

## **Sixth Form Code of Conduct (Suspension Policy)**

Highcliffe School is committed to meeting the personal and educational needs of all students and this entails providing the highest level of academic and pastoral support. High expectations of behaviour are central to the wellbeing of students and staff, in the creation of an outstanding learning community.

Students in the Sixth Form are expected to provide a positive role model for younger students and to model respect for our neighbours and the wider community, alongside developing lifelong learning behaviours in preparation for university and future employment

- Full attendance is an expectation (defined as at least 97%)
- Punctuality to tutor time, assembly and lessons
- Full attendance to all tutorials and appointments with the study mentor when requested
- Responsible behaviour in and around the school, including adherence to safeguarding and fire regulation expectations (wearing ID Lanyards and signing in and out every day)
- Adherence to the Sixth Form dress code
- Respect for all within the school community
- The completion of all academic work on time to set deadlines
- Responding to feedback and intervention to improve progress

Whilst we would not want to exclude a student from the Sixth Form, we will use this sanction when other strategies and sanctions have not been effective, or when there has been a single, clear and serious breach of discipline. We will also use suspension if allowing the student to remain in the Sixth Form would seriously harm the education or welfare of other students.

The policy describes and adjusts from Year 7 to 11, the reasons which may lead to suspension of a Sixth Form student taking into account their greater maturity, self reliance, self motivation and expectations of responsibility of our older and most mature students.

If suspension has to be used as a sanction, then we will inform parents/carers as quickly as possible.

### **1. The Purpose**

The aims of this Suspension Policy are to provide all staff with a clear framework to enable the effective handling of student sanctions and suspensions and to inform all stakeholders of the procedures.

A student can be excluded from the Sixth Form if:

- 1.1 The student has committed a serious disciplinary offence such as, but not limited to an involvement with dangerous weapons, sexual abuse, actual or threatened violence, carrying an offensive weapon, or illegal drugs.
- 1.2 The student's presence in the Sixth Form represents a serious risk to the health and safety of students, staff or other adult e.g. visiting speaker

- 1.3 The student is found to have knowingly made a false allegation about another member of the Sixth Form community, or staff which could have led to that person facing disciplinary procedures, suspension or criminal charges.
- 1.4 The student has engaged in any bullying on any grounds, including race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.
- 1.5 Behaviour which breaks the terms of the student learning agreement (\*See Appendix 1.5) and/or where the behaviour deemed by the school as a serious breach of trust by the student.
- 1.6 Behaviour outside the school site will also be taken into account and this is especially pertinent where it impacts upon the safety or wellbeing of other students or where it brings the reputation of the Sixth Form into disrepute. This also includes incidents involving social media.
- 1.7 Behaviour which is persistently contrary to the Sixth Form mission and code of conduct.
- 1.8 Failure to observe the rules and regulations of external awarding bodies as laid down in the relevant regulations concerning completion, submission and ownership of coursework, attendance at, and conduct in, examinations or tests.
- 1.9 Failure to engage in the steps and interventions that encourage the student to follow the Sixth Form rules/meet standards.

Suspensions can either be for a fixed period or permanent.

## **2. The Procedure**

- 2.1 The suspension of a student is a serious sanction and is only administered after a full investigation by the Head of Year/Head of Sixth Form and in consultation with the Head Teacher.
- 2.2 A student will be excluded immediately, if there is an anticipated or suspected threat to the safety of others in the Sixth Form. Such concerns will immediately be passed onto parents/carers and any agencies and/or authorities as appropriate.
- 2.3 A thorough investigation will precede any suspension which will take place as soon as practicable.
- 2.4 In the event of an suspension, the student's parents/carers will be notified immediately by telephone and this will be followed up in writing.
- 2.5 All suspensions should be treated in the strictest confidence on a 'need to know' basis. The Governors will be fully informed of suspensions applied.

### **3. Right of Representation**

- 3.1 In the case of an suspension that does not take the student's total days of suspension above 5 in a term the Governing Body should consider any representation made by the parents but does not have the power to overturn the Head Teacher's decision. The requirements of the governing body to consider an suspension depend upon a number of factors
- 3.2 In the case of an suspension that results in more than 5 days in a term or a permanent suspension the school will follow statutory guidance. Where the Governing Body is legally required to consider an suspension they must consider the interests and circumstances of the excluded student, including the circumstances in which the student was excluded, and have regard to the interests of other students and people working at the school.
- 3.3 For further information parents can refer to the Department for Education (DfE) document: *Suspension from Maintained Schools, academies, and pupil referral units in England*

Persons responsible for the implementation of these procedures: Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher, Head of Sixth Form, Head of Year and all school staff.

### **Appendix**

#### **FIXED TERM SUSPENSIONS**

For more serious breaches of the school's code of conduct, a fixed term suspension may be appropriate. This will be decided with the Head of Year, the Assistant Headteacher and/or the Headteacher. Fixed-term suspension may be applied for behaviour in school, on the journey to/from school, during school events/trips/visits/, or outside school where the behaviour gives the school cause for concern. These behaviours in the context of young adults in the Sixth Form include but are not restricted to:

- Persistent poor attendance and/or poor punctuality without clear and valid justifications (Inc. Lessons, scheduled tutorials, study periods, enrichment, tutor time, PSHE drop down sessions and assemblies)
- Failure to respond over time to advice and feedback from staff intended to address underperformance
- Failure to meet coursework and/or home study deadlines over time
- Failing to effectively respond to the requirements of individual support plans set by subject areas and/or the Sixth Form team
- Repeated failure to turn up to scheduled study mentor sessions without clear and valid justifications
- Significant number of flags acquired despite intervention
- Intimidating other students or making students feel unsafe when arriving/leaving school and/or during the school day
- Smoking/vaping/on site, in the alleyway or in the immediate vicinity of the school as defined by the school at any time before school, after school, during the school day
- Wilful and wanton damage to property and belongings including graffiti

- Posting photos of video clips of poor behaviour online or sharing them with others in any way; and wherever school believes the use of a mobile or smart device has encouraged or facilitated poor behaviour
- Posting inappropriate comments and/or abusive language on social media about students
- Repeated failure to wear a safeguarding ID lanyard at all times
- Repeated failure to sign in/out of the building contradicting safeguarding and fire protection requirements
- Poor conduct at events associated with the school
- Repeated minor incidents or single major incident of failing to adhere to the dress code
- Behaviour related to bullying issues
- Acts of violence\*
- Bringing the school into disrepute
- Behaviour deemed by the school to be a serious breach of trust by the student

The length of fixed term suspensions will be influenced by the perceived severity of the incident by school staff, the previous behaviour record of the student, the degree of harm caused to the school or the victim, the nature of the incident. For example, passing smoking/vaping-related items to other students is likely to lead to a longer fixed –term suspension than possession on its own.

\*With regard to acts of violence:

- As a guide an suspension of between 2 and 3 days may be applied for violent or aggressive behaviour characterised by: aggressively shoving or pushing another student, a punch, a kick, so-called play fighting, a slap, hair pulling, face scratching, behaviour which causes minor and temporary bumps or marks, or which requires medical attention in school. The duration of the suspension will be influenced by the perception of school staff about the severity of the incident.
- As a guide an suspension of between 4 and 8 days may be applied for violent or aggressive behaviour characterised by putting another student on the ground (including intentionally knocking them over or tripping them as a so-called joke); head butting, head locking, strangling or grabbing the throat; multiple punches or kicks; kicking, hitting or jumping on a student already on the ground; causing nosebleeds or more serious bleeding, causes serious bruising e.g. a black eye; causes or risks concussion or leads to longer term injuries; which causes injuries requiring medical attention from a hospital or doctor; where the attack/violence occurred from behind or caught the student by surprise and therefore heightened the risk of serious injury; where more than one student gangs up on another student; the attack/violence was planned in advance. The duration of the suspension will be influenced by the perception of school staff about the severity of the incident; at the most serious end of the scale permanent suspension is a possible outcome.

Acts of physical aggression, violence, theft, extreme bullying, and criminal behaviour are rare. The school supports parents of victims who seek to involve the police but we cannot report the incident ourselves, unless we are the victims. We support police enquiries by supplying personal details and information as required by law, by supporting restorative justice approaches, or by dealing with the incident ourselves in agreement with the police

## **PERMANENT SUSPENSIONS**

Permanent suspension may be applied as the sanction for a range of very serious behaviours, either one-off incidences or the accumulation of very poor behaviour over time. Permanent suspension may be applied for behaviour in school, on the journey to/from school, out school

events/trips/visits/, outside school where the behaviour gives the school cause for concern. These behaviours include but are not restricted to:

- Supplying alcohol to an/other student/s during the school day or on the journey to/from school
- Supplying any quantity of illegal drug or dangerous substance to an/other student/s during the school day or on the journey to/from school
- Serious acts of violence, including acts of violence towards staff
- Persistent disruptive behaviour
- The accumulation of repeated fixed-term suspensions
- Serious breaches of the behaviour policy/code of conduct for students
- Any action which may be considered criminal in nature, for example serious acts of theft, occurring in school or out of school where it causes concern about the health/safety/well-being of other students or risks bringing the school into disrepute
- Any action or behaviour which brings the school into disrepute

For further information regarding other incidents which may lead to suspension please see the Behaviour for learning policy, which applies to all students.