERNORS SIGNATURE:	L. HALL
HEAD SIGNATURE:	S.MADHVANI

1.0 RATIONALE

This policy deals with the policy and practice which informs the school's use of exclusion. It 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.

2.0 PRINCIPLES

Hornchurch High School believes that every child has the right to an education, and that learning is the core purpose for students. In order to ensure that all students can learn, we may at times need to consider suspension as a consequence for preventing this happening, or for not following the high expectations we have.

Hornchurch High is a learning institution which aims to provide life chances for all of our students. We view suspensions and permanent exclusions as a last resort when all other possible methods of managing student behaviour have been exhausted. The decision to suspend or permanently exclude is never taken lightly and careful consideration is taken of the facts and the surrounding circumstances before reaching a decision to suspend or permanently exclude. The school only uses suspensions and permanent exclusions as part of creating a calm, safe, supportive environment in which students can learn and thrive.

We recognise the detrimental impact of suspension and permanent exclusion on both the education and wellbeing of students and their families.

Permanent exclusion is an extremely serious step to take and has a significant impact on the ability of a student to access education in the future. It is only used where it is unavoidable and where very possible appropriate alternative has been considered. We are committed to using alternatives to permanent exclusion such as off-site directions and alternative provision where appropriate.



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We take account of the Equality Act and of our duty not to discriminate against students for any reason. We also take account of our statutory duties in relation to SEND and we aim to involve parents as early as possible in any process.

3.0 THE DECISION TO SUSPEND

The decision to suspend a pupil is made solely by the Headteacher, or a senior leader with authorisation from the Headteacher.

The decision to suspend a pupil is not taken lightly and could be made in the following circumstances:

- (a) In response to a serious breach of the School's Pupil Behaviour Policy;
- (b) If allowing the student to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the student or others in the school.

Suspension or permanent exclusions may be used for any of the following, all of which constitute examples of unacceptable conduct, and are infringements of the School's Behaviour Policy:

- Actions which put the pupil or others in danger.
- 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 sanctions and other 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 Headteacher makes the judgment that exclusion is an appropriate sanction.



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4.0 SUSPENSION PROCEDURES

All suspensions are of a fixed term nature and have an end date. They usually last anywhere between half a day to 15 days.

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

The decision to suspend a student is not taken lightly and the Headteacher will:

- a) ensure that a thorough investigation is carried out
- b) consider all the evidence available to support the allegations
- c) allow and encourage the student to give their version of events
- d) keep a written record of the actions taken including the signed statements of witnesses
- e) be confident that the procedures detailed later in this policy have been carried out
- f) ensure SEND expert advice has been taken into account where appropriate
- g) take into account any contributing factors that are identified e.g. recent bereavement, mental health issues, subject to bullying or provocation
- h) ensure that parents/carers have been kept informed throughout the process and consulted where appropriate

Once the decision has been made to suspend, a student will only be sent home once contact has been made with parents/carers and where it is clear that the student will be returning to a place of safety. Work will be provided and either sent with the student or arrangements made for collection.

The Headteacher may suspend a student for one or more fixed periods which do not exceed a total of 45 school days in any one school year.

During a suspension of 5 or fewer days, work will be set by Hornchurch High for the student to complete at home. This work should be returned completed at the end of suspension to the relevant teachers.

For a suspension of longer than 5 days, the school will arrange a full-time educational provision from the sixth day of suspension.

Before the end of any suspension, parents/carers will be invited to attend a reintegration meeting at the school with their child. The purpose of the meeting is to ensure that the student understands the reason for the suspension and is committed to preventing the behaviour that led to the suspension from being repeated. The school will consider all further support needed to help the student, including referral to external agencies if appropriate. The student may also spend their return day in the Learning Support Centre to support their reintegration.

During the first five days of any suspension, the parents of a suspended student must ensure that they are not present in a public place during normal school hours without reasonable justification, whether with or without a parent/carer. Failure to comply with this is an offence for which a fixed penalty notice can be issued.



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Whilst each suspension is treated on its own merit, in most cases the number of days of suspension will increase with each offence. A first suspension is likely to be, but not in all cases for a period of 1 or 2 days. The number of days will increase if the incident was a particular serious breach of the school's behaviour policy, or a student received further suspensions for similar behaviour to that which they have been suspended before.

Students facing a number of suspensions in an academic year could result in permanent exclusions.

In exceptional cases, usually where further evidence, not available at the time of the investigation, has come to light a suspension may be extended or converted to a permanent exclusion.

5.0 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.

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.

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 pupil 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.

** Offensive weapons are defined in the Prevention of Crime Act 1953 as "any article made or adapted for causing injury to the person; or intended by the person having it with him for such use by him."*

These instances are not exhaustive but indicate the severity of such offences and the fact that such behaviour seriously affects the discipline and well-being of the school.

In the event of a permanent exclusion, the Headteacher will:

- a) meet wherever possible with the parents/carers and students before reaching a decision to permanently exclude a student
- b) notify the parents without delay, ideally by telephone, followed up by a letter preferably within one school day
- c) inform governing body and LA within one school day of the decision to permanently exclude



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- d) continue to provide an education for the pupil for five school days. From the sixth day of a permanent exclusion the LA is statutorily responsible for ensuring that full time education is available
- e) prepare all supporting papers for the exclusion and pass then to the LA and governing body for circulation to all parties at least 5 days in advance of the meeting. The paperwork should include:
 - The Headteacher's case for permanent exclusion
 - A copy of the exclusion letter of notification to the parent
 - Attendance records
 - Witness statements (where appropriate, signed and dated where possible)
 - Excluded pupil statement (where appropriate)
 - School behaviour policy
 - Details of any Pastoral Support Programme or Individual Education Plan
 - Records of interventions
 - Details of any alternative or enhanced curriculum

If the Head is satisfied that on the balance of probabilities the pupil did what he or she is alleged to have done, exclusion will be the outcome.

6.0 BEHAVIOUR OUTSIDE SCHOOL

Our school suspension and permanent exclusion policy and behaviour policy covers behaviour not only within school but also outside school.

We will sanction students, up to and including Permanent Exclusion, for any behaviour which contravenes our policies when a student is:

- Taking part in any school-organised or school-related activity
- Travelling to or from school
- Wearing our school uniform
- In some other way identifiable as a Hornchurch High student

Or for behaviour which at any time:

- could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school
- poses a threat to another student or member of the public
- could adversely affect the reputation of the school