**ONE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL SUSPENSION, REMOVAL & EXCLUSION POLICY**

The maintenance of good discipline is of paramount importance for the growth, welfare and development of pupils. Pupils should be given clear expectations, effective support and varied opportunities to build good social relationships.

At ONE I.S. we try to ensure that our insistence on high standards is based on the following principles:

* to be built on a foundation of mutual respect
* to focus on commending good behaviour rather than merely drawing attention to the bad
* to be consistent and fair
* to affirm the pupils’ value whilst acknowledging inappropriate behaviour
* to build rather than denigrate

Such discipline is an essential ingredient of effective education and our aims are supported by an ability to invoke various appropriate sanctions where necessary.

Sanctions include but are not confined to:

* Suspension from school (also known as Temporary Exclusion)
* Removal at the request of the school (also known as Required Withdrawal)
* Expulsion (also known as Permanent Exclusion).

A pupil may be excluded for a fixed period of time (temporary exclusion / suspension) or excluded permanently (expelled) from ONE I.S., or parents may be asked to remove a pupil, or a pupil may be required to leave permanently for reasons of misconduct.

**EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (1-5YEARS)**

For children up to the age of five, with a developmentally defined egocentrism and only a burgeoning moral sense, exclusion would only take place once all other avenues have been explored and exhausted, including one to one behavioural support intervention.

**ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOL (5-13 YEARS)**

The main categories of misconduct across the whole of ONE I.S. that may result in suspension, removal or expulsion are:

* Supply/possession/use of drugs and solvents or their paraphernalia or substances intended to resemble them, and alcohol and tobacco.
* Theft, blackmail, physical violence, intimidation, racism and persistent bullying.
* Misconduct of a sexual nature; supply and possession of pornography.
* Possession or use of unauthorised firearms or other weapons.
* Vandalism and computer hacking.
* Persistent attitudes or behaviour that are inconsistent with the ethos of ONE I.S.
* Other serious misconduct towards a member of the school community or which brings ONE I.S. into disrepute (single or repeated episodes) on or off school premises.

Action will be taken following a single offence where that offence is deemed to be sufficiently grave. In most cases, temporary exclusion will be the result of a first offence, although the Head may at her discretion permanently exclude any pupil for a first offence that is considered to warrant such a step.

In other instances, permanent exclusion may be the result of a series of less serious offences, where repetition of these offences indicates the pupil's unwillingness to conform to an acceptable pattern of behaviour. In such cases parents will have been consulted before such a stage is reached in an attempt to correct the behaviour.

A pupil may also be required to leave if, after all appropriate consultation, the Head is satisfied that it is not in the best interests of the pupil, or of the school, that he/she remains at ONE I.S..

The aim of this policy is:

* To ensure procedural fairness and natural justice.
* To promote co-operation between ONE I.S. and parents when it is necessary for a pupil to leave earlier than expected.

For the purposes of the following information;

"Parent" includes one or both of the parents, a legal guardian or education guardian.

"Removal" means that a pupil has been required to leave, but without the stigma of expulsion. Subheadings are for ease of reading and not part of the policy.

**SUSPENSION (TEMPORARY EXCLUSION)**

Only the Head Teacher can suspend a child. Before deciding to suspend a child the Head Teacher will:

* Ensure that an appropriate investigation has been conducted
* Ensure that all the relevant evidence has been considered
* Give the child an opportunity to be heard
* Consult other relevant people if necessary

Work will generally be set for a child to do at home during the period when they are suspended. In addition, consideration will be given to any relevant problems of the suspended child and how they might be addressed in the interim, together with reintegration post-exclusion.

The Head Teacher will inform parents without delay, in person (whenever possible) or by telephone. The Head Teacher will also write to confirm the exclusion, stating the duration period and the reasons for same.

Temporary exclusion constitutes a clear warning about continued membership of the school and this warning should be regarded as final. The Head Teacher is in all cases reluctant to exclude temporarily more than twice. No child who is excluded for a second occasion may return to the school.

**REMOVAL AT THE REQUEST OF THE SCHOOL (REQUIRED WITHDRAWAL)**

Parents may be required, at any time, to remove their child, without refund of fees, temporarily or permanently from the school if, after consultation with a parent, the Head Teacher is of the opinion that the conduct or progress of the pupil has been unsatisfactory or if the pupil, in the judgement of the Head Teacher, is unwilling or unable to profit from the educational opportunities offered (or a parent has treated the school or members of its staff unreasonably) and in any such case removal is considered to be warranted. The deposit will be refunded in the event of removal from the school and fees in lieu of notice will not be charged but all outstanding fees and extras will be payable in full.

Only the Head Teacher can require parents to remove a pupil and before doing so, will follow the same procedure as for temporary exclusion.  In making decisions about withdrawal the Head Teacher will take into account any special educational needs, disabilities, gender and cultural differences that may be relevant to the case, as well as an agreed list of issues relating to withdrawal.

**EXPULSION (PERMANENT EXCLUSION)**

A pupil may be expelled at any time if the Head Teacher is reasonably satisfied that the pupil's conduct (whether on or off school premises or in or out of term time) has been prejudicial to good order or school discipline or to the reputation of the school. The school and the Head Teacher will act fairly and in accordance with the procedures of natural justice and will not expel a pupil other than in grave circumstances. There will be no refund of fees following expulsion (and all unpaid fees must be paid). The deposit will not be returned/credited, but fees in lieu of notice will not be charged.

Some parents prefer, after due consideration, to voluntarily withdraw their child rather than the school imposing Permanent Exclusion. However, it must clearly be understood that the Head Teacher reserves the right to insist on Permanent Exclusion.

Only the Head Teacher can permanently exclude a child and before doing so will follow the same procedure as for temporary exclusion.

In making decisions about exclusion the Head Teacher will take into account any special educational needs, disabilities, gender and cultural differences that may be relevant to the case, as well as an agreed list of issues relating to exclusion.

**APPEAL**

A decision to permanently exclude/remove a child is not taken lightly and before it is reached the Head Teacher will have given careful consideration to any representations by the parents.  In the process, the Owners will be consulted and agree the issues relating to exclusion.

Parents may, if they wish, communicate with the Owners by letter.  If parents wish the Owners to review the case, they should set out the nature of their appeal in writing, detailing the nature of their grievance and the reasons they see for review.

**SUMMARY OF PROCESS:**

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|  Complaint or rumour of serious misconduct is investigated by the Head Teacher |
| ↓ |
| Report of investigation is produced |
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| Head Teacher holds disciplinary meeting |
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| Result of disciplinary meeting is communicated to parents |
|  ↓ |
| If parents appeal, Owners Review is held |

**INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE**

Ethos: An investigation will be conducted fairly, with respect for individuals and for natural justice and in a way that is appropriate to a school, without formal legal procedures.

Complaints: Investigation of a complaint or rumour about serious misconduct will normally be co-ordinated by the Deputy Head and its outcome will be reported to the Head.

Suspension: A pupil may be suspended (temporarily excluded from school) while a complaint is being investigated.

Search: On suspicion, consent is sought from the pupil for any searches of their belongings or property e.g. bags. Any searches are in the presence of a second adult witness. Individuals should be aware that if consent is refused the school may proceed in calling the Police or the parent. By law, physical searches of pupils are not allowed.

**DISCIPLINARY MEETING**

Ethos: Any subsequent meeting will be conducted fairly with respect for individuals and for natural justice and in a way that is appropriate to a school, without formal legal procedures.

Attendance: The pupil and his/her parents (if available) will be asked to attend the disciplinary meeting with the Head at which she will explain the circumstances of the complaint and the investigation.  For this meeting, the pupil may be accompanied by a member of staff of his/her choice. The pupil and his/her parents will have an opportunity to state their side of the case. Members of staff will be on hand to join the meeting if needed, and their statements will be disclosed but, in most cases, the anonymity of pupils will be preserved.

**PROCEEDINGS**

There are potentially three distinct stages of a disciplinary meeting:

*The complaint* - the Head will consider the complaint/s and the evidence, including statements made by and/or on behalf of the pupil. Unless the Head considers that further investigation is needed, he/she will decide whether the complaint has been sufficiently proved. The standard of proof shall be the civil standard, i.e. the balance of probabilities. Appropriate reliance may be placed on hearsay evidence but the Head will not normally refer to the pupil's disciplinary record at this stage.

*The sanction* - if the complaint has been proved the Head will outline the range of disciplinary sanctions that he/she considers are open to them and this may include exclusion from the school for a fixed period of time. He/she will take into account any further statement that the pupil and/or others present on his/her behalf wish to make. The pupil's disciplinary record will be taken into account. Then, or at some later time within five working days the Head will give his/her decision, with reasons.

**LEAVING STATUS**

Explanation: If a pupil is expelled or required to leave, their leaving status will be one of the following: "excluded", "removed" or "withdrawn by parents".

Additional points of leaving status to be decided include:

* The form of letter which will be written to the parents and the form of announcement in the school that the pupil has left
* The form of reference which will be supplied for the pupil
* The entry which will be made on the school record and the pupil's status as a leaver
* Arrangements for transfer of any course and project work to the pupil, his/her parents or another school
* Whether (if relevant) the pupil will be permitted to return to school premises to sit public examinations
* Whether (if relevant) the school can offer assistance in finding an alternative placement for the pupil
* The conditions under which the pupil may re-enter school premises in the future
* Financial aspects: payment of any outstanding fees and extras; whether the deposit will be returned or credited; refund of prepaid fees

*Leaving status* - if the Head decides that the pupil must leave the school, he/she will consult with a parent before deciding on the pupil's leaving status.

Delayed Effect: A decision to expel or remove a pupil will take effect five working days after the decision was first communicated to a parent. Until then, the pupil will remain suspended and away from school premises.  If within five working days the parents have made a written application for a Review by the Owners, the pupil will remain suspended until the Review has taken place.

**THE OWNERS REVIEW**

Request for Review: A pupil or his/her parents, aggrieved at the Head's decision, may make a written application for an Owners Review. Either Owner must receive the application within five working days of the decision being notified to a parent.

Grounds for Review: In their application the parents must state the grounds on which they are asking for a review and the outcome which they seek.

Review Panel: The Review will be undertaken by the Owners and a bipartisan panel. The panel members will have no detailed previous knowledge of the case or of the pupil or parents. Parents will be notified in advance of the names of the panel members. Fair consideration will be given to any bona fide objection to a particular member of the panel.

Review Meeting: A Review will not normally take place during school holidays. A Review Meeting is a private procedure and all those involved are required to keep its proceedings confidential, subject to law.

*Attendance:* Those present at the Review Meeting will normally be:
~ Members of the Review Panel
~ The Head and any relevant member of staff whom the Head, the pupil or his/her parents have asked should attend and whom the Head considers should attend in order to secure a fair outcome
~ The pupil, together with his/her parents and, if they wish, a member of the school staff who is willing to speak on the pupil's behalf. The parents may be accompanied by a friend or relation. [The Owners must be given 7 working days' notice if the friend or relation is legally qualified.]
~ A scribe to keep a written record of the main points of the meeting.

*Conduct of Meeting:*  The meeting will be chaired by one member of the Review Panel and will be conducted in a suitable room and in an informal manner. All statements made at the meeting will be unsworn. The proceedings will not be tape-recorded without the consent of both the Chair of the Review Panel and a parent and any tape-recording will be used only to assist the panel members in reaching their decision and formulating their reasons and will belong to the school. The scribe will be asked to keep written minutes of the main points that arise at the meeting. All those present will be entitled, should they wish, to write their own notes. The meeting will be directed by the Chair of the Review Panel who will conduct it so as to ensure that all those present have a reasonable opportunity of asking questions and making appropriate comment. Everyone is expected to show courtesy, restraint and good manners. The Chair of the Review Panel may at his/her discretion adjourn or terminate the meeting. If the meeting is terminated, the original decision will stand.

*Procedure:* The Panel will consider each of the questions raised by the pupil or his/her parents so far as relevant to:
~ Whether the facts of the case were sufficiently proved when the decision was taken to expel or remove the pupil. The civil standard of proof, namely, "the balance of probability" will apply; and whether the sanction was warranted, that is, whether it was proportionate to the breach of discipline or the other events which are found to have occurred and to the legitimate aims of the school's policy in that respect.
~ The requirements of natural justice will apply. If for any reason the pupil or his/her parents are dissatisfied with any aspect of the meeting they must inform the Chair of the Review Panel at the time and ask the scribe to note their dissatisfaction and the reasons for it.

*Identification:* If the Head considers it necessary in the interests of an individual or of the school that the identity of any person should be withheld, the Chair of the Review Panel may require that the name of that person and the reasons for withholding it be written down and shown to the Panel Members. The Chair of the Review Panel at his/her discretion may direct that the person be identified, or not as the case may be.

*Pupil's Character:* Up to two members of the school staff may speak generally about the pupil's character, conduct and achievements at the school if they are willing to do so.

*Leaving Status:* If, having heard all parties, the Panel is minded to confirm the Head's earlier decision, it is open to the Panel, with agreement of the Head, the pupil and his/her parents to discuss the pupil's leaving status with a view to reaching agreement.

*Decision:* When the Chair of the Review Panel decides that all issues have been sufficiently discussed and if by then there is no consensus, s/he may adjourn the meeting; alternatively the Chair of the Review Panel may ask those present to withdraw while the Panel considers its decision. The decision will be notified, with reasons, to the parents by the Chair of the Review Panel or the Owners by letter within five working days of the meeting. In the absence of a significant procedural irregularity, the decision of the Owners Review Panel is final.

**DISCRETION**
The decision to suspend, remove or exclude a pupil, and the manner and form of any announcement shall be at the sole discretion of the school, acting on the recommendation of the Head Teacher.  In no circumstances shall the school or its staff be required to divulge to parents or others any confidential information or the identities of pupils or others who have given information which has led to suspension, removal or expulsion or which the Head Teacher has acquired during an investigation.

**ACCESS**
A pupil who has been withdrawn, suspended, removed or expelled from the school has no right to enter school premises, be on school grounds or attend school trips without the permission of the Head Teacher.