



VTC Exclusion Policy

Approved by:	Paul Thompson & The Advisory Board	Date: September 2023
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EXCLUSION POLICY

Vocational Training Centre Independent School (VTC) is committed to being a fully accessible and inclusive organisation, welcoming and respecting the diversity of its learners, staff, community, and visitors to the school.

Rationale

This policy is underpinned by the commitment of all at VTC School to ensure the safety and well-being of the whole school community and to maintain an appropriate educational environment in which all can learn and achieve.

We have an overall aim of reducing the need to use exclusion as a sanction.

Introduction

The decision to exclude a learner will be taken by the Headteacher in the following circumstances: -

- (a) In response to a serious breach of the School's Behaviour Policy.
- (b) If allowing the learner to remain in School would seriously harm the education or welfare of the learner or others in the school.

Exclusion is an extreme sanction and is only used by the Headteacher (or, in the absence of the Headteacher, the Head of Centre who is acting in that role).

Exclusion will be used when there is an immediate threat to the safety of others in the school or the learner concerned. Before deciding whether to exclude a learner either permanently or for a fixed period the Headteacher will ensure appropriate investigations have been carried out, considering all the evidence available.

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

Verbal abuse to Staff and others

Verbal abuse to learner

Physical abuse to/attack on Staff

Physical abuse to/attack on learner

Indecent behaviour,

Damage to property,

Misuse of illegal drugs or other substances including supplying,

Theft,

Serious actual or threatened violence against another learner or a member of staff.

Sexual abuse or assault.

Carrying an offensive weapon.

Arson.

This is not an exhaustive list.

Unacceptable behaviour which has previously been reported and for which School sanctions and other interventions have not been successful in modifying the learners's behaviour.

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

Suspension procedure

Suspensions are a fixed term exclusion and are of short duration (usually between one and three days). The DCSF regulations allow the Headteacher to exclude a learner for one or more fixed periods not exceeding 45 school days in any one school year.

Following exclusion parents/carers are contacted immediately where possible. A letter will be sent by post giving details of the exclusion and the date the exclusion ends. Parents/carers have a right to make representations to the Advisory Body and Children's Services Directorate, Social Inclusion Officer at the LA as directed in the letter. A 'return to School' meeting will be held following the expiry of the fixed term exclusion, and this will involve the learner, parent/carer, a member of the Senior Leadership Team and other staff where appropriate. It is school practice to monitor behaviour and work of the learner very closely for the period following exclusion. This may mean the use of a report or close support by staff. If the fixed term exclusion is greater than five days or an accumulation of exclusions exceed five days, a Pastoral Support Plan may be drawn up. This needs to be agreed with the school, learner, parents/carers and any agencies involved.

During the course of a fixed term exclusion where the learner is to be at home, parents/carers are advised that the learner is not allowed on the school premises, and that daytime supervision is their responsibility, as parents/carers.

VTC will continue to provide suitable work that the learner can do from home.

Permanent Exclusion

The decision to exclude a learner permanently is a very serious one. There are two main types of situations in which permanent exclusion may be considered.

The first is a final, formal step in a concerted process for dealing with disciplinary issues following the use of a wide range of other strategies, which have been used without success. It is an acknowledgement that all available strategies have been exhausted and is used as a last resort. This would include persistent and defiant misbehaviour e.g., repeated bullying (which could include racist or homophobic bullying) or repeated possession and or use of an illegal drug on school premises. The second is where there are exceptional circumstances, and it is not appropriate to implement other strategies and where it could be appropriate to permanently exclude a learner for a first or 'one off' offence. These might include:

Serious actual or threatened violence against another learner or a member of staff.

Sexual abuse or assault.

Supplying an illegal drug.

Carrying an offensive weapon*

Arson.

VTC will consider police involvement for any of the above offences.

*Offensive weapons are defined in the Prevention of Crime Act 1953 as "any article made or adapted for causing injury to the person; or intended by the person having it with him for such use by him." These instances are not exhaustive but indicate the severity of such offences and the fact that such behaviour seriously affects the discipline and wellbeing of the school.

Exercise of discretion

In reaching a decision, the Headteacher or Head of Centre will always look at each case on its own merits. Therefore, a tariff system, fixing a standard penalty for a particular action, is both unfair and inappropriate.

In considering whether permanent exclusion is the most appropriate sanction, the Headteacher will consider the gravity of the incident, or series of incidents, and whether it constitutes a serious breach of the School's Behaviour Policy and the effect that the learning remaining in the school would have on the education and welfare of other learners and staff.

In line with its statutory duty, these same tests of appropriateness will form the basis of the deliberations at an Advisory Board exclusion appeals hearing/meeting, when it meets to consider the Headteacher's decision to exclude.

Alternatives to Exclusion

The school works closely with other local secondary schools to undertake managed moves where such a course of action would be of benefit both to the learner and the two schools concerned. However, the threat of a permanent exclusion will never be used as the means to persuade parents/carers to move their son/daughter to another school.

Behaviour Outside School

Learner behaviour outside School on school "business" for example educational visits and journeys, away school sports fixtures or a work experience placement is subject to the School's Behaviour Policy. Inappropriate behaviour in these circumstances will be dealt with as if it had taken place in school. If learner' behaviour in the immediate vicinity of the school or on a journey to and from school is inappropriate and meets the school criteria for exclusion, then the Headteacher or Head of Centre may decide to exclude.

VTC Utilise a local park for PE Sessions. Poor or unacceptable behaviour at this site will be managed through the Schools Behaviour Policy