



Suspension, Required Withdrawal, Expulsion and Review (Prep)

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<i>This policy is reviewed annually</i>	

Contents

1. Principles.....	2
2. Serious Sanctions	3
3. Behaviour Which May Lead to a Serious Sanction	3
4. Suspension	4
5. Required Withdrawal	5
6. Expulsion.....	5
7. Investigation	6
8. Meeting with the Pupil and Parents	7
9. Decision	7
10. Leaving Status and Transition	8
11. Trustees' Review	8
12. Safeguarding and Confidentiality.....	9
13. Recording and Monitoring.....	9
14. Access to School Following a Serious Sanction.....	10
15. Monitoring and Review	10

1. Principles

Independent School Standards – Parts 2, 3 and 8; Equality Act 2010; current EYFS statutory framework

At Caterham Prep School, our approach to behaviour is positive, supportive and developmentally appropriate. It is grounded in our commitment to the safety, wellbeing and personal development of every pupil.

High standards of behaviour grow from positive relationships, clear expectations and a shared sense of belonging and responsibility. Our expectations reflect the values of the School and are applied in ways appropriate to pupils' ages and stages of development.

The School's primary approach is to promote and recognise positive behaviour and to help pupils understand the impact of their actions, regulate their behaviour, repair relationships and make better choices. The School therefore uses a graduated system of support, responses and sanctions, as set out in the Prep Behaviour Policy.

Suspension, Required Withdrawal and Expulsion are the most serious sanctions available to the School. They are used only in serious circumstances and decisions are made carefully, fairly and proportionately.

In considering any serious sanction, the School will take account of the pupil's:

- age and stage of development;
- individual circumstances;
- SEND, disability, medical or other additional needs;
- any relevant contextual or safeguarding factors;
- previous behaviour and support provided;
- understanding and intent;
- the seriousness and impact of the behaviour; and
- any reasonable adjustments or additional support that may be appropriate.

The School will consider whether behaviour may be related to an identified or emerging need and will seek to understand the factors underlying the behaviour.

For pupils in Reception, particular regard will be given to the principles and requirements of the EYFS. Suspension, Required Withdrawal or Expulsion will only be considered in exceptional circumstances, taking account of the child's age, development and individual needs and after appropriate support and alternative strategies have been explored, unless the seriousness of an incident requires immediate action to protect the child or others.

This policy should be read alongside the School's Prep Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, SEND Policy, Equality Policy, Complaints Policy and Admissions Policy.

2. Serious Sanctions

Independent School Standards – Part 3

The following sanctions are available for the most serious behaviour matters:

Suspension (Temporary Exclusion)

The pupil is required to remain away from School for a specified period.

Required Withdrawal (Removal at the Request of the School)

Parents are required to withdraw the pupil permanently from the School. The pupil's leaving status and the information provided to a future school will be determined in accordance with this policy, the Parent Contract and the School's safeguarding responsibilities.

Expulsion (Permanent Exclusion)

The pupil is permanently excluded from the School following serious misconduct.

These sanctions sit at **Level 5** of the Prep School's graduated Behaviour Policy.

The School reserves the right to move directly to a serious sanction where an incident is sufficiently serious or where behaviour presents a significant risk to the safety or wellbeing of the pupil or others.

3. Behaviour Which May Lead to a Serious Sanction

Independent School Standards – Part 3; Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

Suspension, Required Withdrawal or Expulsion may be considered following a single serious incident or an emerging or persistent pattern of serious behaviour.

Examples may include:

- serious or repeated physical aggression or violence;
- serious or persistent bullying, including online bullying;
- discriminatory or prejudicial behaviour;
- serious verbal abuse, intimidation or threatening behaviour;
- behaviour of a sexual nature which is harmful or inappropriate;
- theft;
- deliberate or serious damage to property;
- serious misuse of technology or online systems;
- possession or use of a prohibited or dangerous item;
- persistent behaviour which places the pupil or others at risk;
- persistent serious behaviour which is inconsistent with the School's expectations and values; or
- other serious misconduct, whether on or off School premises, which has a significant impact upon pupils, members of the School community, the orderly running of the School or the reputation of the School.

This list is illustrative and is not exhaustive.

The application of these categories and the School's response will always take account of the pupil's age and stage of development, individual needs, SEND or disability, the context of the behaviour and the seriousness of any actual or potential harm.

Where behaviour raises a safeguarding concern, it will be managed in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, alongside any behaviour response.

4. Suspension

Independent School Standards – Part 3

Only the Headmaster may authorise the suspension of a Prep pupil. Where immediate action is required and the Headmaster is unavailable, the Head of School (Prep), or the Head of Pre-Prep for a Pre-Prep pupil, may authorise an interim suspension, subject to confirmation by the Headmaster as soon as reasonably practicable.

Before a suspension is authorised, the Head of School (Prep), or Head of Pre-Prep as appropriate, will normally:

- ensure that an appropriate investigation has taken place;
- consider the available evidence;
- give the pupil an appropriate opportunity to give their account;
- consider the pupil's age, developmental stage and individual needs;
- consider any SEND, disability, medical needs or reasonable adjustments;
- consider relevant safeguarding or contextual information;
- consult relevant members of staff as appropriate; and
- consider whether the proposed sanction is reasonable and proportionate.

A pupil's account may be obtained verbally, through discussion, in writing or by other appropriate means according to their age, understanding, communication needs and any SEND or disability.

Parents will be informed without delay and the School will confirm the suspension and its reasons in writing.

Where appropriate, work will be provided during a suspension.

Before the pupil returns, consideration will be given to any support required to enable successful reintegration. This may include a reintegration meeting, pastoral support, restorative work, reasonable adjustments or an individual behaviour/support plan.

A record of the suspension and the reasons for it will be maintained by the School.

5. Required Withdrawal

Independent School Standards – Parts 3 and 6; Equality Act 2010

Required Withdrawal may be considered where, following appropriate support, consultation and consideration of any reasonable adjustments, the School concludes that a pupil's continued attendance is no longer in the best interests of the pupil or the School.

This might arise because of persistent serious behaviour or other circumstances in which the relationship between the pupil, family and School has reached a point where continued attendance is no longer considered appropriate.

Required Withdrawal will not be used simply because a pupil has SEND, a disability or other additional needs, or because reasonable adjustments are required.

Only the Headmaster may require the permanent withdrawal of a pupil, following consultation with the Head of School (Prep) and, where relevant, the Head of Pre-Prep.

Before such a decision is made, parents will be consulted and the procedure set out in Sections 7–9 below will normally be followed.

Where a pupil is required to leave, the School will seek to support an orderly transition to another educational setting where appropriate.

6. Expulsion

Independent School Standards – Parts 3 and 6; Equality Act 2010

Expulsion is reserved for the most serious circumstances.

A pupil may be expelled following:

- a single incident of sufficiently serious misconduct; or
- serious or persistent misconduct where previous support, interventions and/or

sanctions have not resulted in sufficient improvement.

Expulsion will only take place where the School concludes that it is a reasonable and proportionate response in all the circumstances.

Only the Headmaster may expel a pupil, following consultation with the Head of School (Prep) and, where relevant, the Head of Pre-Prep.

In reaching the decision, the Headmaster will take account of advice from the Head of School (Prep) and, where relevant, the Head of Pre-Prep, together with the pupil's age and developmental stage, individual circumstances, SEND or disability, any reasonable adjustments, relevant safeguarding or contextual factors and the support previously provided.

For a child in Reception, permanent exclusion would be exceptional and would require particularly careful consideration of the child's developmental needs and the support and alternative strategies which have been provided or considered.

7. Investigation

Independent School Standards – Parts 3 and 8; Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

Where serious misconduct may result in Suspension, Required Withdrawal or Expulsion, the matter will be investigated fairly and proportionately.

The investigation will normally be coordinated by the Head of School (Prep), the Head of Pre-Prep where appropriate, or another senior member of Prep staff nominated by them.

The investigation may include:

- speaking with the pupil concerned;
- speaking with other pupils or staff;
- considering relevant written records or other evidence;
- considering relevant safeguarding information;
- consulting parents where appropriate; and
- considering the pupil's individual needs and circumstances.

The way in which a pupil is enabled to give their account and participate in the investigation will be appropriate to their age, understanding, communication needs and any SEND or disability.

Particular care will be taken when obtaining accounts from younger pupils, including children in EYFS. Staff will use developmentally appropriate language and will avoid repeatedly questioning a child unnecessarily.

Where searching is considered necessary, this will be undertaken in accordance with the School's Searching a Pupil Policy.

A pupil may be suspended while a serious matter is investigated where this is considered

necessary and proportionate, including where this is required to protect the pupil or others while the circumstances are established. Any such suspension will be authorised in accordance with Section 4.

8. Meeting with the Pupil and Parents

Independent School Standards – Parts 3 and 8

Where Required Withdrawal or Expulsion is being considered, the pupil's parents will normally be invited to meet with the Headmaster, accompanied by the Head of School (Prep) and/or Head of Pre-Prep as appropriate.

The School will explain:

- the nature of the concern;
- the relevant evidence;
- the pupil's account;
- any relevant previous behaviour and support;
- the possible outcomes; and
- the factors being considered in reaching a decision.

Parents will have an opportunity to provide relevant information and make representations before a final decision is reached.

The pupil will be given an appropriate opportunity to express their views. The format and extent of the pupil's involvement will be adapted to their age, understanding, communication needs and individual circumstances.

For younger pupils, particularly those in Reception and Key Stage 1, it may be more appropriate for the child's views to be obtained separately by a familiar member of staff rather than for the child to participate throughout a formal meeting.

9. Decision

Independent School Standards – Parts 3 and 8; Equality Act 2010

The decision will be based on the available evidence and made on the balance of probabilities.

In determining the appropriate outcome, the School will consider:

- the seriousness and circumstances of the behaviour;
- the pupil's age and developmental understanding;
- the impact on others;
- any previous incidents or patterns of behaviour;
- support and interventions already provided;
- SEND, disability, medical or other additional needs;
- whether behaviour may be associated with an identified or emerging need;
- reasonable adjustments;
- safeguarding or contextual factors;
- the pupil's response and understanding; and

- whether the proposed sanction is reasonable and proportionate.

Parents will be informed of the decision and reasons in writing.

Where the decision is Required Withdrawal or Expulsion, parents will also be informed of their right to request a Trustees' Review.

10. Leaving Status and Transition

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Where a pupil is Required to Withdraw or Expelled, the School will agree appropriate arrangements concerning the pupil's departure.

These may include:

- the pupil's formal leaving status;
- communication with the School community where necessary;
- the transfer of educational records and work;
- liaison with the pupil's next school;
- appropriate support for transition;
- arrangements for returning School property and collecting personal belongings;
- whether and under what circumstances the pupil may subsequently enter School premises; and
- relevant financial arrangements in accordance with the Parent Contract.

The School will handle information sensitively and respect the privacy of the pupil and other children involved. Any safeguarding information will be transferred to the pupil's next school in accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The School will make any notifications required by law when removing a pupil's name from the admission register.

11. Trustees' Review

Independent School Standards – Part 8

Parents may request a Trustees' Review of a decision to Require Withdrawal or Expel a pupil.

The application should be made in writing to the Clerk to the Trustees within five working days of the written decision being communicated to parents. The application should state the grounds for review and the outcome sought.

The Review will normally be undertaken by a panel of three Trustees who have had no detailed previous involvement in the case.

The Review Panel will consider:

- whether the facts were sufficiently established on the balance of probabilities;
- whether the procedures set out in this policy were followed fairly;
- whether relevant information about the pupil's individual circumstances and needs

- was appropriately considered; and
- whether the decision was reasonable and proportionate in the circumstances.

Parents will be given a reasonable opportunity to make representations.

The pupil's involvement in the Review will be appropriate to their age, understanding and individual needs. The pupil will not normally be expected to attend the whole Review meeting where this would be inappropriate or contrary to their wellbeing.

Parents may be accompanied by a friend or family member.

Reasonable adjustments will be made where required to enable a pupil or parent with a disability or other additional need to participate effectively in the Review process.

The Review Panel will communicate its decision and reasons to parents in writing, normally within five working days of the Review. The Review Panel may uphold the decision, overturn it or refer it back to the Headmaster for reconsideration with recommendations.

Where a Trustees' Review is requested within the required timescale, the pupil will normally remain suspended until the Review has taken place and the outcome has been communicated to parents.

The decision of the Trustees' Review Panel is final.

A challenge to a decision to Require Withdrawal or Expel a pupil is dealt with under the Trustees' Review procedure set out above and not under the School's Complaints Policy. Separate complaints about the way in which the School has acted, which do not amount to a challenge to the disciplinary decision itself, may be considered under the Complaints Policy where appropriate.

12. Safeguarding and Confidentiality

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The welfare and safety of pupils remain paramount throughout any disciplinary process.

Where information obtained during an investigation raises a safeguarding concern, the matter will be referred to the DSL and dealt with in accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Information relating to disciplinary matters will be handled sensitively and shared only where appropriate.

The School will not normally disclose confidential information or the identities of pupils or others who have provided information where doing so would be inappropriate or could compromise their welfare. This will be balanced with the need to ensure a fair process.

13. Recording and Monitoring

Independent School Standards – Part 3

The School will maintain appropriate records of serious behaviour incidents and sanctions.

In accordance with the Prep Behaviour Policy, records will enable leaders to monitor:

- serious incidents and sanctions;
- patterns or repeated concerns;
- the effectiveness of interventions and support;
- whether sanctions are being applied fairly and consistently; and
- whether there are patterns relating to particular groups of pupils or individual needs.

Records of serious sanctions will be reviewed by senior leaders and, where appropriate, Trustees.

This supports the ISS requirement that the School keeps a record of sanctions imposed for serious misbehaviour and implements its behaviour policy effectively and consistently.

14. Access to School Following a Serious Sanction

Independent School Standards – Part 3

A pupil who is suspended, Required to Withdraw or Expelled must not enter School premises, attend School activities or participate in School trips without permission from the Headmaster or, with delegated authority, the Head of School (Prep) or Head of Pre-Prep as appropriate.

15. Monitoring and Review

Independent School Standards – Parts 6 and 8

This policy is reviewed annually and whenever there is a significant change to relevant legislation, statutory guidance or School practice.

The policy is published on the School website and is available in hard copy or an accessible format on request.