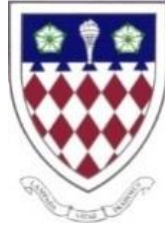


SPALDING HIGH SCHOOL



SUSPENSION AND PERMANENT EXCLUSION POLICY

NOVEMBER 2024

CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

Mrs D MULLEY

EQUALITY LINK GOVERNOR

Mr P BARKS

DATE AGREED:

November 2024

REVIEW FREQUENCY:

TRIENNIAL

Executive Summary:

This policy sets out the principles for fixed term suspensions and permanent exclusions from Spalding High School. It should be read in conjunction with Department for Education Guidance for Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and PRUs in England, including pupil movement August 2024.

This policy will be reviewed and updated every three years, or sooner should the DfE issue updated orders.

Related Policies:

Anti-Bullying Policy
Acceptable Use Policy
Behaviour For Learning Policy
Complaints Policy
Drugs Education & Incident Management Policy
Examinations Policy
PED & Mobile Phone Policy
Pastoral & Academic Support Plan Policy
Uniform and Dress Code

Chair of Governors

Date

Headmistress

Date

Section 1: Introduction

- 1.1 “Good discipline in schools is essential to ensure that all students can benefit from the opportunities provided by education. Therefore, the Government recognises that school exclusions, managed moves and off-site direction are essential behaviour management tools for headteachers and can be used to establish high standards of behaviour in schools and maintain the safety of school communities.” Department for Education Guidance for Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and PRUs in England, including pupil movement August 2024.
- 1.2 The decision to suspend/permanently exclude a child is a very serious one and not one that will be taken lightly. Spalding High School (SHS) has policies, procedures and staff training in place to promote good behaviour and minimise poor behaviour. The Behaviour for Learning Policy is widely publicised so that students, staff, governors and parents/carers are aware of our expected standards of behaviour. SHS will apply the Behaviour for Learning Policy in a consistent, rigorous and non-discriminatory way and all areas of its application will be monitored routinely to satisfy legal requirements within equality legislation.
- 1.3 This policy is an extension of the School’s Behaviour for Learning Policy. The steps outlined in that policy are those taken under “normal circumstances”. When there are continuous contraventions of the School’s Behaviour for Learning Policy such as persistent disruptions to teaching and learning or where there are extreme or exceptional behaviours, the Headmistress may take the decision to suspend for a fixed number of days (suspension) or recommend permanent exclusion (PEX).
- 1.4 The School will adhere to the **Department for Education Guidance for Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and PRUs in England, including pupil movement August 2024** and should be read in conjunction with that document. The DFE Guidance is available to parents via the DFE website or an electronic PDF version can be supplied by the School upon parental request. The decision to suspend/permanently exclude will have regard to The Equality Act 2010, The Families Act 2014 and the School’s wider legal duties and be reasonable, fair and proportionate.
- 1.5 Suspension/PEX will not be imposed forthwith, unless there is an immediate threat to the safety of others in the School or to the student concerned. Before deciding whether to suspend/PEX a student, the Headmistress will:
- Ensure that a thorough investigation has been carried out (including any possible antecedents) and statements taken from those involved/witnesses.
 - Consider all the evidence available.
 - Take into account other pertinent School policies and, where applicable, equality legislation.
 - Encourage the student to give their first hand version of events, both verbally and in writing.
 - If necessary, consult others, but not anyone who may later have a role in reviewing the Headmistress's decision, for example a member of the Governing Body.
- 1.6 “When establishing the facts in relation to a suspension or permanent exclusion decision the Headteacher must apply the civil standard of proof; i.e. ‘on the balance of probabilities’ it is more likely than not that a fact is true, rather than the criminal standard of ‘beyond reasonable doubt’.” (Department for Education Guidance for Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and PRUs in England, including pupil movement August 2024, para 3, pg11).
- 1.7 A student’s behaviour outside of school can be considered grounds for a suspension/PEX. (Department for Education Guidance for Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and PRUs in England, including pupil movement August 2024, para 2, pg11). Students are expected to behave appropriately outside the classroom environment, and in a way, that demonstrates the ethos of the School. This applies to journeys to and from school, occasions when the student is off site but under the School’s supervision, and at all times around the school site. Students must be considerate of the impression they present in the wider community and actions that bring the School into disrepute will be dealt with, as will inappropriate social interaction with peers, particularly issues concerning cyber bullying.

Section 2: Issuing a suspension or permanent exclusion

- 2.1 Suspension or permanent exclusion from the School are the exclusive responsibility of the Headmistress (HM). In her prolonged absence, the Chair of Governors' may devolve this responsibility to the Deputy Headteacher.
- 2.2 If the absence is short term, the student should be placed in isolation until the HM returns, or attempts be made to contact the HM.
- 2.3 Parents/carers will be notified without delay, of the decision to suspend/PEX their child. A letter detailing the suspension/PEX will be sent home (with the child or electronically) and via the postal service. The parental letter will detail:
- The reason(s) for the suspension/PEX
 - The period of the suspension/PEX
 - Expectations of conduct and work during the suspension/PEX period
 - Where to get support
 - The reintegration meeting, including the date and time of the meeting
 - The right to make representation to the Board of Governors, and how that representation should be made.
 - Details of alternative provision from day six for a PEX or if the suspension exceeds five school days.
- 2.4 If the student has a social worker assigned to them, they will be informed of the circumstances and decision to suspend/PEX the child. They will also be invited to attend the reintegration meeting.
- 2.5 Care will be given to the dismissal of the student from the school site. Typically, parents/carers are asked to attend school to collect their child immediately. In certain circumstances and only with agreement between parents/carers and school, students may be dismissed to walk home on their own and asked to notify parents/school when they have safely arrived there.
- 2.6 The Local Authority will be notified of the suspension/permanent exclusion without delay.
- 2.7 The Chair of Governors will be notified, without delay of any:
- Permanent Exclusion
 - Suspension exceeding five days in either duration or total per term (per child)
 - Any suspension or permanent exclusion, which would result in the student missing a public examination.

Section 3: Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions

- 3.1 Suspensions may be issued:
- In response to serious or persistent breaches of the School's Behaviour for Learning Policy.
 - Where allowing the student to remain in school would seriously harm or place at risk the education or welfare of the student or others in the School.
- 3.2 A suspension may be issued for one or more fixed periods up to a maximum of 45 days in an academic year and does not need to be for a continuous period. A suspension can also be for part of the school day.
- 3.3 The decision to exclude a student permanently is a serious one and will only be taken when the basic facts have been clearly established on the balance of probabilities. It will usually be the final step in a process for dealing with disciplinary offences following a wide range of other intervention strategies that have been tried without success. It is an acknowledgement by a school that it has exhausted available strategies for dealing with the child.

3.4 There may however, be exceptionally serious circumstances where, in the Headmistress's judgment, it is appropriate to permanently exclude a student for a first or 'one off' offence.

3.5 Reasons for issuing suspensions or PEX may include:

- Defiance or persistent defiance of the directions of staff
- Disruption or persistent disruption to teaching and learning
- Physical assault against a student or member of staff
- Verbal abuse or threatening behaviour against a student or member of staff
- Carrying, use, or threat of use, of an offensive weapon, or prohibited item
- Bullying
- Sexual abuse or assault
- Racist abuse
- Abuse against sexual orientation or gender reassignment
- Abuse relating to disability
- Wilful refusal to follow instructions necessary to ensure Health & Safety
- Supplying an illegal substance or the possession of an illegal substance.

This list is not exhaustive, but is intended to offer examples of behaviours that affect the discipline and well-being of a school community. The Department for Education make it clear that they trust headteachers to use their professional judgement based on the individual circumstances of the case when considering whether to suspend or permanently exclude a student.

Section 4: During the suspension/permanent exclusion

4.1 Parents are responsible for their child's behaviour and welfare during the term of the suspension/permanent exclusion and are expected to ensure that they are in a supervised environment during normal school hours.

4.2 Students should not attend school or be present on the school site during the term of their suspension/permanent exclusion. SHS request that parents refrain from allowing their child to meet friends at the school gate during the suspension/permanent exclusion.

4.3 SHS will take steps to set and mark work for students during the first five days of suspension/permanent exclusion. Alternative provision will be made available from the sixth day onwards. However, the organisation and provision of work from the sixth day onwards of a permanent exclusion is the responsibility of the Local Authority.

Section 5: Reintegration after a suspension

It is standard practice for a reintegration meeting to take place following a suspension. The meeting will involve the student, parents/carers, the Head of Year and/or Senior Leader/HM. If a social worker is assigned to the child, they will also be invited to the meeting. The purpose of the reintegration meeting is to assist with the positive reengagement of the student and promote the improvement of behaviour. This would ordinarily involve the student being placed on a Pastoral Support Plan for at least an academic term.

Section 6: The Role of the Governors

The School's policy is to adhere to the Department for Education Guidance for Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and PRUs in England, including pupil movement August 2024. Sections six, seven, eight and ten of the DfE Guidance, details the processes for proceedings, disagreements and appeals. All details regarding the arrangements for Governors' or Independent hearings and for the arrangements for suspensions/PEX will adhere to the Government guidance and legislation. Governors receive termly data on suspensions and permanent exclusions.

Section 7: Police involvement – the following guidance is noted

“The Headteacher need not postpone taking a decision on a suspension or permanent exclusion solely because a police investigation is underway and/or any criminal proceedings may be brought. In such circumstances the Headteacher will need to take a decision on the evidence available to them at the time.”
Department for Education Guidance for Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and PRUs in England, including pupil movement August 2024.

The Department for Education Guidance for Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and PRUs in England, including pupil movement August 2024 is available to parents via the DFE website or an electronic PDF version will be supplied by the School upon parental request.

[Suspension and permanent exclusion guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)