

PUPIL BEHAVIOUR AND DISCIPLINE POLICY, INCLUDING EXPULSION

Aims

Wykeham House School believes that for effective teaching and learning to take place, a high standard of behaviour is necessary in all aspects of School life and that girls and staff are entitled to a safe, orderly environment in which to work.

To achieve that aim, the School seeks to:

- Promote behaviour and discipline in line with the School's published Code of Conduct
- Promote self-esteem and self-discipline
- Promote appropriate regard for authority
- Promote positive relationships based on mutual respect
- Provide good role models of behaviour
- Ensure fair and consistent treatment for all
- Work with parents and carers to develop a shared approach and to involve them in the implementation of the School's policy and procedures.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Trustees will establish the policy and keep it under review, in consultation with the Headmistress and staff and taking the views of parents and girls into account. The Trustees will support the School in maintaining standards of behaviour.

The Headmistress will be responsible for the implementation and day to day management of the policy and procedures, in liaison with the Deputy Headmistress and the Heads of Junior and Senior School.

The Leadership Team will be responsible for supporting staff who face challenging behaviour.

Staff, including Support Staff and Volunteers will be responsible for ensuring that the policy and procedures are followed and consistently and fairly applied and creating, within their area of responsibility, a high quality learning environment.

The Trustees, Headmistress and Staff will ensure there is no difference in the application of the policy and procedure on any grounds including: ethnic or national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexuality. They will also ensure that the girls' concerns are listened to and appropriately addressed.

Parents and Carers will be expected to take responsibility for the behaviour of their daughter both inside and outside the School. They will be encouraged to work with the School to assist in maintaining the School's required standards of behaviour.

Pupils will be expected to take responsibility for their own behaviour, subject to their age and understanding. Pupils also have a responsibility to report incidents of inappropriate behaviour, eg violence, bullying and any form of harassment.

Rewards/Reinforcement

The School rewards and reinforces good behaviour in accordance with the School's Code of Conduct and seeks to praise and reward girls in ways that are appropriate to their age and development as detailed in Department Handbooks.

Sanctions

When incidents of unacceptable behaviour are reported, staff should ensure they have gained the fullest possible picture of the incident, what led up to it and whether expectations have been made sufficiently clear before sanctions are applied.

Sanctions should be appropriate to the wrong-doing and age and maturity of the pupil. The following should be taken into account:

- The severity of the incident
- Whether it is a "first or repeat offence" – either of this type of behaviour or of other unacceptable behaviours
- Whether there are mitigating circumstances.

Throughout the School, the approach should be to allow the pupil time to consider their actions, removed, if possible, from the situation. They should be given an opportunity to discuss their actions with an adult, to consider the consequences of their actions and to make reparation. As pupils get older, sanctions may include missing playtimes/detentions/going on report/signing a code of conduct/contacting parents.

Corporal punishment of any kind is absolutely prohibited.

Fixed Term and Permanent Expulsion

Only the Headmistress (or the Acting Headmistress) has the power to exclude a pupil from School. The Headmistress may exclude a pupil for one or more fixed periods, for up to 45 days in any one school year. Fixed term exclusions may serve as a punishment in themselves or may be to allow a “cooling-off” period during which investigations can be carried out. Parents must be informed immediately of the reasons for the exclusion and an opportunity made for them to be part of the subsequent discussions.

The Headmistress may also permanently exclude a pupil. It is also possible for the Headmistress to convert a fixed-term exclusion into a permanent exclusion if the circumstances warrant it.

If the Headmistress permanently excludes a pupil, she must inform the parents immediately, giving reasons for the exclusion. At the same time, the Headmistress makes it clear to parents that they can, if they wish, appeal to the Trustees against the decision within three working days of the decision. During this period and during the Review Process the pupil will remain suspended.

Before taking the decision to permanently exclude a pupil, the Headmistress will ensure:

- There is a statement setting out the complaint(s) against the pupil
- That all available evidence has been collected and considered
- That the pupil’s previous behaviour record and any mitigating circumstances have been taken into account
- That all relevant policies and procedures have been followed
- That permanent expulsion is in the best interests of the pupil and/or the School community
- That the pupil’s parents/carers are aware of all the above and have written confirmation of the decision and the reasons leading to it.
- That the Chair of Trustees is aware.

Once the decision has been taken to permanently exclude a pupil the following should be considered:

- The nature and timing of any announcement to the School
- How the pupil’s leaving will be recorded in the School records
- What support can be given in helping the pupil to find alternative schooling
- Under what, if any, conditions the pupil may return to the School site
- Whether it is appropriate to refund fees/waive a fee notice period.

A pupil may not be permanently excluded without serious cause. "Serious Cause" would be a single serious or a series of repeated offences, which cause harm to other members of the School community or its reputation, eg the supply of drugs or the bringing into School of offensive weapons or any behaviour that brings the name of the School into disrepute.

In some cases, parents may choose to exercise their right to withdraw their daughter from the School in preference to their daughter being permanently excluded.

Record Keeping

The School keeps a variety of records of misbehaviour.

For minor misdemeanours, records are kept by the class/form teacher in the Junior School and with the Head of Junior School, if appropriate.

For minor misdemeanours in the Senior School records are kept centrally in the 'Yellow Book' in the Staff Room which is checked regularly by the Head of the Senior School.

Heads of Junior or Senior School, the Deputy Headmistress and the Headmistress keep records of incidents referred to them.

The Headmistress keeps a record of fixed-term and permanent exclusions. This record is available to the Chair of Trustees and to the Inspectorate, on request.

Monitoring and Review

The Trustees are responsible for monitoring the rate of fixed-term and permanent exclusion, for ensuring that the policy and procedures are followed and for the regular review of the policy and procedures.