

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

1. AIMS

Birchwood College aims to provide a safe and positive learning environment for the students, the staff and the people who visit. It aims to ensure that everyone in the College feels safe, is able to learn without disruption, and is treated with respect.

Birchwood College wants everyone to achieve their own personal best and work cooperatively with others so that they can achieve theirs. We want everyone to feel valued, secure and confident.

By signing this document during enrolment, all students are deemed to have accepted this Code of Conduct and agree to abide by its contents.

Aims for the College

This policy requires the college to:

- promote a culture in which all students are able to learn to the best of their ability
- maintain a calm, respectful environment, in which all members feel safe, valued and able to contribute
- provide a clear framework so that staff, students and parents / carers understand what is expected of them
- promote a shared understanding of what we mean by acceptable behaviour
- ensure that the rights of all are respected equally

Each student should:

- be able to learn and achieve at the highest level possible
- understand what we mean by acceptable behaviour
- take responsibility for their own behaviour and its consequences
- be aware of how their behaviour affects others, so that they can become responsible members of the College and wider community
- feel safe, valued and respected
- aspire to succeed through praise and encouragement

Each member of staff should:

- be able to work effectively in an atmosphere conducive to student learning
- understand their role in promoting positive behaviour
- feel safe, valued, and treated with respect
- receive support from parents / carers, with appropriate input from senior leaders if this is not given

Each parent / carer should:

- be informed about the College's expectations and sanctions
- be made aware of important issues regarding their child's progress and behaviour in College
- feel able to talk to an appropriate member of staff if they have concerns or questions
- understand their rights and responsibilities as parents / carers within the College community

Scope of the Policy

The Policy applies to all students:

- on College premises, during College hours or during out of College activities
- on the way to or from College, including on public transport
- under supervision on off-site visits, including residential trips and sporting events
- representing the College, for example whilst on work experience

Promoting Good Behaviour

We promote good behaviour within Birchwood College by:

- use of a student agreement that sets out the College's expectations on behaviour for all students
- focussing on the positive aspects of students' behaviour through a culture of praise and reward
- communicating to students what we mean by acceptable behaviour, including through assemblies and IAG sessions
- applying commonly agreed expectations, rules, sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly so that students are given clear messages without contradiction
- ensuring that staff model good behaviour, with a focus on the development of mutual respect, understanding and courtesy at the heart of all interaction with students
- providing further support to help those students who struggle to understand what constitutes acceptable behaviour
- engaging parents / carers as partners in promoting good behaviour including through the student agreement and by communicating this policy to all parents / carers

Teachers promote good behaviour in lessons by:

- using Behaviour for Learning techniques so that students experience a consistent approach to behaviour management within each of their lessons
- providing a safe, stimulating and orderly environment for learning
- actively using praise to encourage and motivate all students to contribute and succeed
- planning and delivering appropriate and challenging lessons, taking into account the ability range of the students and any additional learning needs
- using Assessment for Learning techniques so that students are provided with effective feedback to help them to improve
- planning homework tasks carefully so that all students understand what is expected of them
- explaining to students the reasons for any sanctions and being prepared to listen to a student's point of view when it is appropriately expressed

Promoting Good Attendance

There is a clear link between attendance and attainment of students. Students are expected to maintain an attendance of above 95%. We encourage this by:

- use of an appropriately differentiated curriculum to engage all our learners
- high quality teaching and learning
- appropriate pastoral network to support any personal issues
- partnership with parents / carers
- use of assemblies and IAG sessions to reinforce the message
- use of rewards for those with excellent attendance
- discouraging parents / carers from taking students out of College in term-time
- use of the attendance policy

If a student is unavoidably absent from College, they are expected to contact college to provide a reason for their absence. If the absence is repeated, parents / carers are asked to contact College to explain the absence. If absence persists, a medical note is required to prove absence.

Birchwood College will operate a first day response, contacting parents/carers via text message or phone call in order to explain the students' absence.

Students are electronically registered in every lesson. Lesson registration also identifies persistent lateness to lessons and other trends in attendance.

Taking Account of Individual Student Needs

A range of support is available to students to help them to overcome difficulties in meeting the College's expectations on behaviour and attendance. These include:

- Coaching and support from a personal Form Tutor
- Involvement of the college teaching assistant where relevant for students with additional needs
- Support offered from the college pastoral team (including Head of College, Assistant College Leader, College Administrator)
- Bursary / Hardship funds
- Involvement of the Safeguarding Team where appropriate, including the Emotional Health Worker and Education Welfare Officer
- Use of external agencies in supporting a student where appropriate

Vulnerable Groups:

There is due regard for the rights and needs of students deemed to be "at risk", including minority ethnic and faith groups, travellers, asylum seekers and refugees, students who have English as an additional language, Looked After Children, sick children, young carers and any others at risk of disaffection. Any special needs or disabilities students may have are also taken into account when addressing behaviour issues.

The College monitors exclusion and attendance data to ensure that particular groups are not being discriminated against in the application of this policy.

Rewards and Sanctions

There is a focus on the positive, with sanctions used only when absolutely necessary and for the minority who are not meeting our expectations.

Sanctions

Sanctions are used to modify the behaviour of those students not meeting our expectations. Sanctions used are reasonable and proportionate, taking into account the individual needs of the student and the needs of the wider College community.

Dealing with Low Level Disruption, Minor Incidents and Isolated Incidents in Lessons:

All staff are responsible for maintaining an orderly environment. The classroom teacher deals with low-level disruption in lessons; each member of staff is expected to deal with any minor incidents they see around College.

Strategies include:

- Clear reminders about acceptable behaviour
- Warnings
- Moving the student to another place within the classroom
- Removal from the classroom to work in an alternative location

Repeated Disruption in Lessons or Non-compliance:

If a student does not respond to the low level sanctions noted above, or for more sustained disruption, further sanctions are available, including meeting parents / carers, official verbal and written warnings offered by the college leadership team, use of contracts and eventually removal from courses.

Banned Items and Confiscation

All members of staff have the power to confiscate items from students (see below) and must arrange to do so when they see an item that is:

- A banned item, for example: alcohol; a weapon, or anything that could be used as such
- A health or safety hazard
- Inappropriate material, for example that of an extremist, racist or pornographic nature

If the item confiscated is of monetary value, it must be handed in to the College Office as soon as possible. If an item is of no monetary value, it may be disposed of. The College also reserves the right to dispose of any item that it would be illegal for a student to have. Other items are usually returned to students at the end of the day but may be kept for longer. Parents/carers will be informed of any confiscations. Whilst every precaution is taken to ensure that confiscated items are kept safely, the College does not take responsibility for their loss or damage and reserves the right to keep any item.

Mobile Phones

Students are allowed to bring mobile phones into College, although the College takes no responsibility for such items. The College also reserves the right to request viewing of any content thought to be used for bullying or inappropriate actions. Phones are not allowed to be used during lesson time unless instructed to do so by the member of staff.

Powers to Search Students

The College has the authority to search students, with and without their consent, for any item which is banned by the College. The power to search **with consent** has been delegated to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) at Birchwood Community High School. Only members of SLT may search students or their possessions **without consent**, where they suspect the student has weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs or stolen items.

Anyone searching a student, with or without consent, must have another member of staff present as a witness. If a female student has to be searched, a female member of staff should be present.

Exclusions

The Head Teacher, or his / her delegate, may use fixed term or permanent exclusion in response to incidents of a very serious nature.

A list of incidents leading to possible fixed term or permanent exclusion can be found in Criteria for Exclusion (see below). This list is not exhaustive but gives an indication of the level of incident that may lead to exclusion.

When deciding upon exclusion, the Head Teacher (or his/her delegate) will take account of any special educational needs or disability that might affect the decision, and any relevant cultural or religious issues. A record will be kept of actions taken during the investigation of any incident leading to exclusion.

If a student is excluded from College, the College will:

- Inform the parent / carer immediately, in writing, of the reason for the exclusion.
- Set work for any short term exclusion
- Arrange a readmission meeting, at which the reasons for the exclusion will be further discussed

A student may be sent home whilst investigations that may lead to exclusion are carried out.

Criteria for Exclusion

Fixed Term Exclusion may be appropriate for:

Persistent failure to comply with College expectations, despite the use of other sanctions.

- Gambling on site
- Racially motivated incidents
- Homophobic abuse
- Fraud or theft
- Repeated violation of the College non-smoking policy
- Vandalism to College property, including outside of College hours
- Inviting unauthorised personnel onto College site
- Drinking of, or possession of alcohol, drugs or solvents on site
- Arriving in College in an intoxicated state, under the influence of alcohol, drugs or solvents

- Threatening behaviour towards a member of staff or their family and / or their property (on or off College site)
- False and / or malicious accusations against staff
- Persistent bullying, including cyber bullying / misuse of mobile phones and other social networking media
- Misusing images of another student or member of staff
- Behaviour outside of College which brings the College into disrepute
- Being in possession of a weapon on site
- Inappropriate internet access
- Deliberate activation of the College fire alarm
- Verbal abuse / defiance of a member of staff
- Assault even in cases of self-defence or retaliation
- Involvement in serious criminal proceedings or other police involvement were deemed to affect the good order of the College

Permanent exclusion may be appropriate for all of the above and:

- Supply or trafficking of a drug / substance / alcohol
- Bringing unauthorised personnel onto the site
- Threatening use of a weapon
- Arson or vandalism
- Sexual assault
- Assault causing injury
- Repeated and persistent misbehaviour, as detailed in the criteria for fixed term exclusion
- Intimidating or posing a threat to another student or member of staff, either on or off site
- Behaving in a way that could damage the name of the College within the community
- Non-attendance

Instances of permanent exclusion will always be reported to the parent/carer where possible, and to the Chair of Governors. The reasons for the permanent exclusion will be clearly stated. The student/parent/carer will be informed of their right of appeal.

In certain circumstances, eg. arson, possession of illegal drugs, sexual assault, theft, carrying a weapon or assault causing injury, the police may be contacted.

Safeguards

The permanent exclusion of a student is a last resort and the College will take all reasonable steps to avoid such exclusion.

Such reasonable steps may include:

- Exhausting other appropriate sanctions
- Interviews with the student and parents / carers
- Meeting any special educational needs of the student
- Negotiating agreements with the student and parents / carers
- Issuing formal warnings
- Fixed term exclusions
- The involvement of other agencies

Permanent exclusion can follow from one incident if this is sufficiently serious or an accumulation of several less serious issues.

Appeals against Exclusion

Students / parents/ carers can appeal against disciplinary action using the BCAT Exclusions and Appeals Policy

Roles and Responsibilities

Students have the responsibility to:

- attend College each day on time for all lessons or timetabled sessions
- follow the College rules and accept responsibility for their mistakes when they occur
- follow without question any reasonable instruction from a member of staff
- treat all members of the College with respect and listen to their views
- report problems to an appropriate member of staff so that they can be dealt with properly
- allow teachers to teach and other students to learn without interruption or disruption
- complete work and homework to the best of their ability and within the deadlines set by teachers
- seek help with work when there are problems with understanding
- take responsibility for missed lessons by liaising with the teacher to catch up on missed work
- treat the laptops with care, locking them away and on charge after use
- not bully others, abuse them or their property
- avoid any form of aggressive behaviour, including offensive or foul language
- Dress appropriately for college

Staff have the responsibility to:

- plan and deliver appropriate and challenging lessons, taking account of the ability range and any special needs within the class
- be punctual to lessons
- provide a safe, stimulating and orderly environment for learning, encouraging all students to be able to contribute and succeed
- provide effective feedback to enable students to improve
- support and enforce the College rules consistently and fairly
- explain to students the reasons for sanctions and to be prepared to listen to their point of view, provided it is properly expressed
- communicate with parents / carers as appropriate to provide them with relevant information to help their children
- support other staff members appropriately.

Parents / carers have the responsibility to:

- ensure that they are familiar with College expectations and rules as expressed in the Student Agreement
- inform College about any issues that may affect a student's behaviour
- support the College in any reasonable action it takes to improve a student's behaviour
- attend any meetings reasonably requested by the College
- treat members of staff with the respect and courtesy expected of all members of our community

Governors have the responsibility to:

- ensure that College policies / procedures are fair and consistent
- deal with complaints and appeals in line with the College complaints procedures
- ensure that there is no discrimination in the implementation of any policy

Last Reviewed: July 2023

Next review: July 2024