

EXCLUSIONS AND SUSPENSIONS POLICY



Reviewed by	Approved by	Date of Approval	Next Review Date
FNI	LGB	Autumn 2025/26	Autumn 2025/26



Belle Vue Girls' Academy is committed to providing an exceptional educational experience for all, empowering our young people to become confident learners, confident communicators, and confident future citizens.

We are driven by ambition, aspiration, and excellence. We expect nothing but the best, from everyone, for everyone. We break down barriers, we tackle disadvantage, and we value and actively promote inclusion and celebrate diversity. We create an inclusive environment, in which everyone feels welcomed, supported and confident about being themselves whatever their characteristics or background. We know that education has the power to dramatically improve life chances and we take our commitment to our young people seriously. We take every measure to ensure our academy is a happy and safe place for young people to learn and grow.

Policy Statement

Belle Vue Girls' Academy is committed to being a fully accessible and inclusive organisation, welcoming and respecting the diversity of students, staff, community and visitors. This policy is based on DfE statutory guidance [Suspension and permanent exclusion guidance](#)

To achieve the school aims, we are committed to the development of all our students to become confident learners, confident communicators and confident future citizens who demonstrate the following attributes:

- Showing compassion by creating an environment where everyone is welcome, supported, and confident about being themselves.
- Showing respect by being open-minded and treating others as they would wish to be treated.
- Showing responsibility through self-discipline and by being well-organised, polite, and well-behaved.
- Showing resilience by being persistent and determined and keeping going when faced with challenges.

Rationale

This policy is underpinned by the commitment of all at Belle Vue Girls' Academy to ensure the safety and well-being of the whole school community and to maintain an appropriate educational environment in which all can learn, achieve, and realise the aims set out above.

Introduction

Exclusion/suspension are extreme sanctions and are only used by the Headteacher (or, in the absence of the Headteacher, the Deputy Headteacher who is acting in that role). Before deciding whether to exclude or suspend a student the Headteacher will ensure that:

- appropriate investigations have been carried out
- all the evidence available has been considered
- the student's version of events has been heard
- statutory guidance on exclusions, equalities policy and disability discrimination has been taken into account.

Prevention of Exclusion

1. Where appropriate, and in line with the Behaviour Policy, the Academy will use the sanction of the internal Reflection Room for a fixed number of days whereby students will be placed in the Reflection Room and kept out of circulation with curriculum aligned work provided. Parents/carers will be informed of this sanction.
2. The behaviour and attitudes of students is monitored closely by the Pastoral Team, Classcharts indicates students who are accumulating behaviour points. Once identified, students are given a variety of support, including reset time at lunch times and after school, reflection time in the Reflection Room, supportive interventions such as a referral to our EMOJIS programme and our internal THRIVE alternative provision. Students may also be referred to external agencies such as Place2Be, Youth in Mind, CAMHS or the SCIL team.
3. Students may be directed to behaviour placements at other local schools where they would be in the host school's internal seclusion room for a number of days rather than suspended. Belle Vue Girls' Academy will provide work for the student in these cases. If a student misbehaves, the placement will be cancelled and the Headteacher may take the decision to issue a suspension.
4. Belle Vue Girls' Academy works closely with other schools through the Behaviour and Attendance Collaborative (BAC) to find alternatives to exclusion. Students may be referred to the BACS panel for consideration of an Off-site direction to avoid permanent exclusion. This offers the student a fresh start in a new school, which, if successful, will lead to a managed move as a permanent transfer to the new school.

Having considered these matters, the Head teacher will make a decision on exclusion based on the balance of probabilities established. In reaching a decision, the Headteacher will look at each case on its own merits and avoid a tariff system, i.e., fixing a standard penalty for a particular action, as unfair and inappropriate.

Exclusion or suspension may be used for any of the following, all of which constitute examples of unacceptable conduct, and are infringements of the School's Behaviour and Welfare Policy:

- Physical assault against a pupil
- Physical assault against an adult
- Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against a pupil
- Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against an adult
- Bullying
 - Racist abuse
 - Sexual misconduct
 - Drug and alcohol related
 - Damage
 - Theft
 - Persistent or general disruptive behaviour
 - Use or threat of use of an offensive weapon or prohibited item
 - Abuse against sexual orientation and gender identity
 - Abuse relating to disability
 - Inappropriate use of social media or online technology
 - Willful and repeated transgression of protective measures in place to protect

- public health
- Unacceptable behaviour which has previously been reported and for which Academy sanctions and other interventions have not been successful in modifying the student's behaviour.

This is not an exhaustive list. There may be other situations where the Headteacher makes the judgment that exclusion or suspension is an appropriate sanction.

Fixed Term Suspension

Fixed-term suspension means that a student is not allowed to come to school for a certain number of days. Students can also be suspended for lunchtime periods if behaviour at lunchtime is disruptive. A fixed term suspension can be for a fixed period of 1 to 45 days in an academic year but any exclusions over 15 days in a term must be referred to the Governors' Pupil Discipline Committee and this committee must convene if parents/carers request a meeting of this committee for any exclusions amounting to 6 days or over.

Situations leading to fixed term suspension

The school's Behaviour Policy clearly states the type of situations which may lead to fixed term suspension but it is also at the discretion of the Headteacher (or the Deputy Headteacher in their absence) to exclude for an incident which may not be covered by the behaviour policy and which is deemed to be of equal severity; this may include incidents occurring outside the school grounds. Suspension will not be used for minor incidents such as poor academic performance, punctuality concerns or breaches of uniform rules (except where the latter is resulting in persistent and open defiance of such rules). The length of fixed term suspension is at the discretion of the Headteacher but will be for the shortest time deemed appropriate given the nature of the incident.

Procedure after a decision to fixed term suspend a student has been made:

1. Parents/carers will be informed by telephone, without delay, that a decision to suspend has been made. Where the student has involvement from a social worker, the social worker and Virtual School Head (VSH) will also be informed. This will be followed by a letter via the post outlining the reasons for the decision and the appeal process. The local authority will also be informed regardless of the length of the suspension.
2. Any suspension resulting in over 15 days in a term must be referred to the Governors' Pupil Discipline Committee. This committee must convene if parents/carers request such a meeting for any suspensions amounting to 6 days or over. If the suspension is for less than 6 days, parents/carers can make representation to the Pupil Discipline Committee, but it is not obligatory for them to meet. The Pupil Discipline Committee must meet within 50 days of the committee being notified of a hearing.
3. Before a meeting of the Pupil Discipline Committee, the school will send all the relevant material to the parents/carers and the governors on the panel. New material cannot be introduced by the school at the meeting. Parents/carers have the right to be accompanied by a friend or representative.
4. Students will have a reintegration meeting after a fixed-term suspension where it is expected that parents/carers will attend. This meeting may occur over the phone if the suspension was for a short period, meaning logistically attending a face-to-face meeting is not appropriate. The meeting will take place before the student returns to mainstream lessons. The purpose of the meeting is to promote

an improvement in behaviour, to emphasise the joint responsibility between school and parents/carers regarding the student and to explore measures to prevent further misbehaviour.

5. The student may be required to sign a formal behaviour contract or further steps, including a managed move, may be discussed.
6. The school will keep a formal record of all fixed-term suspensions.

Student welfare during exclusion

- The student may not go to the school or into the school grounds, the parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that this does not happen
- The school will set work but it is the parent/carers' responsibility to collect the work and return it to school or ensure the student engages if work is set online
- Parents/carers are legally responsible for the student during suspension and the student should not be in public places during school hours e.g. parks, shopping centres
- After day 5 of a suspension the school will arrange for alternative temporary education – usually at a different local school, which the student is expected to attend
- If a student is suspended at lunchtimes and is entitled to Free School Meals then the school can make arrangements for a packed lunch to be provided if parents/carers wish.

Permanent Exclusions

The decision to permanently exclude a student is never taken lightly. A permanent exclusion means that a student is never allowed to come back into the school; the responsibility for finding the student their next educational establishment lies with the Local Authority.

Situations leading to permanent exclusion

Permanent exclusion may result from serious on-going behaviour problems or the failure of an offsite direction. There will, however, be exceptional circumstances where, in the Headteacher's judgment, it is appropriate to permanently exclude a student for a first or 'one-off' offence. These may include:

- Serious actual or threatened violence against another student or a member of staff
- Producing or sharing material; digital or otherwise, which is inappropriate or which risks the safety or wellbeing of others
- Where a criminal investigation into sexual assault leads to a conviction or caution, the school or college should, if it has not already, consider any suitable sanctions in light of their behaviour policy, including consideration of permanent exclusion. (KCSIE 2025)
- Supplying or being in possession of drugs (including alcohol) – see the Dealing with Drugs Policy
- Carrying an offensive weapon

These instances are not exhaustive but indicate the severity of such offences and the fact that such behaviour can affect the discipline and well-being of the school community. The decision to permanently exclude a student is never taken lightly.

Procedure for Decision Making

The decision to permanently exclude may only be taken by the Headteacher. The standard of proof to be applied is the balance of probabilities, i.e. if it is more probable than not that the student did what he or she is alleged to have done, the Headteacher may exclude the student. Permanent exclusion will not be imposed in the heat of the moment, but it will be normal for a student to be excluded pending enquiries and a final decision. Before deciding whether to exclude a student permanently the Headteacher will:

- Ensure that a thorough investigation has been carried out
- Consider all the evidence available to support the allegations, taking account of the school's behaviour and equal opportunities policies, and, where applicable, Race Relations legislation and Disability Discrimination legislation
- Allow the student to give their version of events
- Check whether the incident may have been provoked, for example by bullying or by racial or sexual harassment
- If necessary, consult others, but not anyone who may later have a role in reviewing the Headteacher's decision, for example a member of the Governing Body.

Procedure after a decision to permanently exclude has been made

Parents/carers will be informed immediately that a decision to permanently exclude has been made, either by telephone or preferably in a meeting with the Headteacher. This will be followed by a letter of confirmation outlining the reasons for the decision and the appeal process.

The school will inform the parent/carer of the date of a Governors' Pupil Discipline Committee meeting at which governors will hear the school's case and representation from parents/carers and the student.

Before the meeting, the school will send all the relevant material to the parents/carers and the Governors on the committee. New material cannot be introduced by the school at the meeting.

The Governors will hear the case, at which parents/carers may be accompanied by a friend or representative. They will come to a decision which they will inform parents/carers and governors of within 24 hours.

Parents/carers do have a right of appeal to an independent panel in the event the Governors uphold the exclusion and information regarding this will be included in the letter sent to parents/carers. However, under the Education Act 2011 this panel can only suggest a reinstatement of the student and not overturn the Governors' decision.

Student welfare following a permanent exclusion

The student may not come to the school or into the school grounds unless invited in.

Parents/carers are responsible for the child during exclusion, and the student should not be in public places during school hours.

After day 5 of exclusion, the Local Authority will arrange for alternative temporary education, usually at a Pupil Referral Unit.

Independent Review Panel

In the extremely rare event of a student being permanently excluded, parents have the right to ask the Trust to convene an independent review panel, regardless of whether or not they have appealed to the governing body. Parents must make this request within 15 school days of receiving notification of the exclusion, and the panel should meet to review the case within 15 days of the notification. Parents have a right to require the Trust to appoint an SEN expert to attend the review, regardless of whether the student has recognised special educational needs.

The panel may make one of three decisions:

- To uphold the exclusion
- To recommend that the governing body reconsiders its decision
- To quash the decision and direct that the governing body reconsiders the exclusion

The panel may only quash the decision where it considers that it was flawed when viewed in light of the principles applicable for application for a judicial review (i.e. the decision was illegal, irrational, or there was procedural impropriety). The panel, however, cannot redirect reinstatement, but it can remove the permanent exclusion from a student's record. It may also deduct £4,000 from the school's budget to support the Local Authority in making alternative provision