



HUNTERHOUSE COLLEGE

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION POLICY

Date/date Reviewed: September 2019

Previous: January 2019

Next Review due: June 2022

This policy is available in pdf format from the school website

www.hunterhousecollege.org.uk

or on request from the School Office 028 9061 2293

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1. Suspension/expulsion is regarded as an extremely serious process. It may be considered after conduct which very seriously constitutes a breach of those rules of discipline, good order and physical safety of all students and staff with which the student and her parents agreed when taking up a place in the school.
2. The policy is in accordance with the following:

Education Authority Scheme for the Suspension and Expulsion of Pupils in Controlled Schools – April 2015

Circular 2015/19 Notification of Pupil Suspension to the Education Authority

Circular 2011/25 'Education of Suspended Students'

Education and Libraries Order 2006

Circular 1998/25 Promoting and Sustaining Good Behaviour in Schools: Summary of New Legislative Provisions

Schools (Suspension and Expulsion of Students) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 1998 (SR 1998 No 255)

Schools (Expulsion of Students) (Appeal Tribunals) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 1998 (SR 1998 No 256)

Circular 1995/09 Suspension and Expulsion Regulations

Circular 1994/03 Expulsion of Pupils: Appeal Tribunal Regulations

3. **Suspension**

- 3.1 A decision to suspend a student can only be taken by the Principal * or where the Principal * is absent or otherwise unavailable, by a Vice Principal following consultation with the Principal *. This decision will be made in response to a serious breach, or persistent breaches of the school's discipline policy.
* or Acting Principal
- 3.2 The school will investigate and fully document the incident. The investigation will include an opportunity for the student to be interviewed and for their version of events to be given before any decision to suspend is made. Consideration will be given to the necessity of a parent / carer being present at this interview.
- 3.3 Where the student concerned has a statement of SEN the following points must be considered
 - The school recognises its legal duty under the Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order to prevent students with a disability, and particularly one that tends to have a student present with emotional and behavioural difficulties, from being at a disadvantage. Consequently, the College's approach to challenging behaviour may be differentiated to cater for the needs of such students. This policy will be guided by the general principle, whilst not ruling out the sanction of Suspension and Dismissal, that other proportionate means other than exclusion should first be considered to achieve the legitimate aim of this policy.

- While not all students with a statement of SEN will have a disability as defined by SENDO, nevertheless care must be taken to ensure that the student's identified special needs are not the underlying reason for being in breach of school rules.

- Therefore, in cases where a student with a statement appears to be unwilling or unable to comply with the normal school rules and routines, and where reasonable adjustments are not proving effective, guidance in the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (CoP) should be followed and an early annual review should be convened by the school. This will allow the Education Authority making an amendment to the provision or placement to meet the needs of the student.

3.4 An initial suspension must not exceed 5 days.

3.5 A student can only be suspended for a maximum of 45 school days in one academic year.

3.6 The suspension process is internal to the school and it is the responsibility of the Principal and the Chair of Governors to ensure that it operates in a fair and consistent manner.

3.7 Where a student has been suspended, the Principal shall immediately give written notification of the reasons for the suspension and the period of suspension to the person with parental responsibility for the student, to the Chair of the Board of Governors and the Education Authority (Belfast Region) using the 'Notification of Pupil Suspension to Education Authority' form (see Appendix A).

3.8 The person with parental responsibility for the student should be asked to visit the school to discuss the suspension and conditions of her return before or on the day that the suspension is completed. The parent should be warned that if the visit does not take place, whether by neglect or refusal, the Principal will, in the absence of the parent, decide either to end the suspension or to impose a further period of suspension subject to the following:

- to facilitate further investigation of the matter
- if expulsion is being considered
- where the return of the student concerned would pose immediate serious problems of organisation and discipline within the school

3.9 Where the period of suspension is ended the Principal will issue the pupil with a 'Return to School Agreement' (see Appendix B):

- Stating that the period of suspension is concluded
- Stating, where appropriate, the agreed conditions to be met by the student to ensure a successful return to school

The agreement must be signed by the Principal, the student and the person with parental responsibility.

3.10 Where the period of suspension is to be extended, in line with the reasons stated in 3.8 above, the Principal will give written notification to the person with parental responsibility for the student, of the reasons for the extension, the period of extension and that the student must return to school at the end of the stated time. The Principal shall not extend a

period of suspension except with the prior approval of the Chairman of the Board of Governors and shall in every such case, give written notification of the reasons for the extension to the Board of Governors.

- 3.11 The Board must be informed in cases where a student does not return to school at the conclusion of the period of suspension. If a student returns to school and fails to fulfil the conditions of her return as stated in the 'Return to School Agreement', she may be suspended for a further period (following the procedure laid down in this document).
- 3.12 Under the circumstances of 3.8 above, the Principal may seek to persuade the student's parent that the student's interests may be best served by transferring to another school. If he/she rejects this recommendation, the Board of Governors may, as a last resort, expel the student.
- 3.13 Through the period of the suspension appropriate work will be provided for the student to be completed at home. This will ensure the minimum possible disruption to her learning.

4. Expulsion

- 4.1 The permanent expulsion of a student from a school is an event which should happen very rarely and as a result of the most serious breaches of reasonable school discipline.
- 4.2 A student may be expelled only after serving a period of suspension.
- 4.3 In cases where there has been a history of serious misconduct, it is important for the Principal to create and maintain a written summary, including copies of all correspondence between the home and the school, showing the nature of the misconduct and the steps which were taken by the school at each stage.
- 4.4 A student may be expelled from the school only after consultation about her possible expulsion has taken place between the Principal, the person with parental responsibility for the student, the Chair of the Board of Governors and an authorised officer from the Education Authority.
- 4.5 The consultation should take place at a meeting of all the named parties which has been convened for the purpose. Any neglect or refusal on the part of the parent to take part in such consultations shall not prevent a student being expelled from the school.
- 4.6 The consultations referred to in paragraph (4.4) shall include consultation about the future provision of suitable education for the student. In doing so, the wishes and feelings of the student shall be taken into account as to the action to be taken and also in relation to the student's future education.
- 4.7 Details and a statement of outcome of the consultation meeting(s) must be included in the school's written record of the processes.
- 4.8 The recommendations from the Consultation Meeting Panel will be considered by the Board of Governors and a decision will be taken as to whether or not to exclude the student.
- 4.9 Where a student is to be expelled from the school, the Principal shall immediately give written notification to the person with parental responsibility for that student, or the student herself where she has attained the age of eighteen, of the right to appeal the decision:
 - (a) to the Board of Governors
 - (b) to the independent appeal tribunal established by the Education Authority

4.10 Pending an appeal, the student will not be re-admitted to the school, but the school will continue to make appropriate provision for the student's continuing education.

Linked Documents

Notification of Student Suspension to Education and Library Board and Notes for Guidance on Completing the Form

**RETURN TO SCHOOL AGREEMENT BETWEEN AND THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
HUNTERHOUSE COLLEGE**

I have read and understand all the rules and instructions for students of Hunterhouse College. These are the rules and instructions as printed in the Student Planner and any relevant policy statements.

I now renew my agreement to undertake to observe carefully those rules and instructions and to abide by the policy statements.

I now undertake to behave well at all times. This means I will not do anything that could be thought to bring the school into disrepute. I undertake to be truthful in all things, even if I know the truth may get me into trouble.

I understand that if at any stage I break this agreement in any way, then this may lead to my exclusion from school for a fixed term or permanently.

Signed : (student) Date :

I/ we, being parent(s) of agree that she will abide by the promises made here and that she understands the consequences if she breaks the agreement in any way.

Signed : Date :

Signed : Date :

Signed : Date :
(for Hunterhouse College)