

# **St Peter's Catholic College of Maths & Computing**

## **Exclusion Policy**

### **September 2009**

Ratified by Governors:  
Next Review:

6<sup>th</sup> May 2010  
May 2013

## **Introduction**

The decision to exclude a student will be taken under the following circumstances: -

- In response to a serious breach of the school's Student Behaviour Policy
- If allowing the student to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the student or others in the school.

Exclusion is an extreme sanction and is only administered by the Headteacher (or, in the absence of the Head, the Deputy Head who is acting in that role). Exclusion, whether fixed term or permanent may be used for any of the following, all of which constitute examples of unacceptable conduct and are infringements of the school's Student Behaviour Policy: -

1. Verbal abuse to staff and others
2. Verbal abuse to students
3. Physical abuse to/attack on staff
4. Physical abuse to/attack on students
5. Indecent behaviour
6. Damage to property
7. Misuse of illegal drugs
8. Misuse of other substances
9. Theft
10. Serious actual or threatened violence against another student or a member of staff
11. Sexual abuse or assault
12. Supplying an illegal drug
13. Carrying an offensive weapon
14. Arson
15. 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 judgement that exclusion is an appropriate sanction.

## **Exclusion Procedure**

- Most exclusions are of a fixed term nature and are of short duration (usually between one and five days).
- The DfES regulations allow the Headteacher to exclude a student for one or more fixed periods, not exceeding 45 school days in any one school year.
- The Governors have established arrangements to promptly review all permanent exclusions from the school and all fixed term exclusions that would lead to a student being excluded for over 15 days in a school term or missing a public examination.

(In relation to procedural matters pertaining to the composition and operation of the Governors' Pupil Discipline Committee, the Governing Body has agreed to adopt the procedural guidelines adopted by Redcar and Cleveland LA).

- Where possible following exclusion, parents are contacted immediately. A letter written by the Head or Deputy Head will be sent by post, giving details of the exclusion and the date the exclusion ends. Parents have a right to make representations to the Governing Body and the LA as directed in the letter.
- In order to facilitate the efficient administration of the exclusion, details of the exclusion need to be communicated to the Attendance Officer, HOH and FT as soon as possible. Details of an exclusion will be communicated to staff at the next staff briefing or via staff intranet/email.
- The Attendance Officer will enter the registration code 'E' into the pupil's attendance file for the duration of the exclusion and ensure that a copy of the exclusion letter is sent to the LA.
- A return to school meeting will be held following the expiry of the fixed term exclusion and this will involve a member of the Leadership Team and/or Head of House and other staff where appropriate.
- It is school practice to place the student on report to the DHT or Head of House, usually for one week to monitor behaviour and work. If the fixed term exclusion is greater than five days, the school will make arrangements for the pupil to be taught at home, after school or by arrangement in a neighbouring school.
- During the course of a fixed term exclusion where the student is to be at home, parents are advised that the student is not allowed on the school premises and that daytime supervision is their responsibility as parents/guardians.

### **Permanent Exclusion**

The decision to exclude a student 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 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 could include racist or homophobic bullying) or repeated possession and/or use of an illegal drug on school premises.
- 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 student 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/her for such use by him/her’. 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.

### **General factors the school considers before making a decision to exclude**

Exclusion will not be imposed instantly unless there is an immediate threat to the safety of others in the school or the student concerned. Before deciding whether to exclude a student either permanently or fixed period the Headteacher will: -

- Ensure appropriate investigations have been carried out.
- Consider all the evidence available to support the allegations taking into account the Student Behaviour, Equal Opportunity and Race Equality Policies.
- Allow the student to give his/her version of events.
- Check whether the incident may have been provoked for example by bullying, racial or sexual harassment.

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

### **Exercise of Discretion**

In reaching a decision, the Head 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 Head will consider: -

- The gravity of the incident, or series of incidents and whether it constitutes a serious breach of the school’s Pupil Discipline Policy and
- The effect that the student remaining in the school would have on the education and welfare of other students and staff.

In line with its statutory duty, these same two tests of appropriateness will form the basis of the deliberations of the Governors’ Student Discipline Committee, when it meets to consider the Headteacher’s decision to exclude.

This committee will require the Headteacher to explain the reasons for the decision and will look at appropriate evidence, such as the student's school record, witness statements and the strategies used by the school to support the student prior to exclusion.

### **Alternatives to Exclusion**

Alternative strategies to exclusion are included in the Behaviour Policy. The school works closely with the LA and other secondary schools to undertake managed moves where such a course of action would be of benefit both to the student and the two schools concerned. However, the threat of a permanent exclusion will never be used as a means to coerce parents to move their child to another school.

### **Lunchtime Exclusion**

Students' whose behaviour at lunchtime is disruptive may be supervised in the Reflection.

### **Behaviour Outside School**

Students' behaviour outside school on school 'business' for example school trips and journeys, away school sports fixtures or a work experience placement is subject to the schools Student Behaviour Policy. Bad behaviour in these circumstances will be dealt with as if it had taken place in school. For behaviour outside school but not on school business, 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 school or on a journey to and from school is poor and meets the school criteria for exclusion, then the Headteacher may decide to exclude.

### **Drug Related Exclusions**

In making a decision on whether or not exclude for a drug-related offence, the Headteacher will have regard to the school's published policy on drugs and will also seek advice from the LA's Drugs Education Advisor. The decision will depend on the precise circumstances of the case and the evidence available. In some cases fixed term exclusion will be more appropriate than permanent exclusion. The Headteacher will make a judgement set against the criteria in the school's Drug Policy.