

EXCLUSION POLICY

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Gayhurst offers its pupils a broad, rounded education in a happy and caring environment where children's pastoral needs, happiness and wellbeing are paramount. Due to the nature and ethos of the school, all will be done to try to reinforce positive behaviour, rather than just punish negative acts. To exclude a pupil, is, therefore, seen as a last resort by the school and will only be utilised if a serious breach of the school's expected standards of behaviour has occurred, or where a continuous pattern of poor behaviour/attendance has not been remediated despite significant effort and support from the school.

It states in the school's Parent Contract (Terms and Conditions): -

The Head may in his/her discretion require you to remove or may suspend or, in serious or persistent cases expel your Child from the School if s/he considers that your Child's attendance, progress or behaviour or that of the parent, (including outside school where it prejudices order or School discipline or the reputation of the School, including through social media) is unsatisfactory and in the reasonable opinion of the Head the suspension or exclusion is in the School's best interests or those of your Child or other Children.

The Headmaster in consultation with the Chair of Governors will have final authority to exclude a pupil permanently from Gayhurst. In the case of permanent exclusion, the Chair of Governors will normally have to be satisfied that all reasonable strategies to improve a pupil's behaviour have been tried and have failed.

In the normal course of events there will be a final warning coupled with suspension for one or two days in normal cases or up to one week for more serious matters before the final sanction of permanent exclusion takes place. This final warning will however, not be offered in the case of serious disciplinary matters such as safeguarding, criminal acts, anything involving drugs or alcohol, wilful damage of school property or deliberately endangering the safety of others.

Following a fixed term exclusion, pupils will be provided with support by a designated member of staff who will act as a mentor to provide pastoral support and guidance in addition to that already given by the form teacher.

Permanent exclusion will take place at a meeting with the Headmaster, pupil and parents. During the meeting, discussions will indicate: -

- the reasons for the exclusion and, if temporary, the date and time the pupil is expected back at school.
- full details of the circumstances and events that have led to the exclusion, together with steps taken to try to avoid it.
- the parents' right to make representations/appeal to the Governors and the latest date by which any written representations must be made (14 days from the date of exclusion).
- the address of the relevant LEA to whom the parent should make an application for a vacant place at alternative educational setting.

Before exclusion is considered, it is expected that the following steps will have been taken to assist and support the pupil:

- 1 Any internal processes relating to sanctions, detention or loss of privileges in the short term, such as not representing the school in a fixture or withdrawal from a school trip or residential activity.
- 2 A meeting with parents by a Senior Member of staff (Assistant Head of Junior/Senior School, Deputy Head or Head) to discuss the child's ongoing failure to meet the school's expectations and standards of behaviour. At such a meeting, targets for improvement should be set for a given time period, support from the school agreed and consequences for failure to make the necessary improvement should be made clear. An outcome of such a meeting may be the further withdrawal of privileges and positions of responsibility such as representing a school team, involvement in a school trip or losing a badge of office over the longer term.
- 3 A period of internal suspension for a maximum of 2 days which would involve the child being removed from lessons and peers and working in isolation with any of the senior members of staff mentioned above.

Dependent on the nature of offences and misbehaviour, steps 2 and 3 are interchangeable based on circumstance and availability of relevant members of staff to deal with matters swiftly.

- 4 If there is a continuation of misbehaviour or any offence is committed that is considered serious enough to warrant an immediate suspension (violence, bullying, theft or damage to school equipment and premises, rudeness and insolence to school staff or visitors to the school) then parents will be invited to a meeting with the Headmaster and notified that the child has been suspended from school and should remain at home for a fixed period, which can be up to 1 week. If the Head is not available, then either the Deputy Head or Head of Junior/Senior School can meet with the parents with the Head's authorisation following consultation and agreement with the Head on the appropriate course of action.
- 5 An accumulation of disciplinary matters and sanctions will result in the child's permanent exclusion, provided that the Head and Chair of Governors are in agreement that all other steps above have been attempted to remedy the behaviour. If a serious breach of school discipline occurs, a permanent exclusion may be considered without any of the above steps being considered necessary.
- 6 Once a child has been excluded from the school, they will be indefinitely barred from the school site.

When a child is permanently excluded, the parents have the right to appeal in writing to the Chair of Governors to review the decision within 7 days of the date of initial exclusion. The complaints policy and procedure does not apply to any decision on exclusion.