

EXCLUSION POLICY

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The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to employees of Benenden School (Kent) Limited and its subsidiaries (collectively 'Benenden' or 'the School').

The [Pupil Behaviour Policy](#) gives details of the expected behaviour of pupils and outlines the sanctions for misdemeanours from a Blue Notification Slip to permanent exclusion. This policy contains the guidelines to be adopted when the School is considering the permanent exclusion of a pupil.

Misconduct

Serious misconduct could result in a pupil being permanently excluded. Examples of serious misconduct are:

- Substance abuse
- Possession of or dealing in illegal substances, controlled drugs (that have not prescribed to the individual) or legal highs
- Breaking the law
- Bullying
- Racist, religious, sexist or homophobic abuse
- Child on child abuse
- Theft
- Behaviour which endangers the pupil or others
- Behaviours which brings the reputation of the School into disrepute
- Making malicious allegation(s) against staff or other pupils
- A series of minor misconducts

This list is not exhaustive, and circumstances may also exist in which the Headmistress is satisfied that it is in the best interests of the pupil or the School for the pupil to leave.

The School will ensure that where a permanent exclusion is being considered, a pupil is not disadvantaged in any way because of a special educational need or disability. Support will be given to allow a pupil to present their case fully if their SEN or disability impairs their capacity to do so.

Investigation

1. When a serious misdemeanour has taken place, the investigation of that incident will include interviewing all relevant parties. Such investigations will normally be carried out by the First Deputy, Deputy Head Boarding and Pastoral or another senior member of staff.
2. While an investigation is taking place, it may be necessary, as a neutral act, for a pupil to be temporarily suspended from boarding and/or from School. During this process the School will make arrangement for the pupil to continue their education, which may include remote learning.
3. Once the investigation has been concluded and if, at that stage, a permanent exclusion is being considered, the Headmistress will hold a Disciplinary Meeting with the pupil and their parent(s), carers or guardian, as applicable, to discuss the behaviour and sanction.
4. The School will seek to keep the timescale between investigation and the issuing of a sanction as short as possible (usually within a week).

Disciplinary Meeting

1. At the disciplinary meeting, the pupil and their parents, carers or guardians will be given the opportunity to state their side of the case and the School will explain the findings of the investigation.
2. The Headmistress will usually then decide on the appropriate sanction. The pupil's school disciplinary record can form part of this decision as the pupil may have a history of serious misconduct and/or have been given prior warnings about the possibility of exclusion.
3. If the Headmistress decides that a pupil must leave the school, parents have the option of withdrawing the pupil before an exclusion takes place.

Actions following Exclusion

1. When the decision to exclude is made, a pupil will be expected to clear their belongings and leave the School that day.
2. A decision will be made about whether the pupil will be permitted to return to the School premises in future, including to sit public exams if the pupil is entered for them at the time of exclusion.
3. The Headmistress will ask the Director of Finance and Operations to ensure that the payment of any outstanding fees and extras is settled and consider the refund of prepaid fees as well as the return of the deposit.
4. The School will work with the pupil's family where possible, to secure a place at another educational institution.

Complaints Procedure

An appeal against a decision to exclude a pupil can be made using Stage Three of the formal [Complaints Procedure](#) and should be made within seven days of the Disciplinary Meeting.