

Believe • Persevere • Succeed

## Exclusion Policy

*This policy is applicable to all Pupils, Parents/Guardians, Staff and Governors*

### Statement of Intention

We are committed to fostering an environment that promotes **our vision** 'To continue to be recognised as a leading Prep school, providing unforgettable learning experiences which inspire our girls to **Believe** in themselves, to **Persevere** and **Succeed** in all they do'.

Our policies are designed to support the diverse needs of all our pupils, our staff, and our community. This policy and its procedures have been developed with due regard for our duties and obligations, for the safeguarding and wellbeing of all our pupils.

### Principles of the policy

The school is committed to maintaining a safe, calm and orderly environment, and exclusion may be necessary where a pupil's, or parent's, behaviour poses a serious risk to the safety or learning of others or constitutes a serious breach of school policy. Decisions must always be proportionate, reasonable and considerate of the pupil's individual circumstances, including any SEND, safeguarding or pastoral needs. Exclusions must be backed by clear communication with parents or carers, ensuring they understand the reasons, procedures and their right to representation.

### Objectives of the policy

The policy aims to maintain a safe, calm and orderly school environment where pupils and staff are protected from serious disruption or harm, and to uphold the right of all pupils to learn without interference. It seeks to ensure that decisions to exclude are proportionate, evidence-based and transparent, taking full account of each pupil's individual circumstances, including any SEND, safeguarding or pastoral needs.



Bowdon Preparatory  
School for Girls

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## Introduction

Bowdon Preparatory School seeks to avoid exclusions. These take place only for very serious incidents or when other strategies, that have been tried and tested, have failed over time. Each pupil and situation will be treated individually. We will always work with all the staff and parents to ensure the best interests of the child, only as a last resort will exclusion be considered.

Pupils whose actions amount to serious misconduct may be liable to either fixed-term or permanent exclusion. In circumstances where a pupil's behaviour, whilst they are at school (as defined below), damages or threatens, actually or potentially, the wellbeing of any member of the school community or the reputation of the school, the school may investigate the pupil's conduct. As a result of this investigation, if it is considered appropriate to protect the wellbeing of other pupils and the school's reputation, sanctions may be imposed proportionate to the seriousness of the misconduct.

When judging whether to exclude a pupil permanently, or for a fixed-term, the school will take into account all the circumstances; these will include the age of the pupil, the seriousness of the offence, its impact upon the school and any member of the BPS community (pupils and staff), and any extenuating circumstances raised by the pupil in their defence.

For the purposes of this policy "at school" means each of the following:

- on school premises;
- anywhere where a pupil is engaged in an activity organised by School staff or anyone acting on behalf of the school; and
- whenever and wherever the pupil is wearing school uniform or other clothing which identifies them as a BPS pupil.

"Serious Misconduct" means:

- Violent or threatening behaviour
- Indecent, offensive, abusive, bullying or harassing behaviour, including child-on-child abuse
- Theft
- Deliberate or reckless damage to property
- Rudeness, abuse or disrespect towards a member of staff or any adult acting on behalf of the school
- Serious misuse of school ICT systems (see the ICT Acceptable Use Policy)
- Repeated breaches of the school's Behaviour Policy
- Possession, use or distribution of drugs, alcohol, cigarettes or vapes
- Bringing pornographic materials or images into school
- Engaging in sustained bullying of other pupils
- Making allegations against a member of the school community that are proven to be malicious
- Malicious or harmful use of social media

### **Fixed Term Exclusion and Permanent Exclusions**

We expect all members of the school community to act in a reasonable, supportive and respectful manner in ensuring the well-being of our community. Where this is compromised by serious misconduct of a child, exclusion will be considered.

Bowdon Preparatory School will apply its Positive Behaviour and Anti-bullying policies in a consistent, rigorous and non-discriminatory way and all areas of application of these policies will be monitored routinely. The following forms of exclusion are considered as an ultimate sanction:

- On-site Exclusion – removal from usual activities but not from the school site; such an exclusion will last up to a full day. An internal exclusion may be the initial part of a fixed-term exclusion while the school awaits the collection of the child by parents.
- Fixed Term Exclusion – the child is removed from school for a set period of time at the discretion of the school.
- Permanent Exclusion – the child is removed from the school roll. This will be preceded by a fixed-term exclusion to ensure proper investigation and consideration of events.

Parents are also subject to the above conditions, relating to fixed-term and permanent exclusion, where the welfare of other members of the school community is threatened by the conduct of a parent. Sanctions applied to a parent may include:

- On site - Access to the site and school events is only permitted under certain conditions
- Fixed Term - Barring the parent from the site and school events for a fixed period
- Permanent – Permanent barring from the school site. Removal of children from the school roll.

The school will communicate with the police where it is deemed necessary for the welfare of the community.

The power to exclude a pupil can only be exercised by the Headteacher or Deputy Head/ Phase Leader in the absence of the Headteacher, and then only in consultation with the Headteacher. If the Headteacher excludes a pupil, the parents are informed immediately, giving reasons for the exclusion. The Headteacher will discuss all exclusions with a member of the Governing Body. A member of the Safeguarding committee will monitor exclusions and ensure that the school policy is administered fairly and consistently.

### **Reason for Exclusion**

The continued presence of any pupil in the school is solely at the discretion of the Headteacher and depends upon the pupil's application, progress, conduct, attendance and behaviour (including outside of school) being in accordance with such standards as the school deems necessary and appropriate.

Exclusion may be the result of repeated failure to abide by the school's expectations of good conduct or an act of serious misconduct.

Every pupil has a right to confidentiality during the consideration of a possible exclusion; an investigation will be undertaken in the strictest confidence and the details only disclosed to those who need to know. This does not preclude the conclusion of an investigation being made public to the school community on completion of an investigation, if the person being investigated has been found to be culpable. If the School decides (after completing the investigation or as a result of new evidence and further investigation) that it is necessary to extend a fixed-term temporary exclusion or to convert it into a permanent exclusion, the Headteacher will write again to the parent(s) with the reasons for this decision. Where exclusion has taken place, the parent(s) will be notified immediately, followed by a letter. This will detail the following:

- Length of exclusion and whether it is temporary or permanent.
- Reasons for the exclusion.
- Parents' right to make representation to the Head. If they are not satisfied with the Head's decision, stage 3 of the school's complaints procedure (the panel hearing) will be used as a template for an appeal against a permanent exclusion. During an appeal process, an exclusion will remain in place, except at the discretion of the Headteacher.

The child will be given work to do at home for the first five days of a fixed term exclusion.

### **Procedure for serious breaches of behaviour standards**

In drawing up the procedure below, the school has had due regard to DfE guidance *Behaviour and Discipline in Schools: guidance for headteachers and staff*, which provides a helpful benchmark of good practice.

The procedure which will normally be followed is set out below but does not have contractual effect. All procedures will be conducted fairly and in a way that is appropriate to the circumstances.

The School is committed to ensuring that any decision regarding suspension or permanent exclusion is fair, consistent, and based on a thorough and impartial investigation. The following procedures must be followed in all cases where a serious sanction or potential exclusion is being considered.

### **Rules of Natural Justice**

The school's procedure is based on the principles of natural justice. These can be summarised in the following two basic rules:

- No person is to be a judge in their own cause; and
- No person is to be condemned unheard.

The rules are therefore concerned with the manner in which a decision is taken. The over-arching principle is a duty to act fairly. Whilst the precise procedure to be followed in a given situation depends on the circumstances of the case, some key principles are as follows:

- A fair and thorough investigation should take place
- Pupils must be informed of the allegation and the evidence relied upon

- Pupils must be given a fair opportunity to exculpate themselves
- An appeal of the Head's decision should be offered.

### **Initial Response**

When a serious incident arises, the following key considerations must guide the initial response

#### Clarifying the Allegation

It is essential to establish the exact nature of the allegation at the outset. The pupil concerned must be informed of the case against them, including:

- the specific behaviour alleged
- the identity of any other individuals involved
- what is alleged to have happened
- when and where it is said to have occurred

The pupil must then be given an opportunity to explain their account of events.

#### Gathering Available Information

The staff member leading the preliminary response must consider:

- what evidence is currently available
- what additional information is required
- how best to obtain any further evidence

#### Assessing Immediate Risk

Where there is a potential safeguarding risk, the school will consider whether the matter should be referred to external agencies, such as the Police or Children's Social Care, in accordance with statutory safeguarding duties.

#### Determining Who Should Lead the Investigation

In most cases, the investigation will be undertaken by the relevant Phase Leader or the Deputy Head. The Headteacher will ensure that any investigation is fair, thorough, and conducted in a timely manner.

### **Conducting the Investigation**

#### Establishing the Facts

No disciplinary decision will be made until the relevant facts have been established through an appropriate level of investigation.

#### Presence of Another Adult

When interviewing pupils:

- the interviewing member of staff will be accompanied by an appropriate adult (usually another member of staff)
- a parent does not need to be present
- a neutral adult (e.g. the School Secretary or another staff member) is preferable. Pupils will be informed of the allegation and the evidence being relied upon, and they will be given the opportunity to respond.

### Informing Parents

Timing of parental contact will depend on the circumstances.

However:

- parents will normally be informed once initial fact-finding has taken place
- parents will be informed as soon as reasonably practicable if the matter may lead to suspension or permanent exclusion
- where the police or Children's Social Care become involved, parents will usually be notified immediately.

### Keeping Parties Apart

Where feasible, pupils involved in an incident should be kept apart.

Pupils should be instructed not to discuss the matter with each other while the investigation is ongoing, particularly in cases involving allegations of bullying or abuse.

### **Suspension During Investigation**

In particularly serious situations, it may be appropriate for a pupil to be suspended while the investigation continues.

Any suspension:

- must be for the shortest time necessary
- must not be used as a pre-determined sanction
- will be communicated to parents immediately and confirmed in writing within one school day

Where a suspension exceeds a short duration, arrangements will be made for the pupil to receive work at home.

### **Decision-Making**

Once the investigation is complete:

#### Determining the Facts

The Headteacher will decide whether the allegation has been proven on the balance of probabilities.

#### Considering Sanctions

If the allegation is upheld, the Headteacher will:

- consider the full range of sanctions available
- take into account relevant factors, including the pupil's age, SEND, disciplinary record, and any religious considerations
- explain their decision and reasons to parents and, where appropriate, to the pupil

#### Considering Permanent Exclusion

A permanent exclusion will only be considered where:

- the incident(s) represent a serious breach of the School's Behaviour Policy, and
- allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of other pupils or staff.

For less serious matters, temporary suspension may be used as an alternative.

All sanctions must be proportionate, reasonable, and applied consistently.

#### **Right of Appeal**

Where a permanent exclusion is imposed, parents will be offered the right to appeal in accordance with the School's complaints policy.

#### **Further titles**

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Acceptable Use and e-Safety Policy

Early Years Policy

Inclusion Policy

EDI Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

Positive Behaviour Policy

#### **The following have been considered in the development of this policy:**

Behaviour and Discipline in School 2024

Equality Act 2010 (Abolition of Corporal Punishment) (Independent Schools) Regulations 1989

Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2019

Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017)

Cyberbullying: advice for Headteachers and School Staff (2014)





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Keeping children safe in education 2024

'Use of reasonable force' (2013, reviewed 2015)

### **Policy Review and Dissemination**

All members of staff and governors will receive a copy of this policy (via TEAMS link).

The policy will be available for parents on our website. A paper copy can be requested via the School Office [office@bowdonprep.org.uk](mailto:office@bowdonprep.org.uk)

<b>SLT member responsible</b>	SMT
<b>Governor / Board Responsible</b>	Board
<b>Date of review</b>	Spring Term 2026
<b>Date of next review</b>	<b>Spring Term 2028</b>

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