



Independent School for Girls Aged 2 to 18
and Boys Aged 2 to 11

EXPULSION, REMOVAL AND REVIEW POLICY

Harrogate Ladies' College family of Schools:

Highfield Pre School, Highfield and College

SLT Responsibility: Joanna Fox

Governor Committee Review: F & GP

Review Cycle: Biennial

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Since 1893

Introduction

Scope: This policy applies to the Harrogate Ladies' College Family of Schools - Highfield Pre School, Highfield and College - hereafter referred to as "the School". The policy contains guidelines, which will be adapted as necessary, explaining the circumstances under which a pupil may be expelled from the School, or required to leave permanently for misconduct or other reasons. The policy applies to all pupils at the School but does not cover cases when a pupil has to leave because of ill-health, non-payment of fees, or withdrawal by his/her parents. *See Behaviour Policy for Suspension Procedure*

Interpretation: The definitions in this clause apply in this policy.

Principal: references to the Principal mean the Principal of the School (including College) and may include deputies.

Head: references to the Head mean the Head of Highfield and may include deputies.

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

Expulsion: A pupil may be formally expelled from the School if it is proved on the balance of probabilities that the pupil has committed a very grave breach of discipline or a serious criminal offence. Expulsion is reserved for the most serious breaches.

Removal: Parents may be required to remove a pupil permanently from the School or from boarding if, after consultation with the parents and if appropriate the pupil, the Head/Principal (as applicable) is of the opinion that:

- (a) by reason of the pupil's conduct, behaviour or progress, the pupil is unwilling or unable to benefit sufficiently from the educational opportunities and / or the community life offered by the School;
- (b) if the parents have treated the School or members of its staff unreasonably.

Policy statement

Aims

The aims of this policy are:

- to support the School 's behaviour code
- to ensure procedural fairness and natural justice
- to promote co-operation between the School and parents when it is necessary for the School that a pupil should leave earlier than expected.

Misconduct

The main categories of misconduct which may result in expulsion or removal include but are not limited to:

- supply/possession/use of certain drugs and solvents or their paraphernalia or substances intended to resemble them, or alcohol, tobacco, “legal highs”, e-cigarettes, e-sticks or vaping equipment
- theft, blackmail, physical violence, intimidation, false allegations, racism or any other form of discriminatory behaviour, or persistent bullying including cyberbullying
- misconduct of a sexual nature; supply, possession or distribution of pornography
- possession or use of unauthorised firearms or other weapons
- vandalism or computer hacking
- persistent attitudes or behaviour which are inconsistent with the School 's ethos
- other serious misconduct which affects the welfare of a member or members of the School community or which brings the School into disrepute (single or repeated episodes) on or off School premises.

Equality

The School will make reasonable adjustments for managing behaviour which is related to a pupil's special educational need or disability. Where expulsion needs to be considered, the School will ensure that a pupil with a disability or special educational needs and/or his/her parents are able to present their case fully where their disability or special educational needs might hinder this. Any religious requirements affecting the pupil will also be considered.

Other Circumstances

A pupil may be required to leave if, after all appropriate consultation, the Principal is satisfied that it is not in the best interests of the pupil, or of the School, that they remain at the School.

This policy applies to all members of our school community, including boarders and those in our EYFS setting.

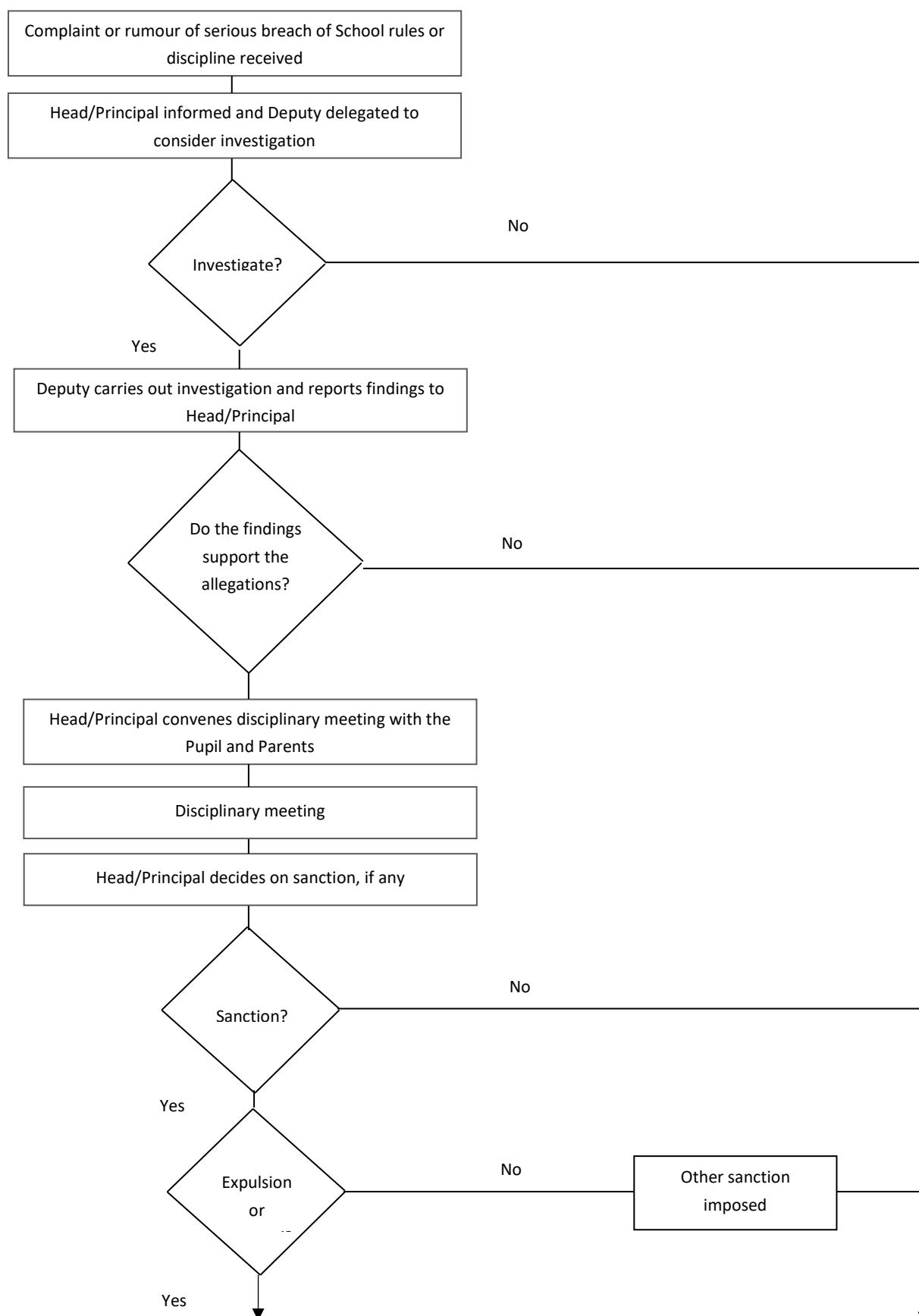


Procedure

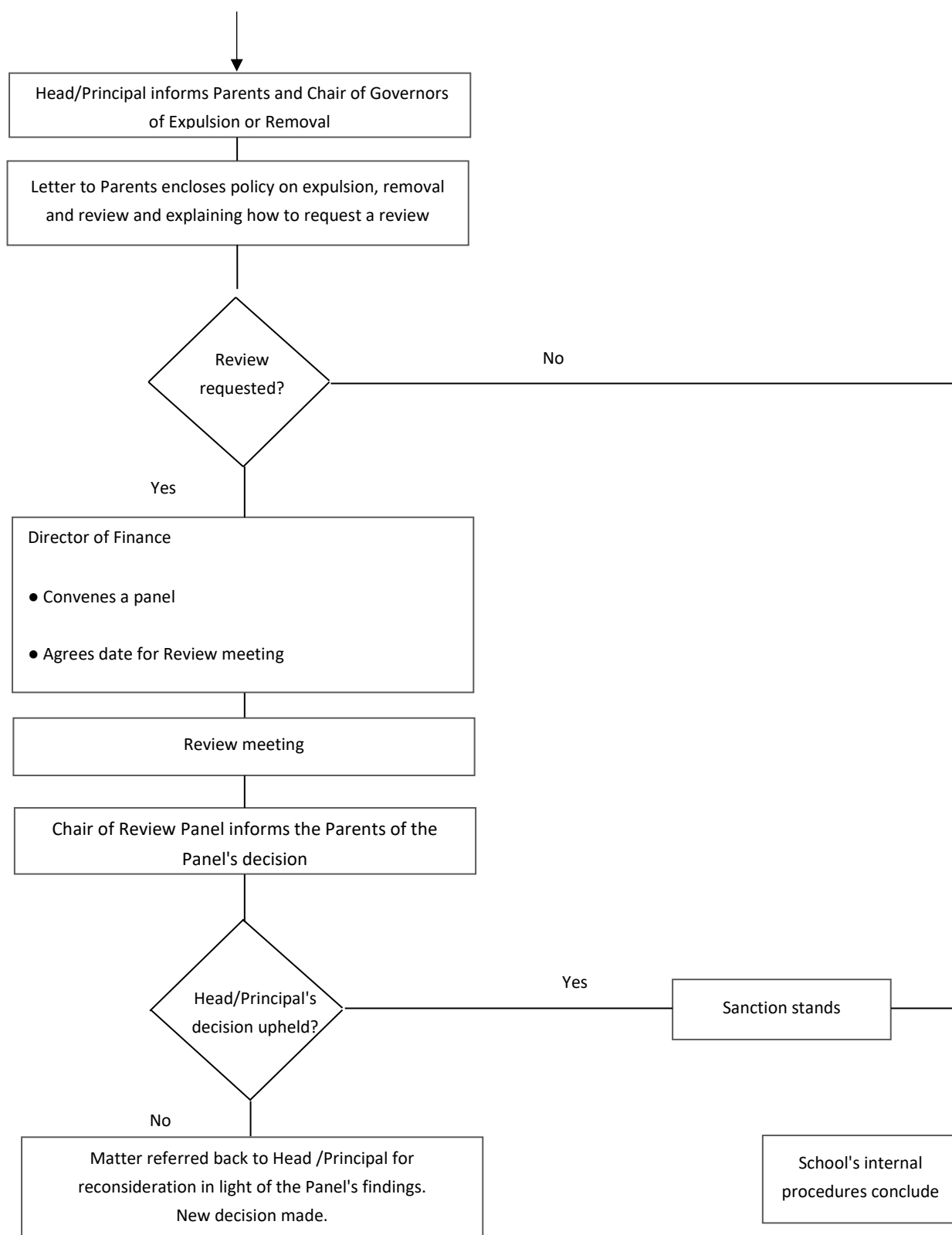
The procedure followed by the School in cases where a sanction of Expulsion or Removal may be imposed by the Head/Principal (as applicable) are summarised in the flowchart at **Appendix 1** to this Policy. The three stages of this procedure are as follows:

- **Stage 1: Investigation procedure** - further details of the procedures to be followed at this stage are set out in **Appendix 2**
- **Stage 2: Disciplinary meeting with the Principal/Head** - further details of the disciplinary meeting are set out in **Appendix 3**.
- **Stage 3: Governors' Review meeting** - further details of the Review meeting are set out in **Appendix 4**.

Appendix 1 Procedural flowchart



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Appendix 2 - Investigation procedure

Complaints

Investigation of a complaint or rumour about serious misconduct will be co-ordinated by a senior member of staff, and its outcome will be reported to the Head/Principal (as applicable). The Parents will be informed as soon as reasonably practicable if a complaint under investigation is of a nature that could result in the pupil being expelled or removed from the School.

Suspension

A pupil may be suspended from the School while a complaint is being investigated or while an investigation is suspended (see paragraph 6 below). Should a suspension continue for a period of more than one school day, the School will take reasonable steps to put in place arrangements to ensure the continuing education of the pupil. The Head of Year or Highfield Deputy Head will co-ordinate these arrangements with the pupil's parents. The parents or guardians should note that there may be a delay in providing work whilst teaching staff are given the opportunity to determine what work should be set. Alternatively, in exceptional circumstances and at the Principal's discretion, the pupil may be placed under a segregated regime on School premises. The pupil will be unavailable for school representation (e.g. trips and visits, fixtures) whilst temporarily excluded. The Head of Year/Highfield Deputy will telephone the parents to briefly explain the breach of discipline and will request that parents collect their child as soon as possible and will send them a copy of this policy at this stage.

Where the outcome of an investigation might find against the pupil and the appropriate sanction would result in removal or expulsion, the pupil and parents will be informed at the point of investigation and/or suspension that this could be a likely outcome.

Search

We may decide to search a pupil's space and belongings and ask him/her to turn out the contents of pockets or a bag, if we consider there is reasonable cause to do so. The search will be carried out in line with government guidance (found [here](#)) and care will be taken to ensure reasonable privacy. This policy does not authorise an intimate search or physical compulsion in removing clothing. Only outer clothing will be searched. If necessary, the police would be called and an appropriate adult will remain with the child. A search must be conducted by two members of staff, and only after authorisation from the Principal/Head or the senior member of staff on-call.

See also Appendix 4 of the School's Behaviour Policy for the School's policy on searching and confiscation.

Interview

A pupil may be interviewed informally by a member of staff to establish whether there are grounds for a formal investigation. If the pupil is then interviewed formally about a complaint or rumour, this

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will usually be carried out by two members of staff and arrangements will be made for him/her to be accompanied by a member of staff of his/her choice and/or by a parent (if available at the relevant time). A minute of the interview will be recorded in writing by one of the interviewing members of staff.

Ethos

An investigation and any subsequent meeting will be conducted fairly and in a way which is appropriate to a school, without formal legal procedures. Everything will be done to ensure the pupil is comfortable throughout the process.

Suspension of an investigation

It may be necessary to suspend an investigation, for example where external agencies such as the police or social services are involved and have advised that this is necessary. A decision to suspend an investigation will take into account advice from an appropriate external agency and will be subject to periodic review.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disability

The School will ensure the needs of a pupil with special educational needs or a disability are fully met, to the best of the School's ability during the investigation process.

Appendix 3 Disciplinary meeting

1. **Preparation:** The Chair of Governors will be informed of the meeting. Documents available at the disciplinary meeting before the Head/Principal (as applicable) will include:
 - a statement setting out the points of complaint against the pupil
 - written statements and notes of the evidence supporting the complaint, and any relevant correspondence
 - the investigation report prepared by the senior member of staff
 - the pupil's school file and (if separate) conduct record
 - the relevant School policies and procedures.

2. **Attendance:** The pupil and his/her parents (if available) will be asked to attend the disciplinary meeting with the Head/Principal (as applicable) at which the senior member of staff appointed to investigate the matter will explain the circumstances of the complaint and his/her investigation.

The pupil may also 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. Where possible, 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.

If the parents or the pupil have any special needs or disability which call for additional facilities or adjustments (e.g. parking or the provision of documents in large print or other accessible format) those requirements should be made known to the Head/Principal (as applicable) so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

If a parent is unable to attend because of, for example, travel and working commitments, the School will make reasonable alternative arrangements to ensure the parent can be involved, remotely if necessary, with the disciplinary process and their child's education.

3. **Proceedings:** There are potentially three distinct stages of a disciplinary meeting:

3.1 The Complaint/s: The Head/Principal (as applicable) will consider the complaint/s and the evidence, including statements made by and/or on behalf of the pupil. Unless the Head/Principal (as applicable) considers that further investigation is needed, she/he 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/Principal (as applicable) will not normally refer to the pupil's disciplinary record at this stage.

3.2 The Sanction: If the complaint has been proved the Head/Principal (as applicable) will outline the range of disciplinary sanctions which she/he considers are open to her/him.

He/she will take into account any further statement which the pupil and/or others present on his behalf wish to make. The pupil's disciplinary record will be taken into account.

Then, or at some later time, normally within one school day, the Head/Principal (as applicable) will give her/his decision in writing, with reasons. For pupils of Highfield Pre-School or Highfield, the Head will discuss a decision to Expel or Remove a pupil with the Principal before providing the written decision to parents.

3.3 Leaving Status: If the Head/Principal (as applicable) decides that the pupil must leave the School, he/she will consult with a parent before deciding on the pupil's leaving status (see below).

- 4. Delayed effect:** A decision to Expel or Remove a pupil shall take effect seven days after the decision was first communicated to a parent. Until then, the pupil shall remain suspended and away from School premises. If within seven days the parents have made a written application for a Review by the Governors of the decision, the pupil shall remain suspended until the Review has taken place and either the sanction is upheld or a reconsidered decision made.

5. Leaving status

5.1 Explanation: If a pupil is Expelled or Removed, his/her leaving status will be one of the following:

- Expelled
- Removed
- Withdrawn - if the offer is made and accepted by parents

5.2 Detail: Additional points of leaving status include:

- the form of letter which will be written to the parents and the form of announcement in the School
- 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
- whether the pupil will be entitled to leavers' privileges
- whether the pupil will be eligible for membership of the alumni

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- 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; refunded of prepaid fees.

Appendix 4 Review

1. **Request for review:** A pupil or his/her parents may request a Governors' Review of the Head's/Principal's decision to Expel or Remove a pupil. The application must be made in writing using the Request Form at **Appendix 5** and received by the Director of Finance within seven days of the decision being notified to the parents, or longer by agreement. If the parents or the pupil have any special needs or disabilities which call for additional facilities or adjustments, these should be made known to Director of Finance so that appropriate arrangements can be made.
2. **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. For the avoidance of doubt, a mere disagreement with the decision of the Head/Principal (as applicable) will not of itself be grounds sufficient for a Governors' Review.
3. **Review Panel:** The Review will be undertaken by a three-member sub-committee of the Governing Body. The panel members will have no detailed previous knowledge of the case or of the pupil or parents and will not include the Chair of Governors. Selection of the Review Panel will be made by the Director of Finance. With the exception of the Chair of Governors, those Governors not appointed to the Panel will not be provided with information about the case. 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. The Panel may, if requested by the parents, include an independent member who has no connection with the management or running of the School.
4. **Role of the Panel:** The role of the Panel is to consider the documentation provided by the parties and representations made and to decide whether to uphold the decision of the Head/Principal (as applicable) or refer the decision back to him/her with recommendations so that he/she may consider the matter further.
5. **Review meeting:** The meeting will take place at the School premises, normally within ten School days after the parents' application has been received. A Review will not normally take place during school holidays. The parents and the Head/Principal (as applicable) will be asked to submit any documents they wish to refer to at the meeting to the Director of Finance and a single bundle will be circulated to each member of the Panel and the parties simultaneously at least three School days before the meeting. On receipt of new information not previously available to the Head/Principal (as applicable) before his/her decision was made, the Director of Finance should contact the Chair of Governors who will decide whether:
 - to include the new information in the bundle; or
 - to omit the information if not relevant to the grounds for Review; or
 - to make further enquiries of the parents or the pupil about the information; or
 - to refer the information to the Principal for her consideration as to whether the decision should be revisited.

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Expulsion, Removal and Review Policy

A Review meeting is a private procedure and all those who are concerned in it are required to keep its proceedings confidential, subject to law. The requirement is without prejudice to the parties' right to refer to the Panel's decision in any subsequent legal proceedings.

6. Attendance: Those present at the Review meeting will normally be:

- members of the Review Panel and an appointed Clerk
- the Head/Principal (as applicable) and any relevant member of staff whom the pupil or his/her parents have asked should attend and whom the Head/Principal (as applicable) 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 meeting is not a legal proceeding and so legal representation is not necessary. The Director of Finance must be given seven days' notice if the friend or relation is legally qualified and the parents should note that the Review Panel will wish to speak to them directly and this person will not be permitted to act as an advocate.

7. 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 meeting will not be recorded but the Clerk will be asked to keep a hand-written minute of the main points which 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 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 may at his/her discretion adjourn or terminate the meeting. If the meeting is terminated, the original decision will stand.

8. Procedure: The Head/Principal (as applicable) will provide the parents with a copy of the current Review procedure if requested. The Panel will consider each of the points raised by the pupil or his/her parents and any documentation they wish to rely on so far as relevant to:

- **whether the decision was fair procedurally and/or substantively** - whether the facts of the case were sufficiently proved and an appropriate procedure followed when the decision was taken to Expel or Remove of the pupil. The civil standard of proof, namely, "the balance of probability", will apply and
- **whether the sanction was proportionate** - that is whether it was warranted in respect of the breach of discipline or the other events that 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 at the time and ask the Clerk to note their dissatisfaction and the reasons for it.

9. **Decision:** When the Chair decides that all issues have been sufficiently discussed, he/she may conclude the meeting and the Panel will consider its decision and recommendations. The Panel's decision and any recommendations will be notified in writing, with reasons, to the Head/Principal (as applicable) and the parents by the Chair of the Review Panel within three days of the meeting. The Principal will provide her response to those recommendations, if appropriate, in writing within 24 hours. In the absence of a significant procedural irregularity, the decision of the Head/Principal (as applicable) will then be final.

Appendix 5 - Form for requesting a Review

To [●]

Subject [Name of pupil]

I/we request a Review of the Principal's decision to expel or require the removal of the above-named pupil. I/we agree that the Review will be carried out in accordance with the Review Procedure supplied to us with this form and I/we agree to abide by the terms of that Procedure and in particular that the proceedings are and will remain confidential subject to law and that the decision of the Head/Principal (as applicable) following consideration of the recommendations made by the Panel will be final, subject to such legal rights (if any) as may exist.

I/we confirm that I/we have parental responsibility for the above-named pupil and that I/we have consulted the pupil who wishes the Review to be undertaken.

I/we understand that the Panel will be concerned with the fairness and proportionality of the decision of the Head/Principal (as applicable) in accordance with the School's existing policies (where applicable and relevant) on educational, pastoral care and administration matters.

I/we understand that we may be accompanied at the Review meeting by a friend or relation and that I/we may ask up to two members of the School staff to attend the meeting and speak on behalf of the pupil if they are willing to do so. If I/we wish to bring a friend or relation who is legally qualified I/we will provide seven days' notice as required.

I/we will inform [●] if I/we have any special needs or disabilities requiring additional facilities or adjustments.

The grounds upon which I/we seek a Review and the matters which I/we wish to discuss at the Review and to ask the Panel to take into account are as set out in a statement attached to this sheet.

(Two signatures required where practicable)

Signed	Signed
Full name	Full name
Relationship to pupil	Relationship to pupil
Date	Date
Address	Address
Telephone number	Telephone number