

ROEDEAN

Exclusion Policy

(The term exclusion here refers to suspension or permanent suspension which may be expulsion or the requirement to leave)

Roedean has a set of general rules and regulations which are designed in order that Roedean may be a safe, happy and caring place where members of the community show consideration, concern and respect for each other. These rules are found in the Roedean Handbook and in the Behaviour Policy.

All pupils are expected to comply with these rules. Severe or consistent breaches of regulations may result in the pupil's place at school being at risk.

The purpose of this exclusion policy is to set out a list of the sorts of behaviour that could merit exclusion and to outline the procedure which would precede an exclusion.

Exclusion offences:

A non-exhaustive list of the sorts of behaviour that could merit suspension or exclusion includes the following, regardless of whether they took place within school or outside the school grounds or school time:

- Physical assault against pupils or adults
- Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against pupils or adults
- Bullying
- Racist abuse
- Damage to property
- Theft
- Sexual misconduct
- Drug misuse
- Alcohol misuse
- Persistent disruptive/antisocial behaviour
- Contravention of the Roenet policy
- Contravention of the ABC contract
- Behaviour which brings the school into disrepute
- Behaviour which in the Headmistress's reasonable opinion leads her to believe that removal of the pupil from the school is in the best interest of the school or of the girl

Procedure

- A fair and thorough investigation will be held into the allegations against an individual pupil
- The investigation will normally be carried out by a member of the senior team or a housemistress/master

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- The investigation will be to establish the facts. Statements will be taken as appropriate from pupils and staff involved in the incident or who witnessed the incident. Statements will be signed by the witness and dated, and countersigned by the person taking the statement.
- The pupil will be informed of the allegation and the evidence relied on by the member of staff investigating the incident in an interview and will be given a chance to respond to these allegations. A member of staff will attend to support the pupil.
- Parents will be informed of the incident and of the steps taken.
- The Headmistress will weigh up the evidence presented to her and reach a decision.

Temporary suspension

- The parents will be requested to remove the pupil by the Deputy Headmistress in the Senior School or Head of Junior School, who will arrange a time for collection, and ensure that appropriate work is taken home.
- The length of suspension will vary according to the circumstances and nature of the offence, but will generally not be longer than a week.
- Either the Headmistress or the Deputy Headmistress/Head of Junior School will write a letter to the parents and see the pupil on her/his return.

Permanent suspension

- **Expulsion:** this is when a pupil is formally expelled from the school as a result of a grave breach of school discipline, for example a serious criminal offence or some wilful act calculated to cause serious damage to the school, its community or any of its members. Reference to the facts and circumstances will be made in response to every request for a reference.
- **Requirement to leave permanently:** this is for a breach of school discipline which falls short of one for which expulsion is necessary. In such circumstances reasonable assistance will be given in helping the girl to make a fresh start at another school. A boarder may be required to leave the boarding house without necessarily being required to leave the school.

In any circumstance where permanent suspension is being considered the Headmistress is required to act fairly and in accordance with the principles of natural justice. She will use every endeavour to contact parents before any final decision is taken and would expect, in normal circumstances, to hold a formal meeting with the parents and pupil during which the case under discussion is heard and a fair consideration is given to this by the Headmistress before a final decision is reached. Following such a meeting a letter would be sent to the pupil and parents to confirm the decision reached in or subsequent to the meeting.

All records of suspension are kept in the Headmistress' Office and must be notified to the Chairman of Governors.

The right to appeal

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Parents have a right to appeal against a decision made by the Headmistress by lodging an appeal in writing to the Chairman of Governors. This falls within the procedure outlined in the Complaints procedure found on the school website.

Confidentiality

Exclusion cases should be treated by all parties in the strictest confidence. However, confidentiality cannot and therefore should not be guaranteed to any witness or party whose evidence may be relied on.

This policy must be read with the “General Rules and Regulations” found in the School Handbook, the Complaints Policy and the Parents’ Contract.

Roles and responsibilities

1. The Deputy Headmistress in the Senior School or Head of Junior School is responsible to the Headmistress for managing all issues of discipline and behaviour within the school. To assist in this role she or he may turn to teachers, tutors, house staff, senior tutors or the Assistant Head, Teaching and Learning. She or he will deputize for the Headmistress when necessary.
2. The Headmistress is responsible to the School Council for ensuring appropriate standards of discipline. Within the school and the promotion of good behaviour. She will determine the main principles behind any behaviour policy and ensure it does not conflict with other school policies. She will determine issues of suspension and exclusion.
3. The School Council endorses the principles underlying this policy and require the Headmistress to ensure appropriate standards within the school.