



The Grey Coat Hospital

Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy

POLICY NAME:	Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy
GOV COMMITTEE:	Strategy Committee
POLICY REVIEW TIMING:	Annual

Aims

The Grey Coat Hospital is committed to encouraging good behaviour in an atmosphere of mutual respect and shared values, including the commitment to support and protect all members of its community. The school employs a positive approach to behaviour management which focuses on rewards for positive behaviours over sanctions for negative behaviours. Alongside this, a graded approach to sanctions is used which is designed to reduce recurring negative behaviours, thus pre-empting the need for suspension (formerly called fixed term exclusion) and/or permanent exclusion.

The school sets a target of zero permanent exclusion in any academic year in recognition of the seriousness of this sanction and its effects on the student concerned, and their family. The school also aims to keep suspensions as low as possible, and will consider alternative internal sanctions where appropriate.

Within the context of this ethos, however, it may be necessary to suspend a student where there has been a serious breach of school discipline and/or there is a risk of serious harm to the education or welfare of the student or others in the school.

Suspension will be for a fixed period; or, in very serious cases, a permanent exclusion will be imposed.

The School

- Will follow the latest government guidance on “Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England”;
- Will not suspend for minor incidents such as not doing homework; nor for such issues as poor academic performance; truancy; lateness; breaching school uniform policy; or behaviour of parents;
- Will not suspend in the heat of the moment unless there is an immediate risk to the students or others;
- Will be mindful of not discriminating against a student on the basis of protected characteristics, such as disability or race; and be mindful of fair treatment of students from groups who are vulnerable to suspension
- Will consider whether students on the SEN register have been given appropriate help before taking the decision to suspend;
- Is likely to suspend in cases where there has been a serious breach of the school’s behaviour policy, either in or out of school
- Will listen to both sides of the story before taking a decision to suspend;
- Before suspending, will consider whether a less serious sanction would be appropriate;
- May refer to Westminster agencies when considering whether to suspend, in particular when permanent suspension is a possibility;
- Will send a letter informing parents of the decision to suspend, the reason for suspension, the rights of parents to appeal and length of suspension;

- Will take reasonable steps to provide and mark work for a suspended/permanently excluded student for the first five days of a suspension/permanent exclusion
- Will work with the local authority to arrange education from the sixth day of a fixed-period suspension or a permanent exclusion; this will be triggered by consecutive fixed-period suspensions totalling more than five days.
- Will only issue a permanent exclusion as a last resort, in response to a serious breach, or persistent breaches of, the school's behaviour policy; and where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school;
- Will, without delay, notify governors and the local authority of any permanent exclusion; any suspension which would result in the pupil being suspended for a total of more than five school days (or more than ten lunchtimes in a term); and any suspension which would result in the pupil missing a public examination

A suspension can also be for parts of the school day. The legal requirements relating to suspension apply in all cases. Lunchtime suspensions are counted as half a school day for statistical purposes and in determining whether a governing board meeting is triggered.

Where a pupil has received multiple suspensions or is approaching the legal limit of 45 school days of suspension in an academic year, the Headteacher should consider whether suspension is providing an effective sanction.

A suspended student

- Will normally begin suspension from the day after the incident occurred;
- Will not come onto the school site during the period of suspension without prior arrangement with the Headteacher;
- Will be expected to complete all set work promptly and to the best of her/his ability
- Will attend, with parents, a meeting with the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or other senior member of staff before returning to the school, to demonstrate that she/he has reflected on previous behaviour and is committed to avoiding a repeat of the behaviour that led to suspension;
- Will participate in the development of a Personal Support Plan drawn up by the school, to help prevent future suspension; this may involve external agencies and the local authority Inclusion Officer.

Parents

Parents are expected, to attend a reintegration meeting with their child, following a suspension.

In case of a suspension of more than five days but fewer than 15 school days in the term, parents can make representations to governors. Governors must consider within 50 school days of receiving the notice of suspension, whether the suspended pupil should be reinstated.

In the absence of any representations from the parents, governors are not required to meet and cannot direct the reinstatement of the pupil.

In the case of a suspension which does not bring the pupil's total number of days of suspension to more than five in a term, governors must consider any representations made by parents, but cannot direct reinstatement and are not required to arrange a meeting with parents.

If applied for by parents within the legal time frame (within 15 days of notice not to reinstate), the school (as an academy trust) must, at its own expense, arrange for an independent review panel hearing to review the decision of governors not to reinstate a permanently excluded pupil.

Parents may request an independent review panel in case of a permanent exclusion, even if they did not make representations to, or attend, the meeting at which governors considered reinstating the pupil.

The Governors (The Discipline Committee)

The governing body has a duty to consider parents' representations about a suspension; it will delegate this function to a designated sub-committee consisting of at least three governors. This will be the Pupil Discipline Committee.

The Committee must consider the reinstatement of a permanently excluded pupil within 15 school days of receiving notice of the suspension **if** the exclusion is permanent; **or** if it is a suspension which would bring the pupil's total number or school days of suspension to more than 15 in a term; **or** if it would result in a pupil missing a public examination or national curriculum test.

The Governors:

- Will convene the committee of three to five governors plus a clerk to consider cases where the exclusion is permanent or is a suspension for a period of 15 days or more in a term, or when a parent requests a hearing;
- Will ensure that statements and any documents available to the Committee are distributed (in translation where appropriate) to the parents prior to the meeting and arrange for an interpreter to be present where appropriate.
- Will explain the running order of the meeting before it begins;
- May decide to re-instate the student in cases where the exclusion is permanent or for a suspension of a period of 15 days or more in a term;
- May decide to place more information on the student's file.

The Chair of the Pupil Discipline Committee has the right, acting on his/her own, to consider and decide on whether to reinstate a pupil who is due to take a public examination during a suspension.