

# BRIDGEWATER SCHOOL

WORSLEY, MANCHESTER

M28 2WQ

## WHOLE SCHOOL POLICY FOR SUSPENSION AND EXCLUSION

**SCOPE:** This policy covers all pupils attending Bridgewater School, including those in EYFS and any using the school's Early and Late Clubs. In order to address all our pupils' needs, separate procedures may be appropriate for EYFS, Prep or Senior children. Where this is the case, the relevant procedure is attached.

The Governors have the right to refuse to allow a student to continue in the school and to ask the parents to remove their son/daughter immediately.

There are three disciplinary areas under which a student can be suspended or permanently excluded.

- a. Misconduct\*
- b. Failure to achieve the required standards of work and conduct\*
- c. Matters related to a parent's disregard of school policy or practice (see page 3).

### Suspension

The Head Teacher has the power in the first two instances above to suspend a student for a period deemed fit.

Another member of staff will be present in any interview about the misconduct or inappropriate work with the student concerned. Notes of the interview will be taken. She will ensure that the parents or guardians have been notified of the suspension before it takes effect so that satisfactory arrangements are made to send the student home.

The Head Teacher will write to the parents formally detailing the reason for the suspension, its duration, the conditions for the student's return and, if appropriate, the likely consequences of further misconduct or failure to meet standards of work. This suspension will remain on the student's personal file for 18 months and will be taken into account should further misdemeanours occur.

The Head Teacher will inform the Chair of the incident and will record this in her report to the next Governors' Meeting.

The student concerned will be set work which can be accessed through Class Charts.

## **Permanent Exclusion**

The Head Teacher will undertake a full investigation of the circumstances with whoever is necessary, including the police.

A permanent exclusion is usually the result of a long process of misconduct in behaviour or academic work (see above\*). However, it is possible for a single action to precipitate it. The Head Teacher reserves the right to require the removal of a pupil if, in the opinion of the Head Teacher, satisfactory standards of work or conduct are not maintained or if, in the opinion of the Head Teacher, the pupil's presence in school is undesirable.

The Head Teacher has the power to suspend a student for a period determined by the situation. The Head Teacher will make arrangements for work to be provided during any investigation or period of suspension.

Another senior member of staff will be present in any interview with the student concerned. Notes of the interview will be taken. Sometimes the grounds for permanent exclusion emerge rather than being initially obvious in the initial disciplinary meeting with a student. In this case, parents or guardians will then be invited into school at that point (with the agreement of the student if over 18 years of age). As soon as possible, the Head Teacher will discuss the conclusions and recommendations with 2 persons from the Chair/ Vice-Chair of Governors and Chair of Disciplinary Committee and send a written report of this to them. The recommendations will be

- To allow the student to return to school immediately whether exonerated or with a warning, followed up in writing to the parents.
- To allow the student to return to school after a specified period of suspension and a written warning to the parents.
- To exclude the student permanently

If the latter is agreed, The Chair will confirm the recommendation in writing to the Head Teacher within 24 hours of receipt of the report.

The Head Teacher will then inform the parents of the decision by telephone and by a written confirmation. She will offer the parents the opportunity to discuss the outcome. She will give them a written copy of the appeals procedure.

The parents will not be entitled to a refund for any part of the term's fees.

If the student is below the statutory school leaving age, the Head Teacher will inform the Local Education Authority of the date of permanent exclusion if no alternative arrangement is made.

## **Negotiated Withdrawal**

In some incidents, it may be agreed that, in the interests of the student and the school, the parents can withdraw their child rather than go through the full disciplinary procedures. This would be requested in writing by the parents to the Head Teacher. An appeal process could not be instigated after this as it would not apply.

The parents will not be entitled to a refund for any part of the term's fees.

### Assistance from the school

If asked to do so, The Head Teacher will assist the parents in searching for another school.

### Matters Regarding Parents

#### *Attendance Policy*

If a parent does not follow the procedures for the requesting of absence, a child may receive a suspension or even a permanent exclusion, depending upon the circumstances e.g. in rare cases, where a parent deliberately disregards the school policy or takes a persistent disregard for the end of terms.

#### *Parental Support*

Where a parent refuses to support the school in matters of discipline or work or refuses to meet with members of staff or senior staff to resolve ongoing pastoral or academic problems, a student would have to leave the school.

This does not in anyway imply dissatisfaction with the student. It is simply because the situation is unworkable for that child and the other children in his/her class.

Depending on the circumstances this could involve an immediate permanent exclusion, \*a negotiated withdrawal or a requirement to remove a child by a set date.

In all these cases outstanding fees and a term's notice in lieu will still apply.

Except for a negotiated withdrawal (\*see above), the right of appeal to the governors applies in these cases also.

#### *Parental Conduct*

At Bridgewater School, the strong relationships between parents, staff and students are vital to the relaxed but purposeful atmosphere of the school and the academic success of the children. Where a parent's conduct would cause damage to the school's reputation, its ethos or discipline, this could result in a student having to leave the school. Examples of this are spreading malicious gossip, public verbal or physical fighting in the school grounds, disrespect to members of staff and persistent and vexatious complaints.

### APPEAL PROCEDURE

Should parents be dissatisfied with the school decision they should write, describing their appeal to The Chair of the Governors and send it to her in an envelope, marked **PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL** to the school address. The Clerk to the Governors will deliver this to her. She will arrange for an appeal committee to be formed of not less than 2 Governors and 1 Independent Person not already in knowledge of the situation and Chaired by the Chair of

Governors. Once the Chair has received the letter, an acknowledgement will be sent within 5 working days with a date for a hearing by the complaints committee no more than 15 school days after receipt of the letter to the Chair of Governors.

The Hearing will consist of:

- Introduction of attendees and the matter in hand by the Chair of the Panel
- The Complainant makes statement of appeal, including the calling of any relevant witnesses and outcome sought
- Questions/clarifications requested from the Complainant and witnesses by the Head Teacher and by the Panel
- The Head Teacher makes statement, including the calling of any relevant witnesses
- Questions/clarifications requested from the Head Teacher and witnesses by the Complainant and by the Panel
- The Complainant makes final statement
- The Head Teacher makes final statement
- The Panel withdraws and reaches decision

The Hearing will be minuted by a person nominated by the Panel who shall also be committed to retaining the confidential nature of proceedings. It would not be appropriate for a Governor to act as the clerk.

Both the Complainant and the Head Teacher are entitled to be accompanied by a friend as support or as someone who can speak on their behalf if necessary. However, legal representation will not be permitted.

The decision reached by the Panel shall be notified to the Complainant and to the Head Teacher in writing within 3 school days and to the next Full Meeting of the Board of Governors although this record shall only be in general form. The Board shall also maintain records of complaints which reach beyond Stage 1 and shall monitor the effectiveness of its procedures in these regards. Records will be kept confidentially in school for those matters and will be available for inspection by the Chair of Governors and the Head Teacher.

### **Independent review**

If the Complainant remains dissatisfied with the response by the Board of Governors' Panel, he or she has the right to refer the matter to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills on the grounds that the Board was failing to discharge a statutory duty or had acted, or was proposing to act, unreasonably.

**Reviewed by the Head Teacher and Senior Management Team – December 2024**