

# **BISHOP'S HATFIELD GIRLS' SCHOOL**

## **BEHAVIOUR FOR LEARNING POLICY**

**Date of last review:** Summer Term 2025

**Date of next review:** Summer Term 2026

**Curriculum & Standards Committee Approved: June 2025**

## **1. Principles (to be agreed annually by the Governing Body)**

This policy is based on the principle that school should be a safe environment in which each pupil's behaviour is conducive to enabling everyone in the school community to 'achieve their potential and enjoy the journey'. Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School is a community in which mutual respect, good discipline and behaviour are nurtured in order to create a whole school environment that maximises an individual's learning potential. Every pupil has the right to learn and achieve. We aim to encourage personal standards and the development of learning habits which prepare students for a successful and fulfilling life, both within and beyond school.

Behaviour in schools works best when there are clearly defined expectations for all pupils. We place an emphasis on recognising, celebrating and rewarding good behaviour, progress and achievement as well as having clearly defined consequences for not meeting the school's expectations. We recognise the importance of on-going training for all staff in behaviour management strategies. Continuing professional development for all staff is embedded practice and where there is a perceived need for staff training to assist in achieving the aims of this policy, such training will be considered within the limits of available resources.

The Governing Body authorises staff to use reasonable force when necessary, and to search or screen pupils as advised in the relevant DfE guidance (Searching, screening and confiscation: Advice for headteachers, school staff and governors). The Governing Body also authorises the school to discipline pupils for misbehaviour outside the school premises, where appropriate and practical.

This policy is based on the following principles:

- It is the responsibility of all colleagues to use their best endeavours to ensure that all pupils of the school maintain good discipline and good behaviour at all times. Every teacher has the right to teach.
- Pupils play a key role in the promotion of acceptable behaviour for learning. All pupils have a responsibility to learn to regulate their behaviour to ensure learning is not disrupted.
- Parental/carers support for the school's approach is paramount in promoting positive behaviour in pupils. Parents/carers should not ask for, nor expect, exceptions to be made for their child with regards to behaviour.
- The school will communicate this policy to pupils, staff, parents/carers and the Governing Body using a variety of means including the school website. Behaviour expectations and the consequences of failing to meet these expectations will be reinforced through form time, assemblies, the normal school curriculum, Life Skills lessons and other relevant opportunities.
- The Actions and Consequences document will be published in every pupil's planner and pupils regularly encouraged to read and understand it.
- The school will always try to support pupils who struggle to regulate their own behaviour, including engaging with external agencies where appropriate. This may include consideration of any SEND needs and making reasonable adjustments where these are indicated in an EHCP.
- To indicate our commitment, new parents/carers, pupils and the school sign our joint Home School Agreement.

The school has the power to discipline pupils for misbehaviour outside the school premises. This may apply when the pupil is:

- taking part in any school-organised or school-related activity
- travelling to or from school
- wearing school uniform
- in some other way identifiable as a pupil at the school.

This may also apply to misbehaviour at any time, whether or not the conditions above apply, that:

- could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school
- poses a threat to another pupil or member of the public
- could adversely affect the reputation of the school and/or bring the school into disrepute.

**(See DFE Guidance: 'Behaviour in schools. Advice for headteachers and school staff. February 2024.')**

The examples given above are illustrative and not exhaustive. Whilst the school has the power to discipline pupils for behaviour outside the school premises, in most circumstances such behaviour would be a matter for a pupil's parents/carers and/or outside agencies such as the police. The school will assess each case on its own merits with regard to whether any of the above criteria apply.

The school recognises the provisions of the **Equality Act 2010** and will make such reasonable adjustments as are appropriate to support a child with characteristics protected by the Act when applying the Behaviour for Learning Policy. In applying the provisions of this policy staff will take the needs and circumstances of individual students into account including the child's age and any special educational needs that might apply.

## **2. Aims**

- To be a school that does not tolerate persecution or bullying of others on any grounds including ability, age, culture, faith, gender, disability, race or sex.
- To develop self-discipline, self-control and a sense of responsibility for the school and its environment.
- To encourage members of the school to adhere to our Bishop's 360 school values, demonstrating respect and courtesy to one another, to visitors to the school and towards our local community.
- To provide a clear and precise framework which all colleagues, parents/carers and pupils view as being fundamental to enhancing learning and achievement.
- To provide ground rules of behaviour through the school's Pupil Code of Conduct and Actions and Consequences document - available on the school website.
- To ensure that the school's Pupil Code of Conduct is complied with at all times.
- To ensure that pupils understand the consequences of disruption to learning and breach of the Pupil Code of Conduct and that these are applied in a fair and consistent manner.
- To provide appropriate support for pupils who deliberately and persistently ignore or breach the Pupil Code of Conduct or disrupt learning, as well as applying consequences for their behaviour.

- To provide appropriate support for colleagues in promoting pro-active behaviour management.
- To ensure accurate records are maintained for every individual pupil on the type and number of rewards and sanctions given by using the Behaviour Module within Arbor and CPOMS as required.

### 3. Key Expectations

We expect our pupils / students to follow the **Pupil Code of Conduct**. The school expects all pupils to:

**‘Strive to uphold our core values of respect, trust, honesty, teamwork, ambition and kindness’**

1. Attend school regularly and on time.
2. Respect and follow school uniform and jewellery rules at all times.
3. Accept the authority of adults and follow instructions promptly and willingly including while on trips / visits, when representing the school and in the neighbourhood of the school.
4. Behave and speak respectfully to everyone, using appropriate language at all times.
5. Respect all property, keeping it free from damage. Keep the school tidy by not chewing gum or dropping litter and by eating only in the allocated areas.
6. Arrive at lessons on time, with the necessary books and equipment, including the BHGS Planner.
7. Settle quickly at the start of the lesson and listen to the teacher in silence, putting their hand up if they wish to speak or need any help.
8. Work quietly, safely and co-operatively to the best of their ability; completing all classwork and homework on time.
9. Walk around the school sensibly and quietly. Shouting around the school is unnecessary and inappropriate.
10. Not carry or use mobile phones or any other personal electrical equipment on the school premises during the school day (inclusive of detentions and Enrichment Activities) unless being used for a specific lesson.
11. Not smoke, vape or bring into school alcohol, dangerous objects or illegal substances.
12. Not endanger the safety or well-being of other pupils or members of the public when in school, representing the school or travelling to and from school, upholding the excellent reputation of the school at all times.

**‘Following this Code allows everyone to learn and the teacher to teach’**

### 4. Actions and Consequences

The school will use the Actions and Consequences document (linked in Appendix 2) when sanctioning behaviour in and out of school (where applicable). This will be reviewed annually at the end of the Summer Term. The document forms an integral part of our behaviour systems in school.

The Actions and Consequences document also outlines the likely sanctions in place as a consequence of particular behaviours. The likely sanctions may include issuing negative house points, lunchtime detention, homework referral, after school detention and SLT detention. Internal isolation for all or

part of the day may be used as a sanction. Internal isolation will also be used pending an investigation into a particular incident in order to de-escalate, collect evidence and keep all members of the community safe.

References are made to suspensions in Actions and Consequences. Only the Headteacher, or members of the SLT authorised by the Headteacher, can issue a suspension. Permanent exclusion can only take place with the authorisation of the Headteacher.

## **5. Pupil support systems**

The school will endeavour to work with pupils, parents/carers and outside agencies to balance the use of sanctions with support strategies for pupils where appropriate. This may include internal mentoring, use of daily/weekly reports, a Pastoral Support Programme, use of Outreach support (e.g. from the Links Academy) and/or liaison with the area Inclusion Team.

Support for pupils may also include isolating them from their peers at certain times during the day to avoid them coming into conflict with others.

The aim should always be to support pupils so that they can adjust their behaviour and to therefore avoid suspensions or permanent exclusions being applied.

Pupils at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion are identified through the Inclusion Framework which highlights those pupils whose behaviour is a cause for concern, using a tiered approach.

Following a suspension from school a readmission meeting will be held with the pupil and parents/carers prior to the pupil returning to school. Pupils will not normally be allowed back into lessons until such a meeting has taken place. The purpose of this meeting is to ensure the smooth reintegration of the pupil back into the school and to work to prevent any further occurrences of poor behaviour and further suspensions. The support measures required for the pupil will be discussed and agreed at this meeting. This may include a referral to the school's Behaviour Mentor or the setting up of a Pastoral Support Plan. A record of this meeting and resultant support measures will be kept and shared with relevant parties if required. Pupils will also be expected to complete a Reflection Form to demonstrate that they have understood the reasons as to why they received a suspension and to consider the impact on self, family and other members of the school community.

Where appropriate, a pupil can also transfer to another school as part of a 'managed move'. This will only take place with the consent of all parties involved, including the parents/carers. The school will work with the Inclusion Team to discuss this. However, the threat of exclusion will never be used to influence parents to remove their child from the school.

## **6. Screening or searching pupils**

6.1 Headteachers and authorised staff have a statutory power to search pupils/students or their possessions without consent where they suspect that a pupil/student possesses knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco and cigarette papers, vaping items, fireworks, pornographic images, stolen items or any item which the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence or to cause personal injury to or damage to the property of any person. Staff may also search a pupil's locker without consent at any time. All staff are authorised to carry out such searches and this should always be done in the presence of at least one other member of staff. Staff can also search a pupil/student without consent for any item banned as being prejudicial to school safety and discipline. Such items include lighters, matches and other incendiary devices. Searches will normally be undertaken following consultation with a member of SLT, although where the safety of

others is deemed to be at risk searches may take place without this consultation. The school may search pupils/students for any other item with their consent.

All searches will be carried out in accordance with the DfE guidance as outlined in: [Searching, Screening and Confiscation - GOV.UK](#)

6.2 The school is not required to inform parents/carers before a search takes place or seek consent to search their child. Where a pupil/student refuses consent for a search this will generally be presumed as an admission of guilt. Any items found in the course of such a search will be retained by the school to be disposed of or delivered to the police as appropriate. The school will involve the police in its investigations if circumstances warrant it. The school also reserves the right to confiscate items which are not in themselves harmful but which are in contravention of this Policy or otherwise prejudicial to a positive learning environment. Such items include mobile phones and other electrical devices which are being used in contravention of school rules or inappropriate items of uniform. Such items will be returned to the pupil/student in line with school policies and procedures. The school may also confiscate items such as chewing-gum, which is banned in school, or food and drink items which are being consumed in prohibited areas. These items will not be returned. Jewellery that infringes the school's uniform expectations will also be confiscated. All staff are authorised to confiscate items from pupils/students.

6.3 School staff reserve the right to ask the pupil/student's permission to access their mobile phone's memory/ camera roll, where they believe that to do so will help an investigation into serious misconduct. They will limit such a search to the issue in hand. Should a pupil/student withhold permission to follow a reasonable request, the pupil/student may be liable to punishment for obstruction of justice, and in serious cases of pupil misconduct the police may then be informed in order to gain access to this information.

6.4 School staff will access pupils' school emails and any documents on the school's Google Drive or network drives as required in order to investigate incidents or concerns.

## **7. Use of reasonable force**

School staff have a legal power to use reasonable force to either control or restrain pupils/students. This can range from guiding pupils/students to safety by the arm to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a pupil/student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. Staff do not have a duty to physically intervene in situations where doing so would place themselves in danger. All interventions will be carried out in line with the principles outlined in the DfE Use of Reasonable Force guidance document: [Use of reasonable force](#)

## **8. Suspension and Permanent Exclusion**

8.1 Exclusion can take two forms:

- Suspension
- Permanent exclusion

A suspension is where a pupil is removed from the school site for a fixed period of time, which will be notified in writing to parents/carers. A pupil will not be given fixed period suspensions totalling more than 45 days in any one school year. A permanent exclusion is where a pupil is removed from the school site on a permanent basis and will not be allowed to return to the school.

Suspension can only be imposed by the Headteacher or someone acting as the Headteacher in the Headteacher's absence (an Acting Headteacher is someone appointed to carry out the functions of the headteacher in the headteacher's absence or pending the appointment of a headteacher). In this school both of the Deputy Headteachers have this power if the Headteacher is absent and/or not contactable.

The following information outlines our suspension and permanent exclusion processes. As a school we work with pupils and their families to try, wherever possible, to avoid the need to suspend or permanently exclude but, at times, it is a necessary step. We follow the most up to date version of the DfE guidelines on Suspensions and Exclusions.

The school is aware of the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and will make such reasonable adjustments as are appropriate to support a student with characteristics protected by the Act when applying the Behaviour for Learning Policy. This may include referrals to relevant specialist outside agencies. Such protected characteristics do not in themselves constitute a reason not to suspend or exclude a pupil where their behaviour warrants this sanction.

The school takes steps to ensure that it does not discriminate unfairly against pupils when making decisions about whether a student is suspended or not. The school governors receive regular reports on suspensions broken down by key categories to detect any indications of conscious or unconscious bias.

## **8.2 Suspension**

8.2.1 Suspension is an important part of the school's disciplinary process and will be used where appropriate. A decision to suspend a student for a fixed period would only be taken after a thorough investigation into any incident that might lead to this sanction being applied. When taking a decision to suspend reference may be made to the school's Actions and Consequence document, Code of Conduct, DfE guidance and Behaviour for Learning Policy as required.

8.2.2 The burden of proof is different for schools than it is for criminal law. The Headteacher needs only to be satisfied that the student's behaviour is proven 'on the balance of probabilities', not 'beyond all reasonable doubt'. In other words, the Headteacher need only be satisfied that it is more probable than not that a student has done what they are alleged to have done to apply a suspension. Key colleagues carrying out an investigation of a behaviour that may result in a suspension will discuss the possibility of a suspension with the Headteacher. The Headteacher will consult with key staff before taking a decision to suspend.

8.2.3 Parents/carers will always be informed in writing if a suspension is imposed. We are also required to inform the Local Authority of any fixed-term suspensions. The suspension is also recorded on the student's school record. If a pupil has a social worker, or if a pupil is looked-after, the headteacher must now, also without delay after their decision, notify the social worker and/or Virtual School Headteacher, as applicable.

8.2.4 When implementing a suspension:

- The duration of any suspension should be kept to a minimum whilst being commensurate with the reasons for the suspension in order to protect the learning of the student; the significance lies in the suspension itself, rather than its length.
- The duration of suspension will also take account of whether a pupil has had previous suspensions. In general, the number of days suspended will increase where a pupil has had previous suspensions.

- Parents/carers should be informed of the decision (usually by the Head of Year or a member of SLT) and be informed of a time and date for a readmission meeting.
- Wherever practicable, the pupil should be informed of the decision by a senior member of staff or member of the pastoral team.
- During the period of the suspension it is the parents'/carers' responsibility to keep their child away from the school premises and to ensure they are not in a public place at any time during school hours without reasonable justification. Failure to do so may result in the parents/carers being given a fixed penalty notice or prosecuted by the Local Authority.
- Work should be provided during the period of suspension - this will usually be posted on Google Classroom by class teachers.
- Pupils will be expected to complete a Reflection Form to demonstrate that they have understood the reasons as to why they received a suspension and to consider the impact on self, family and other members of the school community.
- A readmission meeting will be held with the pupil and parents/carers. The purpose of this meeting is to ensure the smooth reintegration of the pupil back into the school and to work to prevent any further occurrences of poor behaviour and further suspensions. The support measures required for the pupil will be discussed and agreed at this meeting. This may include a referral to the school's Behaviour Mentor or the setting up of a Pastoral Support Plan. A record of this meeting and resultant support measures will be kept and shared with relevant parties.

8.2.5 Parents/carers have a right to have the suspension reviewed. Only parents/carers of the pupil have this right. If a parent/carer disagrees with the suspension there are a number of things they can do:

Suspensions of between 1 and 5 days in any one term:

- If the suspension brings the number of days suspended to 5 days or fewer in the term, the parent/carer can write to the Headteacher to express their opinion, although the Headteacher does not have to change their decision. They also have the right to make representations to the school's governors. If they wish to do so, this should be completed in writing as soon as possible to the Chair of Governors, via the school office (admin@bishophatfield.herts.sch.uk). The Chair of Governors will ask a panel of up to three governors to consider these representations. The Panel will also receive a report from the Headteacher as to the reasons for the suspension. They cannot direct reinstatement of the pupil or a rescinding of the suspension and the governors are not required to arrange a meeting with parents/carers.

Suspensions which bring the total number of days to more than 5 but less than 16 days in any one term:

- In this case, if parents/carers make representations, the board of governors must consider and decide within 50 school days of receiving the notice of suspension whether the suspended pupil should have the suspension rescinded. In the absence of any representations from the parents, the governing board is not required to meet and cannot direct the Headteacher to rescind the suspension of the pupil. Parents should write to the Chair of Governors, via the school office. The Chair of Governors will ask a panel of up to three governors to consider these representations. The Panel will also receive a report from the Headteacher as to the reasons for the suspension. The Panel may decide to uphold the suspension or rescind the suspension.

Suspensions which bring the total number of days to 16 or more in any one term:



- If the pupil has been suspended for 16 days or more in any one term (or has been suspended during a time in which they will miss a public examination) the governors will meet automatically to discuss the suspension which took the period of suspension over 16 days/required the pupil to miss a public examination. This meeting must take place within 15 days of the date of the latest suspension or before the date of the public examination. If the governors decide to reinstate the student that fact will be recorded on the pupil's file.

### **8.3 Permanent Exclusion**

8.3.1 Permanent exclusion is carried out by the Headteacher and through the appropriate Governors' Disciplinary Committee in accordance with DfE and HCC guidance, for repeated serious misconduct or possibly for one-off incidents of exceptional seriousness.

8.3.2 To allow for a detailed investigation and a period of reflection a pupil/student may in the first instance be placed in internal isolation whilst evidence is collected. The decision to permanently exclude a pupil/student should be lawful, reasonable and fair, taking into consideration mitigating and aggravating circumstances and the 2010 Equality Act.

8.3.3 When establishing the facts in relation to an exclusion decision the Headteacher must apply the civil standard of proof; i.e. 'on the balance of probabilities' it is more likely than not that a fact is true, rather than the criminal standard of 'beyond reasonable doubt.' This means that the Headteacher should accept that something happened if it is more likely that it happened than that it did not happen.

8.3.4 A decision to exclude a pupil/student permanently will be based on a serious breach, or persistent breaches, of the school's Behaviour for Learning Policy and/or the school's Actions and Consequences document and/or the school's Code of Conduct; and/or where allowing the pupil/student to remain in the school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil/student or others in the school.

At Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School the following incidents or offences are likely to lead to a permanent exclusion. This list is intended to indicate the degree of severity of offences but it is not intended to be exhaustive:

- Actual or threatened violence against a member of staff
- Malicious allegations against a member of school staff
- Serious act of violence/assault against another pupil/student
- Sexual assault or abuse of a pupil/student or member of staff
- Holding and/or the distribution of child pornography
- Hacking of the school's IT system, leading to serious disruption to learning
- Possession, carrying, or intent to supply an illegal drug or legal high
- Carrying an offensive weapon
- Acts likely to seriously endanger the health and safety of members of the school community
- Multiple suspensions for persistent disruptive behaviour and/or persistent breaches of the school's Behaviour Code

8.3.5 The school will fulfil its obligation to set and mark work for a child who has been permanently excluded for the first five school days after the decision to exclude. From the sixth day following a permanent exclusion the Local Authority has the responsibility for maintaining the child's education.

## **9. Evaluation**

On a regular basis the Senior Leadership Team will analyse information relating to rewards and sanctions. This will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the systems in school and to allow constructive suggestions for improvement to be made by staff and pupils. The Governing Body will review this policy and monitor its effectiveness. The policy will be available on the school website for pupils, parents/carers and staff.

### **Other relevant policies or documents**

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- The most recent Actions and Consequences document (reviewed annually)
- Attendance Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Drug Use and Misuse Policy
- Equality Policy
- Protected Characteristics and Prejudice-Related Incidents Policy
- Pupil Code of Conduct
- Teaching & Learning Policy
- DfE publication: Behaviour and Discipline in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff. February 2024
- DfE Guidance - Use of reasonable force: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies, July 2013
- DfE Guidance - Searching, screening and confiscation Advice for headteachers, school staff and governing bodies, July 2022
- DfE and HCC Exclusions Guidance

## **Appendix 1 - GUIDELINES FOR INVESTIGATION OF SERIOUS OR PERSISTENTLY DISRUPTIVE INCIDENT(S)**

Incidents of a serious nature (outlined in the Actions and Consequences document) or repeated incidents that cause disruption of learning can lead to a suspension or a permanent exclusion.

The following guidelines should be followed as far as possible and practicable by staff when a specific incident will lead to a suspension or permanent exclusion. If this is likely, a member of the Senior Leadership Team should be informed as quickly as possible and guidance sought if there is any doubt as to the course of action.

- Isolate individual(s) e.g. using Pupil Support Centre, Head of Year office, on-call area(s), Senior Leadership Team offices.
- Any comments/questions should be focused on what has been reported.
- Where necessary, a second colleague should be present as a witness to proceedings.
- Incidents such as fighting, bullying, theft, smoking, vandalism, etc. should be investigated and dealt with by the Head of Year in liaison with the Deputy Headteacher responsible for Inclusion or another member of SLT. Incidents of racism should be dealt with in the same manner and then reported to the Deputy Headteacher responsible for Inclusion.
- Searches of personal property, e.g. clothing (asking the pupil to empty their pockets), bags, lockers, should usually only be undertaken by a Head of Year or a member of the Senior Leadership Team and always with another colleague present.
- A written report should be completed by the pupil, or where assistance is needed, colleagues may write the report on behalf of the pupil, with confirmation given by the pupil of the accuracy of the content, e.g. by signing the statement. Statements from witnesses of the incident (pupils and staff) should also be taken.
- For very serious incidents such as possession of or drug use, possession or use of alcohol, large scale theft, possession of offensive weapons, assault, etc., another colleague should be present from the start of the investigation, whose role could be to scribe comments and/or ask additional questions as guided by the Head of Year or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. It is advisable to inform the Headteacher immediately that such an incident has occurred. Drug related incidents should be reported directly to the Headteacher and the guidance of the Drugs Use and Misuse Policy should be adhered to.
- Serious accusations against colleagues should be reported immediately to the Headteacher, or one of the Deputy Headteachers in their absence.
- Any Child Protection / Safeguarding issues should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or one of the Deputy DSLs.
- It should be a priority, where possible, to conclude questioning and have written reports on the day of the incident prior to the pupil(s) being sent home. If the incident is reported after school, relevant pupils must be seen at the very start of the following school day.
- If the Head of Year feels that police should be contacted, they need to confer with the Deputy Headteacher responsible for Inclusion, the Headteacher or another member of SLT if applicable.

Where Police are investigating an incident relating to a pupil at the school, this will not preclude the school conducting its own investigation or sanctioning the pupil in accordance with this policy.

- As appropriate, parents/carers should be contacted in the event of any suspension or exclusion (internal, fixed term or permanent) or police involvement.
- As far as possible, by the end of the following school day, the final outcome and action must be agreed and carried out. However, if additional information and evidence is required, then interim measures may be put in place e.g. isolation in the Pupil Support Centre, use of on-call area(s) or a suspension, while further investigation occurs.

The school will endeavour to work with parents/carers and outside agencies to balance the use of sanctions with support strategies for pupils where appropriate. This may include the implementation of a Pastoral Support Programme, use of Outreach support and/or liaison with the area Inclusion Team to avoid a permanent exclusion being issued.

## **Appendix 2 - [Actions and Consequences](#)**