



# Wimbledon College

## **EXCLUSION** *advice for parents*

*Please read this leaflet carefully. It contains important information and advice about your son's exclusion, including your legal rights and responsibilities. It forms part of the Head Master's exclusion letter.*



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## **EXCLUSION** *advice for parents*

### exclusion

Exclusion is a response to a serious breach of discipline. This includes persistent disruptive behaviour, violence, threatening or reckless behaviour, bullying, theft and criminal damage, serious or persistent breaking of school rules, and flat refusal to follow instructions.

The school has a behaviour policy and strategies for dealing with poor behaviour. Alternatives will have been considered before taking the decision to exclude.

The decision to exclude a pupil is not taken lightly. Care and consideration will have been given to all the circumstances of the behaviour or incident which has led to the decision to exclude.

The exclusion will be for a length of time which is no longer than necessary to address the misbehaviour and impose a reasonable sanction which reflects the nature of the offence.

The school is required to follow statutory guidance and procedures to ensure your son is treated fairly and that the exclusion procedure is well understood by himself and his parents.

Exclusion may be for a fixed period or permanent.

### fixed period exclusions

Fixed period exclusions fall into three categories:

- exclusions of 5 days or fewer
- exclusions of 6 to 15 days or exclusions which total 6 to 15 days in one term

- exclusions over 15 days or exclusions which total more than 15 days in one term

There is a limit of 45 days to the time for which a pupil may be excluded in any one school year.

Special rules apply if an exclusion would mean that your son misses a public examination.

As a result of further investigation or information, the Head Master may extend a fixed period exclusion or change it to a permanent exclusion.

## informing you of the exclusion

The school will have tried to contact you by 'phone to inform you of the exclusion. The 'phone call will have been made by your son's Pastoral Support Assistant (PSA), his Head of Line or a Deputy Head.

He will then have been sent home with a copy of the Head Master's exclusion letter and this advice leaflet for parents. A second copy of the letter is sent by post.

## your responsibilities

During exclusion your son may not come into school or take part in any school activity.

You have a legal duty to ensure that your child is not found in a public place during normal school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of exclusion.

This requirement applies whether or not your son is in your company.

Failure to comply with this legal requirement is an offence and you may be prosecuted or given a fixed penalty notice of £50 rising to £100 after 28 days.

The police have powers to remove your son from a public place if he is excluded from school.

## meeting

We will invite you into school to discuss your son's exclusion. This meeting will usually be within a short time of the beginning of the exclusion.

Your son should also attend the meeting and wear his school uniform. At the meeting he will be given a further opportunity to explain his side of things.

The meeting will usually be conducted by the Deputy Head with pastoral responsibility for your son and the Head of Line.

We would ask you

- to listen to what the school has to say about the behaviour or incident which led to the exclusion
- to understand that your son's previous behaviour, and his failure to respond to warnings or other disciplinary measures, may have contributed to the decision to exclude on this occasion
- to ask if you need guidance on what to do next if you still disagree with the school's decision to exclude

We will listen to your views (and those of your son) and answer your questions. At the meeting we will want:

- if possible to get agreement on the facts of the case
- to have a shared understanding of why exclusion was an appropriate disciplinary action
- to agree a way forward with the school and parents working together in support of your son
- to get your son to commit himself to certain targets and standards of behaviour

The law requires us to apply a standard of proof which is the balance of probabilities, i.e. it is more probable than not that your son did what he is alleged to have done. It may not always be possible to get complete agreement but we will work with you to move forward and both support your son and challenge him to meet acceptable standards of behaviour.

## your son's part

Your son will have been given an opportunity to explain his behaviour. He will usually have been asked to do so in writing. Consideration will have been given to what he says and he will only have been excluded if the school believes that his behaviour warrants it.

If a governors' hearing is held, your son is allowed and encouraged to attend the hearing and to speak on his own behalf if he wishes to do so and you agree.

When your son returns to school, he will have a meeting with his Head of Line and is likely to be on daily report, have a behaviour contract or a pastoral support plan (PSP) to ensure he knows what is expected and to monitor his progress in meeting those expectations.

## schoolwork during the exclusion

Work for your son to do during his exclusion will be sent, emailed or 'phoned home by the Head of Line or PSA, or left at school reception for you to collect.

Your son should bring the completed work with him on the day he returns to school. If the exclusion is for a long period of time, you are responsible for returning work to school and collecting new work.

If your son has examinations during the exclusion, special arrangements will be made by his Head of Line.

## exclusions of six days or longer

All state schools are required by law to make arrangements for the full time education of pupils excluded for six or more days. They are required to do this by entering into partnership arrangements with other schools.

Wimbledon College has a partnership arrangement with The London Oratory School to make provision for each other's excluded pupils.

Boys excluded from Wimbledon College will attend at the London Oratory School from the sixth day of a fixed period exclusion until the end of the exclusion. They will be set work by their own teachers at Wimbledon College and complete that work at the Oratory School under supervision.

The London Oratory School  
Seagrave Road  
London SW6 1RX

Boys will wear their usual Wimbledon College school uniform and will participate in physical education activities as available.

Attendance is a legal requirement.

## the reintegration interview

If the exclusion is for six days or longer, the law requires us to hold a reintegration interview. The purpose of the interview is:

- to discuss the school's and the parents' joint responsibility for your child's behaviour in school
- to discuss how your son's behaviour can be addressed
- to explore any wider issues that may be affecting your son's behaviour
- to reach agreement on how best to proceed with your son's education and what measures can be put in place to prevent further misbehaviour
- and to consider a parenting contract

The reintegration interview must take place during the period your son is excluded or up to 15 days afterwards. The law requires the school to arrange an interview for all exclusions of 6 days or longer. However, it is our practice to hold interviews for all exclusions.

Failure to attend a reintegration interview will be a factor that may be taken into account by a magistrate's court if, on future application, they consider whether to impose a parenting order.

# making representation to the governors

You have the right to make representation to the school's governing body. If you wish to do this, you should email or write to the Clerk to the Governors as soon as possible:

The Clerk to the Board of Governors  
Wimbledon College  
Edge Hill  
London SW19 4NS  
clerk@wimbledoncollege.org.uk

The Clerk will pass your letter or email to the Chair of the Pastoral Committee. A governors' hearing will usually involve three governors and the Clerk.

## exclusions of 5 days or fewer

If you request it, the governors must review exclusions of 5 days or fewer. However, the governors cannot change the decision of the Head Master to exclude. The governors are not required to meet you to conduct their review and may do so by considering what you write and documentation submitted by the school. They may add their findings to your son's school record.

## exclusions of 6 to 15 days

If you request it, the governors must review any exclusions which are for between six and fifteen days, or which total 6 to 15 days in one school term. The governors can uphold the Head Master's decision to exclude or they can direct the reinstatement of the pupil. The hearing must be convened between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 50<sup>th</sup> day after receiving notice of the exclusion (which will usually be the day the exclusion starts). If the exclusion has come to an end by the time the hearing is held, the governors can place their findings on the pupil's record.

## exclusions over 15 days

The governors must meet to review exclusions of 15 days or more, or which total more than 15 days in one school term. The governors can uphold the Head Master's decision to exclude or they can direct the reinstatement of the pupil. The hearing must be convened between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> day after receiving notice of the exclusion (which will usually be the day the exclusion starts). The governors can uphold an exclusion, or they can uphold the appeal and direct the reinstatement of the pupil.

# independent appeal

If your son is permanently excluded and the school governors uphold the Head Master's decision, you have the right to appeal to an independent appeal panel. The Local Authority's democratic services department arranges the appeal hearing and you will be notified of the date of the hearing and the procedures that will be followed.

You must appeal within 15 school days of the governors' decision and the independent hearing must be held within 15 school days of you notifying the Local Authority of your wish to appeal.

There is no independent appeal for fixed-term exclusions.

## disability discrimination

If your son has a disability and you think disability discrimination has occurred, you have the right to appeal or make a claim of disability discrimination to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal:

SENDIST  
Mowden Hall  
Staindrop Road  
Darlington DL3 9DN  
0870 241 2555 (*special educational needs helpline*)  
0870 606 5750 (*discrimination helpline*)  
sendistqueries@tribunals.gsi.gov.uk  
sendist.gov.uk

## your son's school record

You have the right to see your son's school record. If you wish to see his record you need to make a request in writing to the Head Master.

The arrangement we usually make is for you to come into school and to have access to your son's record in a private room. If there are any papers you would like to take away, we will be happy to photocopy them for you.

If you wish to have a photocopy of the full record, we can send this to you or arrange for you to collect it. However, as school records are often very lengthy (they contain documents from the beginning of primary school and we, by law, do not have the discretion to decide what to include or leave out) we will usually make a charge for doing so.

The law requires us to make the school record available within 15 school days of receiving your request.

## contacting the school

If you have any questions or need further information about your son's exclusion, please do get in touch with the school at the earliest opportunity.

Your first point of contact should be your son's Head of Line or the Deputy Head.

The school telephone number is 020 8946 2533

The school email address is [mail@wimbledoncollege.org.uk](mailto:mail@wimbledoncollege.org.uk)

Specific 'phone numbers and email addresses for Heads of Line, Deputy Heads and the Head Master are listed on the school website: [wimbledoncollege.org.uk](http://wimbledoncollege.org.uk)

## further help and advice

You may wish to contact the Exclusions Officer for the Local Authority (the London Borough of Merton) who can also offer advice:

Mr Alan Elliott  
Parent Partnership Service  
Hillcross Primary School  
Ashridge Way  
Morden  
London SM4 4EE  
020 8543 8671  
[education@merton.gov.uk](mailto:education@merton.gov.uk)  
[merton.gov.uk/schools/exclusions.htm](http://merton.gov.uk/schools/exclusions.htm)

The Advisory Centre for Education is an independent national advice centre for parents of children in state schools. They offer information and support on state education in England and Wales, including on exclusion from school. They can be contacted at:

Advisory Centre for Education  
1c Aberdeen Studios  
22 Highbury Grove  
London N5 2DQ  
020 7704 9822 (*exclusions advice line*)  
0808 800 5793 (*freephone*)  
[ace-ed.org.uk](http://ace-ed.org.uk)

The statutory Code of Practice relating to exclusions is available on the Department for Children, Schools and Families' (DCSF) website ([www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications)): *Improving Behaviour and Attendance: Guidance on Exclusion from Schools and Pupil Referral Units* (September 2007).

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