



St Columba's College

Exclusions Policy

This policy applies across the College at all age ranges including Early Years, Prep and Senior Schools. It should be read in conjunction with the Anti-Bullying, Behaviour, and Drugs and Alcohol policies and the Senior and Prep Codes of Conduct.

As a school conducted in the educational tradition of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart, St. Columba's College promotes respect of authority, respect of fellow students, and self-respect. The school advocates a discipline that is respectful of the dignity of the individual, is consistent and fair, and is based on a relationship of mutual trust and cooperation. Students grow in self-discipline as they grow in understanding themselves and in learning to respect others.

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Section 1 Principles

In keeping with its charism and foundation, the College views exclusion as an option when dealing with students whose behaviour has been shown to be at serious odds with the College's rules and ethos. A process of warnings, formal, and final are usually features of the process, but in exceptional circumstances the Headmaster may permanently exclude a student if the seriousness of the offence warrants it.

Only the Headmaster, or in his absence his Deputy, may exclude a student. In the Prep, this will be the remit of the Head of Prep or the Deputy Head following consultation with the Headmaster.

Students may be excluded for one or more fixed periods, or permanently. For serious but relatively minor breaches of the College rules, students may be excluded for one or more fixed term periods, not exceeding 45 school days in any one academic year.

Section 2 Reasons for Exclusion

A decision to exclude a student permanently would, in the general course of events, be taken as a last resort when a wide range of strategies for dealing with disciplinary offences has been employed to no avail or if an exceptional 'one-off' offence has been committed, e.g.:

- serious violence, actual or threatened, against a student or member of staff
- theft
- sexual abuse or assault
- supplying an illegal drug
- carrying an offensive weapon

Any decision to exclude in a drug-related case will be based on the criteria determined in the College's Drugs and Alcohol Policy.

The College does not see exclusion as normally appropriate in the following cases:

- minor breaches of discipline
- poor academic performance
- truancy or lateness.

Section 3 Parental Co-operation

Parental co-operation forms part of the contract between the College and all parents of students at the College. A refusal to abide by the terms of an exclusion may be considered a breach of contract.

Section 4 Procedures

Exclusions may take several forms, depending on the nature of the circumstances involved.

Section 5 In-House Suspension

A student may be removed from a class for part or the whole of a day with immediate effect if it is deemed appropriate by the Headmaster or Deputy Head (Head of Prep in the Prep School) in order to prevent the escalation of a situation or to remedy a particular problem. In these circumstances the parents will be notified formally of the need to withdraw the standard provision of lessons, as part of contact with them. Such exclusions are usually supervised by senior members of staff depending on the phase of the school e.g. the relevant House staff or by the Deputy Head.

Section 6 Suspension from school

When a student has failed to respond to the standard series of sanctions used by the College in relation to his/her behaviour, the Headmaster or Deputy Head (Head of Prep in the Prep School) after due consultation may require a student to remain at home until a formal meeting with his/her parents can be arranged to discuss the situation. His/her return to class will depend on a written assurance that he/she will adhere to College rules.

Section 7 Fixed Term Exclusion

A student may be temporarily excluded from the College for a particularly serious offence, or repeated offences, only at the discretion of the Headmaster or Head of Prep in the Prep School following conversation with the Headmaster (or Deputy Head in his absence), who will consult with the appropriate staff before the decision is made. The period of exclusion will be determined by the Head and a written statement of the circumstances leading to the decision will be provided for the student's parents.

After a review meeting with the student and his/her parents, the Headmaster may readmit the student on the assurance of future good conduct, restitution where appropriate, and within the terms of either a formal or final warning as to future conduct.

Section 8 Permanent Exclusion and Required Removal

Permanent exclusion is a last resort and will normally be enacted after a Final Warning has been issued to a student but not necessarily in every instance.

Required Removal: the Head may at his/her discretion require parents to remove their child from the College if he/she reasonably considers that parents' behaviour or conduct:

- is unreasonable; and/or
 - adversely affects (or is likely to adversely affect) their child's or other children's progress at the College, or the well-being of College staff; and/or
 - brings (or is likely to bring) the College into disrepute; and/or
 - is not in accordance with their obligations under their contract; or
- their child's attendance, progress, behaviour or attitude is unsatisfactory and, in the reasonable opinion of the Head, the removal is in the College's best interests and/or those of the child or other children.

Only the Headmaster, or the Head of Prep in consultation with the Headmaster may make such a decision and only after consultation with the Dean and the Chair of the Board of Trustees. It is issued taking into account the student's interests and those of the student community as a whole.

Section 9 Appeals

Parents are entitled to appeal to the Board of Trustees against any exclusion or required removal. A letter stating the intention to appeal should be sent to the Clerk to the Governing Body at the College. A hearing will be set up as quickly as possible, but within ten working term time days. The Trustees' decision is final.

Section 10 Continuing Education

The College will continue to provide education for a student who remains on roll only in the case of an exclusion of more than 15 days. The College will consider:

- how the student's education will continue;
- how his/her problems might be addressed in the interim;
- reintegration post-exclusion (except in the case of permanent exclusion).