



“Inspiring learning, developing character, building futures”

## **Student Support Policies and Procedures**

### **Positive behaviour policy and disciplinary procedures**

*Aim: To create a safe and secure environment and promote positive behaviour to ensure that all students are supported to be successful in their academic studies and are prepared for their future careers.*

Policy Authorisation:	Management: Senior Leadership Team
Date of Policy Update:	September 2025
Date of Policy Review:	September 2027
Policy Author	College Lead for Safeguarding and Behaviour

# Positive behaviour policy and disciplinary procedures

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# 1. Introduction

Our college mission is “inspiring learning, developing character, building futures.” This policy aims to support this mission by promoting positive behaviour among students. The college’s positive behaviour approach will:

- Foster self-confidence and self-discipline in students.
- Ensure a safe and effective learning environment.
- Prepare students for academic success and success in their next steps.

We have high expectations for student behaviour and clearly outline the consequences of not meeting these standards. Good behaviour and self-discipline are crucial for effective learning and long-term success.

We recognise that inappropriate behaviour may indicate unmet social or emotional needs, but students are accountable for their choices. Addressing behaviour issues involves understanding the reasons behind them and intervening early to prevent escalation and further disciplinary action.

Behaviour expectations are detailed and discussed during student induction. Serious breaches of conduct may result in formal disciplinary procedures, including possible withdrawal from the college.

Students are responsible for their behaviour, but we appreciate that parents and carers play a crucial role. We ask parents and carers to support our efforts and attend meetings if needed. Open communication between parents/carers and the college is encouraged to address any concerns and provide the right support and challenge.

## 2. Scope

This policy and its associated procedures apply to all students at the college and to prospective students when at college. This policy also applies to student behaviour away from college if the reputation of the college is compromised and/or the behaviour has a negative impact on a college activity or other students.

There is a separate Assessment Malpractice and Plagiarism Policy to deal with assessment misconduct, such as plagiarism and inappropriate use of AI, which is aligned to this policy.

## 3. Positive behaviour approach

Our approach to managing behaviour is consistent and structured:

- **Understand students:** Build relationships and be vigilant for signs of concern.
- **Explore reasons:** Show professional curiosity to understand the underlying causes.
- **Challenge:** Encouraging the student to take responsibility for their actions and understand the impact on themselves and others.
- **Support:** Work together with students, staff, and families to address concerns.

- **Focus on change:** Agree what needs to happen to put things right or to make things better in the future.

## 4. Formal disciplinary procedures

### 4.1 General principles

No formal disciplinary action will be taken against a student until the college has investigated the circumstances of the alleged misconduct.

Consideration will always be given to mitigating or extenuating circumstances such as learning difficulties or disability and serious personal or family problems. However, these factors may not excuse unacceptable behaviour.

At every stage of the formal disciplinary process, a disciplinary meeting will be held. A student has the right to be advised of the reason for any meeting. The purpose of a meeting is to discuss the concerns, understand the reasons and develop a plan to address them.

If a student fails, without good reason, to attend a meeting which they have been advised to attend, the meeting can take place and a decision may be made in the student's absence.

Throughout the formal disciplinary procedures targets/expectations will be set, as well as any identified areas of support for the students to achieve these targets. This will be agreed as part of a discussion with the student.

Parent(s)/carer(s) will be informed in writing whenever formal disciplinary procedures are implemented.

Students may progress directly to Review of College Place meeting, as a result of an act of alleged gross misconduct, or where the behaviour, or concern, requires greater intervention than normal escalation of the disciplinary procedures (see section 4.5).

At any stage during the procedure a student may be suspended by the College Lead for Safeguarding and Behaviour, or a member of the leadership team acting on their behalf, whilst an investigation is carried out, following the suspension procedure as outlined in this policy.

Students have the right to appeal the outcome of a Review of College Place meeting.

### 4.2 Disciplinary meetings and Formal Warnings

A student can be issued with a Formal Warning as an outcome of a disciplinary meeting or a Review of College Place meeting.

Students can be issued with a Formal Warning as a result of not demonstrating any significant improvement following previous interventions and support or if there is misconduct deemed a serious concern (see examples below)

- poor attendance, where absence is not notified or reasonably explained
- poor punctuality
- continued missing of deadlines or non-submission of course related work/assignments

- Persistently or significantly disrupting the learning of others
- moderate cases of disrespectful behaviour to other students, staff or visitors
- moderate cases of misuse of the internet/IT equipment/mobile phone
- moderate misuse of college facilities
- failure to comply with the expected student standards of behaviour
- continued failure to follow college expectation/rules (e.g smoking or vaping on campus)

The above examples are not exhaustive or exclusive and offences of a similar nature will be dealt with under this procedure.

For any formal disciplinary meeting, a member of staff will be identified as Chair. The Chair will issue any Formal Warning. Other staff and the student's parent(s)/carer(s) may be invited to attend to support the process but this is not a requirement.

The Chair will state clearly the reasons for the meeting and confirm the possible outcomes. The student will be given time to express their views and outline any individual circumstances to be considered.

If the student fails, without good reason, to attend an arranged meeting as requested, the meeting may take place, and disciplinary decisions made in the student's absence

Possible outcomes:

- Issue a Formal Warning
- Issue a caution
- No case to answer

Students and their parent(s)/carer(s) will be informed, in writing, of the outcome of the meeting, including associated targets/expectations and support.

Progress Mentors will monitor the progress made by the student against associated targets/expectations.

A summary of the disciplinary meeting and outcome will be recorded on the college system.

## 5. Review of College Place meetings

There are 3 types of review of college place meetings:

- Review of College Place meeting (standards & expectations)
- Review of College Place meeting (fitness to study)
- Review of College Place meeting (academic progress)

### 5.1 Review of College Place meeting (standards & expectations)

A student can be escalated to a Review of College Place meeting (standards & expectations) as a result of not demonstrating significant improvement following a Formal Warning.

Students may also progress directly to a Review of College Place meeting (standards & expectations) as a result of an act of alleged gross misconduct, or where the behaviour, or

concern, requires greater intervention than normal escalation of the disciplinary procedures. Any decision to proceed directly to a Review of College Place meeting (standards & expectations) must be made in conjunction with the College Lead for Safeguarding & Behaviour, Head of Student Services or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

In cases of alleged gross misconduct a student may be suspended with immediate effect until the Review of College Place meeting takes place.

*Examples of gross misconduct:*

- bullying, intimidation, abuse, the use of violence or threats of violence in any form e.g. verbal, physical, via email etc.
- serious violation of the college's rules and expectations
- sexual, racial or homophobic harassment of another student or member of staff
- extremely abusive behaviour towards another student or member of staff
- theft or unauthorised possession of any property or facilities belonging to a student, the college, or any employee of the college
- serious damage deliberately carried out on college property
- allowing a non-member of college to gain access to the premises using their own membership card
- refusal to carry out reasonable instructions of a member of staff
- in possession and/or under the influence of a controlled drug (see substance misuse policy) on the college site or on any activity associated with the college
- any possession of illegal items, including drug-related paraphernalia or weapons
- refusal to comply with a request to be searched
- a criminal offence, which may adversely affect the college's reputation
- Persistent failure to follow health and safety regulations (e.g smoking on campus or vaping outside of designated area)
- conduct which could threaten the health and safety of others
- an extended period of poor attendance, where absence is not notified or reasonably explained
- refusal to attend an external exam/assessment without reasonable explanation

The above examples are not exhaustive or exclusive and offences of a similar nature will be dealt with under this procedure.

## 5.2 Review of College Place meeting (fitness to study)

A student will usually progress to a Review of College Place meeting (fitness to study) if they have not been able to meet the targets agreed during the assess, plan, do, review process described in the college's Fitness to Study Policy, and/or are not engaging effectively with the support offered previously.

In some cases, a student may progress directly to a Review of College Place meeting (fitness to study) if there are significant concerns about their fitness to study, for example a prolonged period of absence due to illness or when health/wellbeing concerns are impacting the ability to meet the learning outcomes of the course.

For full information please refer to the college's Fitness to Study Policy.

## 5.3 Review of College Place meeting (academic progress)

A student can be escalated to a Review of College Place meeting (academic progress) as a result of:

- Non-completion of essential work that would result in a student failing their course/programme of study, without reasonable explanation
- Significant concern for progress on their course/study programme, with no clear improvement following previous support and interventions

## 5.4 Review of College Place meeting - procedures

For all types of a Review of College Place meeting, a member of staff will be appointed as the chair of the Review of College Place meeting. The meeting will be attended by a staff panel which will consist of the chair and a second member of staff.

Prior to the Review College Place meeting, students and their parent(s)/carer(s) will receive a formal invitation. The invitation will include details of the reasons for the meeting and confirmation of the possible outcomes. The student will be signposted to this policy, which is available on the college's website.

A student may only be accompanied by a parent(s)/carer(s) and/or a member of staff acting as the student's advocate. If a student wishes another representative to attend this must be approved by a member of the senior leadership team. Parents/carers are not required to attend, although their support is welcomed, and the meeting can go ahead in their absence.

If the student, or parent/carers, requests a rearrangement or extra time in advance of the meeting, then one rearrangement may be agreed and put back for a period no longer than 5 college days. However, if the student fails, without good reason, to attend a Review of College Place meeting as requested, the meeting may take place, and decisions made in the student's absence.

At the Review of College Place meeting, the chair will state the reason(s) for the meeting and give a summary of the supporting evidence. The student, and attending parent/carers, will have the opportunity to respond to this so this can be considered by the panel.

Possible outcomes of a Review of College Place meeting:

- Withdrawal of college place
- Issue of, or extension to, any Formal Warning
- Issue of a caution
- Decision that student cannot progress on to the next year of their current study programme
- No case to answer

The outcome of the Review of College Place meeting will be decided by the disciplinary panel and recorded on CEDAR. The student and parent(s)/carer(s) will be informed of the outcome in writing.

A student who is suspended from college, is waiting for a Review of College Place meeting to take place, or whose place at college is withdrawn as part of the college's disciplinary procedures will

not be permitted to attend a college organised visit. Permission to attend a visit may also be withdrawn and a refund cannot be guaranteed.

A student has the right to appeal against the outcome of a Review of College Place meeting. Appeals must be made in writing to the Deputy Principal within 5 working days of notification of the outcome of the Review of College Place meeting.

## 6. Suspension procedure

Suspensions will normally be carried out by a member of the student support leadership team or senior leadership team. A suspended student will be advised that any attempt to enter the college site during this period will be regarded as a serious breach of discipline.

Parent(s)/carer(s) will be informed of the suspension immediately or as soon as practicable and arrangements will be made for the student to return home safely.

The student's progress mentor, relevant heads of department, teachers, a member of the senior leadership team and Head of Estates will be informed of any student who has been suspended.

During the period of suspension teachers will be required to provide work for the student to complete until the date of the Review of College Place meeting.

A copy of the reasons for the suspension will be sent to the student and a copy will be sent to the parent(s)/carer(s) along with a copy of the positive behaviour policy and disciplinary procedures.

A Review of College Place meeting will normally be arranged within 5 college days of the suspension, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

During a suspension a student may be permitted to attend college for any external examinations but will be required to report to reception and be supervised at all times.

## 7. Withdrawal of college place

A student's college place may be withdrawn as an outcome of a Review of College Place meeting.

Students and parent(s)/carer(s) will be informed, in writing, of the reason for withdrawal of college place and will be offered support and signposted to support provided from other agencies, as relevant.

A student has the right to appeal the withdrawal of their college place under the appeals procedure.

A student deciding who is suspended from college, is waiting for a review of college place meeting to take place or whose place at college is withdrawn as part of the college's disciplinary procedures will not, ordinarily, be permitted to attend a college organised visit.

A student who has had their place at college withdrawn as part of the college's disciplinary procedures, will not normally be offered a place to return to college.



## 8. The appeals procedure

A student has the right to appeal against the withdrawal of their college place. Students and parent(s)/carer(s) will be informed of this right in writing.

If a student wishes to appeal, they must do so in writing to the Deputy Principal within 5 working days of notification of the outcome, unless there are individual circumstances preventing this timescale being met such as college holidays or a religious festival.

The appeal letter must include full details of the grounds of appeal and full evidence in support of the appeal request.

Potential grounds of appeal could include that:

- new evidence has come to light that should be considered
- the sanction imposed is perceived as too severe or disproportionate
- there was perceived unfairness or bias among the original decision-makers
- college policy/procedures were not followed

An appeal hearing will usually be held within 5 working days of receipt of the request. The student and parent(s)/carer(s) will be informed in writing of the date, time and place of the appeal hearing and the reasons for withdrawal of their college place. If the student requests extra time to prepare their case, the hearing may be put back for a period not longer than 5 working days.

An appeal hearing will be conducted by a panel consisting of at least one member of the senior leadership team, acting as chair, and a second member of the leadership team.

A student may only be accompanied by parent(s)/carer(s) or a member of staff acting as the student's advocate at the appeal hearing. If a student wishes another representative to attend this must be approved by the senior leadership team.

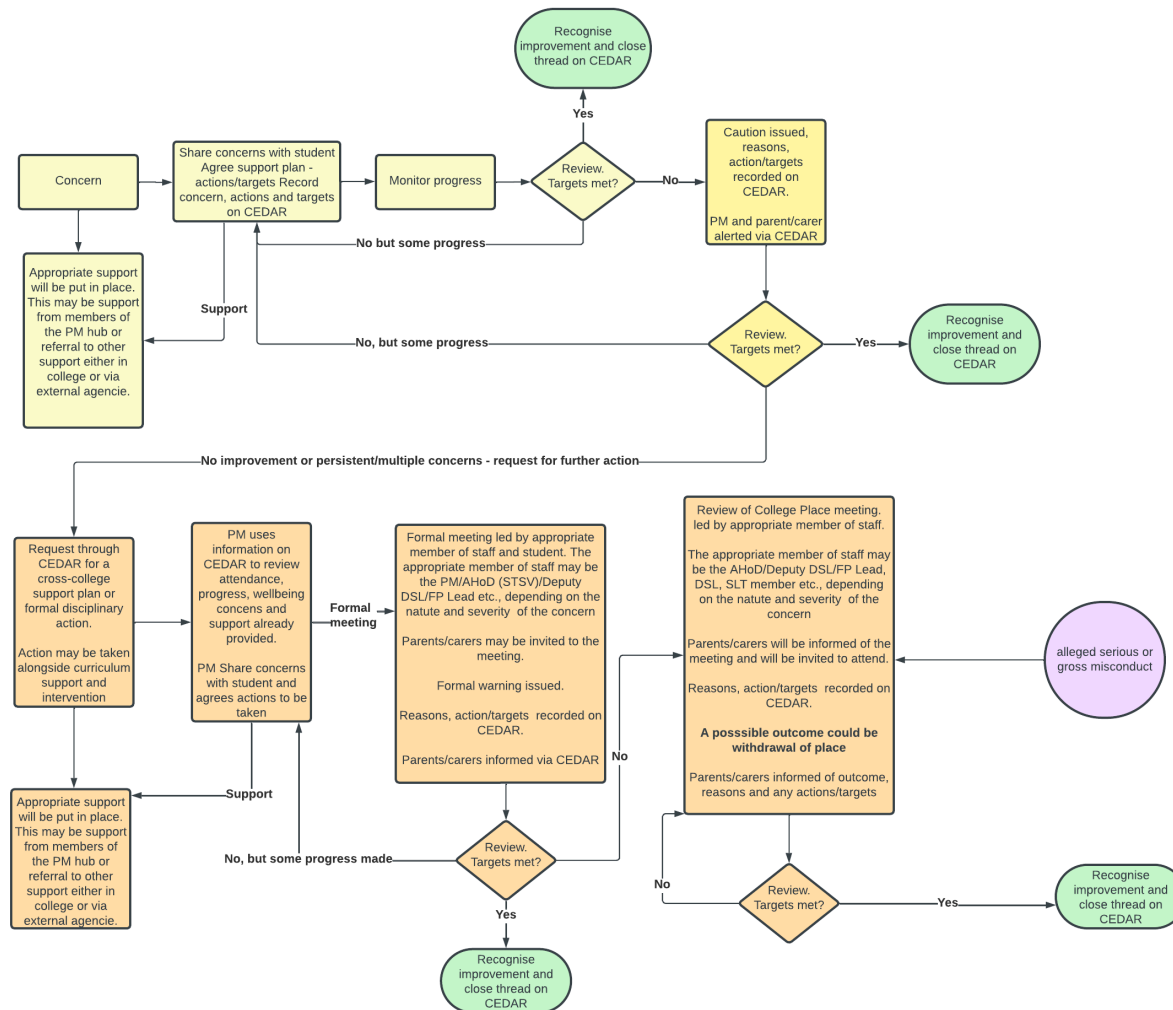
The student and parent(s)/carer(s) will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal within 5 working days of the appeal hearing.

During the process of an appeal a student may only be permitted to attend college for external examinations but will be required to report to reception and be supervised at all times.

## 9. Recording

Accurate records of all disciplinary action, including the reasons for the action and details of targets/expectations will be recorded on CEDAR.

# Appendix 1: Disciplinary procedures flowchart



## Appendix 2: Right to search

Searching appropriately can play a critical role in ensuring that student and staff welfare is protected and helps the college establish an environment where everyone is safe, can learn and thrive. A search may also play a vital role in identifying students who may benefit from early help or a referral to other support services.

(i) In line with legislation the staff at Blackpool Sixth reserve the right to search students and their possessions (eg. bags, lockers) if they have reason to believe that they are carrying offensive weapons, illegal substances, alcohol, stolen items or anything that has been, or is likely to be, used to cause injury or commit an offence. A search can be conducted with or without a student's consent.

(ii) When carrying out searches we will consider the individual needs of students with Special Educational Needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and make any reasonable adjustments that may be required.

(iii) Searches will be carried out by two members of the safeguarding team (the person doing the search and a search witness). The staff conducting the search will be competent in searching.

(iv) Before any search is undertaken consent will be sought from the student. The member of staff conducting the search will explain to the student why they are being searched, how and where the search is going to take place and give them the opportunity to ask any questions.

(v) If consent is refused to any aspect of the search, the student will be informed that the college has the right to carry out a search and that if they continue to choose to refuse they will be suspended pending a Review of College Place meeting. The Police will be informed if the member of staff considers that a search is necessary because there is a risk of harm.

(vi) When being searched, students will only be required to remove "outer clothing" such as coats, jumpers and shoes.

(vii) It is not necessary to inform parents/carers before a search takes place or to seek their consent to search. However, parents/carers will always be informed as soon as possible after a search has taken place or if a search has been refused.

(viii) If inappropriate articles are found, they will be confiscated. If these items are dangerous they will be disposed of safely by the College Lead for Safeguarding and Behaviour. Illegal items, such as controlled drugs, weapons will be reported to the police and either delivered to the police or safely disposed of safely in line with police advice.

(ix) Any search by a member of staff will be recorded in the college's safeguarding reporting system, including the date/time, who was searched, who conducted the search, the reason for searching, whether or not an item is found and any follow up action and/or support.

## Appendix 3: Use of reasonable force

Colleges cannot use force as a punishment – it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in college to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people.

- The decision on whether or not to use reasonable force to control or restrain a young person is down to the professional judgement of the staff concerned and should always depend on individual circumstances.
- All members of college staff have a legal power to use force (Section 93, Education and Inspections Act 2006) and lawful use of the power will provide a defence to any related criminal prosecution or other legal action.
- The senior leadership team will support staff if they use this power in the right way.
- Colleges do not require parental consent to use force on a child or young person.

See the Use of Reasonable Force Policy for more details.