

EXCLUSIONS POLICY

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Behaviour policy, Anti-Bullying policy, Drugs and Substance Misuse policy, Safeguarding – online safety policy, and Complaints procedure.

This policy is available on the School's website and on request from the School reception.

At St Helen and St Katharine we encourage the establishment of good student/teacher relationships and support for the School's values through a system of rewards and sanctions which are designed to promote a calm and disciplined environment. It is hoped that students will respond to the School's positive encouragement and rewards and will comply with the School code of conduct at all times. However, the School acknowledges that from time to time, students' conduct may fall below the standards of behaviour reasonably expected by the School.

Our system of rewards and sanctions is detailed in the Behaviour Policy. When poor behaviour is identified, sanctions are implemented in line with the School's Behaviour Policy. That policy includes sanctions for breaches of behaviour that do not merit exclusion/require removal.

St Helen and St Katharine does not allow any form of corporal punishment.

Fixed term exclusions (suspensions) are used to deal with serious breaches of discipline as below. In the most serious circumstances, permanent exclusion may be used.

Behaviour that may merit fixed term or permanent exclusion

All students are entitled to an education where they are protected from disruption and can learn in a calm, safe and supportive environment. Serious incidents or persistent poor behaviour which has not improved following in-School sanctions and interventions, which may or may not include previous fixed term exclusion, could result in permanent exclusion of a student.

A non-exhaustive list of the sorts of behaviour that could merit permanent exclusion (including behaviour or conduct outside of School and, where applicable, online) includes the following:

- Physical assault against students or adults;
- Behaviour which puts the safety of the student, or any other person, in jeopardy;
- Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against students or adults;
- Bullying, including cyber-bullying in accordance with the School's Anti-Bullying policy;
- Committing a criminal offence;
- Fighting;
- Abuse on the grounds of race, religion/belief, disability, SENs (etc.) or any form of unlawful discrimination;
- Sexual harassment or misconduct, including non-consensual sharing of nudes or semi-nude images and/or videos or the generation and/or sharing of explicit images of others (for example using AI);
- Engaging in sexual activity during School activities and/or while on School property;
- Drug, alcohol and substance misuse (including supply/possession/use);
- Damage to property;

- Vandalism or computer hacking;
- Theft or unauthorised possession of any property belonging to the School, another student, or a member of staff;
- Wilful damage to property;
- Bringing illegal, inappropriate or dangerous items into School, such as drugs, weapons, firearms, pornographic material, etc;
- Misconduct which adversely affects or is likely to adversely affect the welfare of a member or members of the School community;
- Serious academic malpractice, for example, the improper use of AI generated material in externally examined coursework;
- Misconduct which brings or is likely to bring the School into disrepute; and
- Persistent disruptive behaviour or breaches of the School's Behaviour Policy.

The School reserves the right to impose sanctions for conduct or behaviour which falls short of exclusion, including but not limited to the imposition of a period of suspension or a warning (up to and including a final written warning).

The Head may decide that suspension or expulsion for a lesser offence is justified where there has been previous misbehaviour. All aspects of the student's record at the School may be considered.

For the avoidance of doubt, a Fixed-Term Exclusion ('suspension') is where the student is removed from school temporarily for a set number of days, usually between 1 and 5 days, up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year. The student remains on roll during this time.

In the case of Permanent Exclusion, the student is removed from the School's register permanently and is not allowed to attend the school. It will only be used as a last resort in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy. In exceptional circumstances, a one-off incident can warrant a permanent exclusion.

Circumstances which may merit required removal

A non-exhaustive list of the sorts of circumstances that could merit required removal (including behaviour or conduct outside of School including, where applicable, online) includes the following:

- Conduct or behaviour (including conduct or behaviour outside of School) which is unsatisfactory, and is a serious breach of the code of conduct and the values of the School;
- Attendance and/or progress at the school is unsatisfactory;
- Circumstances where the School is-unable to meet the student's needs, including cases where the School cannot reasonably accommodate adjustments or reasonably provide the nature or level of support required. This includes but is not limited to circumstances where parents do not declare SEND or other needs (e.g. a history of EBSA) that existed prior to the student's enrolment in the school and are beyond the scope of the School's provision;
- Where, in the reasonable opinion of the Head, the required removal is in the best interests of the student and/or of other children, or the School (including our staff)
- Where the parent's behaviour or conduct is unreasonable; and/or causes a breakdown of trust and confidence; and/or adversely affects (or is likely to adversely affect) their child's and/or other student's progress at the School, and/or the wellbeing of School staff; and/or brings (or is likely to bring) the School into disrepute (among the School community or the general public);

The School reserves the right to impose sanctions for conduct or behaviour which falls short of required removal, including but not limited to the imposition of a period of suspension or a warning (up to and including a final written warning).

Serial or persistent issues

Please note that exclusion or required removal may also be imposed by the School as a sanction for a series of more minor misdemeanours and/or repeated short-term absence in the case of the student (as well as long term absence).

PROCEDURE

The over-arching principle is a duty to act fairly. While the precise procedure to be followed in each situation depends on the circumstances of the case, some key principles are as follows:

- a fair and thorough investigation should take place
- a student must be informed of the allegation and the evidence relied upon
- a student must be given a fair opportunity to represent themselves
- an appeal should be offered

Parents will be informed as soon as reasonably practicable in the event there is a complaint, concern, allegation or circumstance that could result in the student being excluded or removed.

Although the School will endeavour to process investigations and disciplinary steps as swiftly as reasonably practicable, there may be factors which require the School to pause or delay their internal processes.

The Head for their part undertakes to make decisions in respect of exclusions or required removals fairly, and, where appropriate, after due investigative action has taken place (such investigation to be carried out by the Head or their nominee). Any findings of fact will be made on the basis of the balance of probabilities.

The nature and level of investigation carried out by the School will depend on the circumstances of the case. Statements will likely be taken from all students and staff who were involved in or witnessed the incident. These statements should be attributed, signed and dated by the witness who should first be given the opportunity to read it. The original statement should be kept on file. It is good practice for another adult to be present when students are being interviewed by the person charged with the investigation. However, this need not be a parent. A neutral adult such as the appropriate Head of Section or form tutor is preferable.

The student involved should be told not to discuss the matter with any other student involved. Parents will also be requested to treat the matter as confidential.

Following an investigation, parents will be provided (to the extent appropriate) with the information / evidence collated which is relevant to the allegation, concern or circumstance (which could result in the student's exclusion or removal) and on which the School proposes to consider when reaching its decision. In most cases, this will be provided at the parent meeting (see below).

In particularly serious cases it may be appropriate for the student not to attend school until the investigation has concluded and the meeting convened. This is a neutral act and may be, for example, to protect the integrity of any investigation or to support the welfare of the student themselves and/or other members of the School community or in compliance with direction from

statutory agencies. Such a period may be for 1 day up to 1 week. If a relatively lengthy investigation is unavoidable, suitable arrangements will be made to ensure that, as far as practicable, the student is able to continue with her education during this time. Parents/carers will be told immediately by the Head, or the Senior Deputy Head or Pastoral Deputy Head, and this will be followed by a confirmatory letter. Alternatively, depending on the circumstances of the case, the student may be segregated in school if they remain on School premises.

Decision to exclude/require removal

Prior to any decision being taken by the Head to exclude or require the removal of the student, the Head will meet with the student and their parents or, ~~-(in circumstances involving the possibility of the student's required removal on the grounds of attendance, or the School's ability to meet need,)~~ the parents.

In circumstances where the School believes removal may be warranted because the School is unable to meet the student's needs, reasonably accommodate adjustments or reasonably provide the level or nature of support required, or where there are attendance issues, the School will collate relevant information and evidence (including where available and appropriate any external or expert evidence or assessments), share and discuss these with the parents and provide the parent with a reasonable opportunity to share their views.

The meeting will be Chaired by the Head and generally attended by the student, their parent(s), a note taker and any other person required, e.g. the member of staff who carried out the investigation). The facts of the investigation will be shared and the student and parents will have the opportunity to ask questions, make comments and present any additional points for consideration. If the Head considers that further investigation/information is needed, the meeting may be adjourned, and the reason for the adjournment will be explained to the student / their parents.

Following the conclusion of the meeting the Head will reach their decision having taken all the relevant circumstances into account. In all but the most straightforward cases, there will be an adjournment before announcing the decision. Ideally a decision would be made on the same day. All parties will be informed of the decision, usually face to face in the first instance where possible, though a phone call or online meeting may be more appropriate depending on circumstances. It will always be confirmed in writing as soon as possible, and no longer than five working days from the meeting.

Any decision to exclude is a very serious one with significant potential repercussions. The decision will only be taken in response to a serious breach of the School's Behaviour Policy, or if, once other options have been exhausted, allowing the student to remain In School would seriously harm the education or welfare of the student or others in the School.

A student's previous disciplinary record will be taken into account. A decision to exclude will also have regard to all the relevant circumstances, for example:

- Domestic circumstances
- Whether the student was provoked, perhaps as a result of bullying or harassment
- Whether any other students involved in the investigation are being dealt with in the same way
- Whether the interests of the student outweigh those of the wider School community
- Public examinations – a separate venue might be provided, if appropriate.
- SEND or pastoral needs

If appropriate a less severe sanction will be made, such as a fixed-term exclusion (perhaps accompanied by a final warning).

The Head will consider agreeing to a managed move of the student to another school, provided such an alternative can be readily identified. Another option may be to allow the parents/carers an opportunity to withdraw the student rather than having exclusion imposed.

In most cases, decisions to exclude or require removal will take effect immediately. An exception to make a decision on a deferred basis may be considered to enable parents/carers sufficient time to make suitable alternative arrangements. For example, it may be that the student is allowed to return to School solely for the purposes of sitting imminent public examinations. Depending on the reason for exclusion this may not be possible.

Appeals against exclusion/required removal

The School will always offer the right of appeal to any student excluded or required to be removed from the School. Any appeal against exclusion will be dealt with under Stage 3 of the School's Complaints Procedure, and should be made in writing to the Head within five working days of the student's exclusion / required removal. For clarity, the student will remain excluded or removed from the School pending the outcome of the appeal. The outcome of the appeal process is final and there shall be no further right to appeal.

If a decision is taken by the parents to withdraw the student, the parents will waive any right to an appeal.

For the purposes of this policy "working days" refers to weekdays (Monday to Friday) during term time, excluding bank holidays and half term.

Fees following exclusion

If the student is excluded, there will be no refund or remission of fees due (whether paid or payable) in or relating to the term in which the student is excluded, suspended or removed.

In respect of exclusions and required removals, the deposit will be forfeited and retained by the School.

Arrangements will be made for the return of any school resources/equipment held.

Recording and monitoring

Where the School imposes exclusion, required removal or suspension as a sanction, the written report on the investigation will be placed on the student's file. In cases where the decision to require removal was not due to the student's behaviour or conduct, e.g. because of attendance or the School's inability to meet need, this will be clearly noted.

Details of the exclusion, required removal or suspension will be recorded on the School's Sanctions Record. If the student leaves the school, information will be shared with the future school as appropriate in line with relevant legislation.

Governor Scrutiny and Implementation:

This takes place through briefing meetings between the Head and the Chair of Governors and the Chair of the Governance Committee, and by the Chair of Governance Committee checking the Serious Sanction Log termly and raising any queries/concerns with the Head.

Policy last reviewed	Trinity 2026
Next Review date	Trinity 2027
Person Responsible	Head
Audience	Staff and Parents