



**British International School
of Timisoara**

We Provide the Foundation on Which Our Children Can Flourish

School Policies

School Suspension/Exclusion policy

Approved by: Head of School

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School Suspension/Exclusion policy

General

British International School of Timisoara is a coeducational private international school offering a British-style education and accepting children aged between 4 and 18.

British International School of Timisoara offers its students a truly international experience through a British-style curriculum and adheres to the guidelines of the Council of British International Schools, Cambridge Assessment International Education and the International Baccalaureate Organisation. Our qualified, internationally-experienced and dynamic educators teach all subjects in English, with the exception of the lessons of Romanian, which are being taught by qualified and engaging local teachers.

Our Vision

*We provide the Foundation on which our Children can Flourish
Inspiring our students to Learn and Live with Purpose*

Our Mission

Building a community of learners where students are given meaningful opportunities to learn, experience, grow, succeed and excel in all areas of their academic and personal development

Our Core Values

*We Think, We Explore and We Learn
We Listen, We Respect and We Care
We Speak Up, We Participate and We Strive*

At BIST we want to ensure that all members of our community understand and adhere to our school ethos and values. Rules and regulations will be in place to protect all members of the community and to give everyone equal opportunities for development and progress.

Introduction

The purpose of this policy to set out clear criteria for the exclusion, either temporary or permanent, and the procedures that should be followed regarding any student situation involving a potential exclusion outcome.

Overview

This policy describes the practice that this school follows regarding the exclusion of a child. It recognises that the seriousness of some situations requires an immediate response that cannot always follow the best practice set out in the policy but, in all situations, the rights of children and parents to a full hearing will be respected.

Responsibility

The School Board, the School Leadership Team and all staff at BIST are committed to the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum for all children. They are also responsible for promoting good behaviour and discipline on the part of the whole school community and for securing an orderly and safe environment for children and staff in order to ensure that the curriculum is delivered and children can realise their academic and social potential.

The Head of School has the discretion to deal with children who are displaying challenging behaviour but will do so consistently in the context of the school's Behaviour Policy.

*BIST is committed to child protection and safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all students.
We expect staff, parents, volunteers, visitors and the students to share this commitment.*

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The Behaviour Policy and other relevant documents include several different strategies designed to promote the continued inclusion of children into the school. Suspension/exclusion is the most drastic step that any school can take because it runs against the school's commitment to inclusion and is, out of necessity, reserved for the most serious cases.

The decision to suspend/exclude a student must be lawful, reasonable, and fair. Schools have a statutory duty not to discriminate against children based on protected characteristics, such as ethnicity, race, language, nationality, religion, social origin, disabilities or sex. Schools should consider the fair treatment of students from groups who are vulnerable to exclusion.

Suspension/exclusion itself can take many different forms and these may include:

- Time out in another teacher's class 'hot-spotting'.
- Lunchtime exclusion (i.e.: a sanction which may involve a student losing the play time during the lunch break)
- Fixed term internal suspension.
- Fixed term external suspension.
- Permanent exclusion

All these steps are clearly connected to the behaviour policy and they clearly identify ways in which penalty points can be accrued by a student for unacceptable behaviour. All sanctions and communications about a student and how he or she have come to be considered for a suspension/exclusion action will have been recorded on **Schoolbase**.

Definition of terms

Exclusion – means permanent exclusion from the school (ending the school-parent contract and all the rights and privileges associated with this)

Suspension – suspension from school activities can be internal or external; this will be determined by the school

- **Internal suspension** – period to be determined by the school (up to 3 days), is where the student is allowed into school, but is not taking part in school activities with his/her peers; the internally suspended student will be in school, completing school work isolated by his/her colleagues, but supervised by a member of staff. As an exception, so far as the School Director decides on the internal suspension of a student during his disciplinary investigation, on a proposal from the Disciplinary Board, this period may exceed 3 days and may be ordered throughout the disciplinary investigation period.
- **External suspension** – is when a student is not allowed to come to school for a fixed period of time (up to 2 weeks) and he/she is provided with school work to be completed at home. As an exception, in so far as the School Director decides to suspend a student externally during his disciplinary investigation on a proposal from the Disciplinary Board, this period may exceed 2 weeks and may be ordered throughout the disciplinary investigation period.

SLT – School Leadership Team

Before Considering Suspension/Exclusion

The School recognises that the parents/carers are profoundly affected by the suspension/exclusion of their child and will work with them closely to ensure that only in rare circumstances will suspension/exclusion come as a surprise.

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In most cases parents/carers will have been working with the school to prevent their child from being suspended/excluded.

Most of the time, children at risk of being suspended/excluded are likely to have had a history of disaffection and to have had Behaviour Support Plan, before the question of suspension/exclusion arises, but to the extent that misconduct committed by the student is serious, his suspension/expulsion may be ordered and if he has no history.

However, suspension or exclusion can happen for certain cases, when it has been proven that the physical or emotional safety of a child or member of staff has been or it is in the risk of being seriously affected. Additionally, extreme measures (suspension or exclusion of a student) can be implemented when there is a very serious breach of the school rules (as described in appendix 1).

The Schools' Power to Suspend or Exclude

The one who can decide to exclude a student, for disciplinary reasons, is the School Director, after completing a disciplinary investigation. A student may be suspended for one or more specified periods, which in some cases may lead to permanent expulsion.

A fixed period suspension does not have to be for a continuous period. In exceptional cases, usually where further evidence has come to light, a fixed period suspension may be extended or converted to a permanent exclusion.

The behaviour of children outside school, during school related activities, can be considered as grounds for suspension/exclusion. This will be a matter of judgement for the SLT members in accordance with the school's published Behaviour Policy.

The Run Up to a Possible Suspension/Exclusion

The decision to suspend a student is not taken in consultation with the parents. However, the parents will be kept informed.

In those cases where a suspension/exclusion can be communicated after a meeting with parents, the school will:

- try to warn parents/carers that the child is at risk of suspension/exclusion;
- if time allows, arrange a meeting with the parents to plan how to support the child and avoid the need for suspension/exclusion;
- take account of the views of the child;
- keep written notes of all verbal warnings to the child and advice to parents/carers;

Notifying the local authorities

The school reserves the right to notify and involve local authorities, including but not limited to Child Protection and Police, if and when this seems necessary, in the interest of children or there is a legal obligation on the part of the School in this regard.

When to Consider Suspension/Exclusion

Suspension/exclusion will be used sparingly in response to serious breaches of school policy or law. Normally the decision to suspend/exclude a child will only be taken if:

- there have been serious breaches of the school's Behaviour Policy;
- there is a danger that if the child is allowed to stay in school, this will seriously affect the education or well-being / health and safety of the child or others;

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- a range of alternative strategies has been tried before suspending/excluding the child.

However, a permanent exclusion may be given for a first/single offence, for example in the event of serious, actual or threatened violence, using or selling illegal substances, and posting information online that brings the school's reputation into disrepute. Details about events that can lead to exclusion in Appendix 1.

Before reaching the decision to suspend or exclude a student, the School Director will:

- consider all the relevant facts and such evidence as may be available to support the allegations made, considering the school's Behaviour and Equal Opportunities policies and the need to apply those policies consistently;
- allow the child to give his or her own version of events;
- check whether the incident may have been provoked, for example, by racial or sexual harassment;

If the Director considers, after analysing the evidence, that the child has done what he is supposed to have done and that the expulsion is the appropriate sanction, given the nature of the matter, he may expel the child.

Fixed Term Suspension

The School Director may suspend a child for up to two weeks in any school year, unless he is suspended during disciplinary investigation, which may exceed 2 weeks.

Individual suspensions will be for the shortest time necessary, because any exclusion makes it difficult for the child to reintegrate into the school.

The reasons for suspensions are:

- to make it clear to the child that a behaviour is unacceptable, because it affects not only the right of others to a safe and secure environment but also interferes with the opportunities for learning;
- to support school discipline and to act as a clear statement to all children that certain behaviour is unacceptable;
- to ensure that parents/carers know of the behaviour and are involved in controlling it.

In all cases where a child is suspended, the school will take reasonable steps to set and mark work that is accessible and achievable outside of school; usually through access to Google classroom.

Only in the most exceptional circumstances will the School will suspend a child for a first or one-off offence. Such exceptional circumstances might include carrying an offensive weapon, using or supplying an illegal drug, sexual misconduct or serious actual/ threatened violence against another child or a member of staff, and posting information online that brings the school's reputation into disrepute. Details about possible reasons that would lead to suspension in Appendix 1.

Permanent Exclusion

Permanent exclusion is an extremely serious step to take. The School will normally only consider such action if:

- in response to a serious breach, or persistent breaches, of the school's Behaviour Policy;
- where allowing the child to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the child or others in the school;
- the child has been offered a full range of services and strategies designed to maintain that child's inclusion in school and there is evidence that these have been consistently applied but brought about no significant improvement in the child's behaviour.

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Exclusion is usually the final stage in the process of solving disciplinary crimes. Through this, the School confirms that it has exhausted all available strategies to deal with the child's case or considers that his deed is very serious.

Suspension / Exclusion Procedure

Whenever the decision to suspend/exclude a child is taken, the School will notify parents. The School must also provide parents with the following information:

- the reasons for the suspension/exclusion;
- the period of suspension or that fact that it is an exclusion, if this is the case;
- the right of parents to make statements about the suspension and / or expulsion before the School Board and how the child may be involved in it;
- the considered evidence;
- the manner of attacking the decision, respectively the term and the competent authority

If alternative provision is being arranged (internal suspension) then the following information must be included:

- the start date for any provision of full-time education that has been arranged for the child during the exclusion; through Google classroom or equivalent;
- the start and finish times of any such provision, including the times for morning and afternoon sessions where relevant;
- the location at which the provision will take place;
- any information required by the child to identify the person he/she should report to on the first day;

Parents/carers must be informed where a fixed period suspension has been extended or converted to a permanent exclusion. In such cases the School must write again to the parents explaining the reasons for the change and providing any additional information required. The School should ensure that information provided to parents/carers is clear and easily understood.

The School Director

The School Principal may delegate his duties to the consideration of a suspension / expulsion decision to a member of the school management team, in so far as he is objectively unable to perform his duties.

Disciplinary Committee

The School Director will appoint the members of the Disciplinary Committee. The Committee will function throughout the school year and will be responsible for implementing the school rules, for monitoring the behaviour of students around the school and managing any possible situations where the school rules have been broken, including serious incidents that might lead to suspension or exclusions from school; in such situations, the School Director will be informed, with regards to the proposed sanction, will be presented with all facts and will have the ultimate decision with regards to the consequence of the respective incident.

Reintegration into School

The School can, if considers necessary, convene a planning meeting to discuss and make plans for the reintegration of a child after an extended suspension. The meeting will make the necessary preparations for the child's return to school and will involve the parents/carers and the child as well as key members of school staff.

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The meeting will consider all aspects of reintegrating the child, including any modifications to the timetable or the provision of additional support. Any previous plans will be revised and new targets agreed. If there were no plans prior to the suspension one might be drawn up.

Review

This policy will be reviewed by members of the School Board and School Leadership Team on yearly basis, or every time there is a change in legislation.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the School Behaviour policy and Equal Opportunities Policy

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Appendix 1

Standard List of Reasons that constitute disciplinary violations

The school will consider any type of such actions, regardless of the environment (physical or online, including outside school time, in so far as a student of the School is harmed, a member of the School and/or the goods and image of BIST):

<p>1. Physical assault against a student and/or an adult</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fighting or any acts of violence • Pushing 	<p>2. Abuse / threatening behaviour against a student and/or an adult</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal abuse • Threatening • Aggressive and/or intimidating behaviour • Use of an inappropriate language • Emotional abuse, humiliation, terror, denigration, unjust accusations, discrimination, ridicule, harassment, and other hostile or repulsive attitudes • Verbal intimidation • Owning or using a prohibited object
<p>3. Bullying</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal • Physical • Sexual • Homophobic bullying • Racist bullying 	<p>4. Racist abuse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racist taunting and harassment • Derogatory racist statements • Swearing that can be attributed to racist characteristics • Racist graffiti
<p>5. Sexual misconduct</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual abuse • Sexual assault • Sexual harassment • Indecent behaviour • Sexual graffiti, any drawing with obscene content 	<p>6. Drug and alcohol related</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drug possession, use or trafficking • Inappropriate use of prescribed medicine • Smoking (including but not limited to electronic devices, with or without nicotine) • Alcohol possession, use or trafficking • Substance possession, use or trafficking
<p>7. Damage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vandalism • Arson • Graffiti • Destruction by any means 	<p>8. Theft</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stealing school goods • Stealing personal goods (pupil and/or adult) • Theft from units on a trip with the school (including but not limited to restaurants, shops, hotels, museums, etc.) • Selling and trafficking stolen goods
<p>9. Persistent disruptive behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated disobedience to teacher instructions • Repeated violation of school rules and policies 	<p>10. Other</p> <p>Includes incidents that are not covered by categories 1-9</p>

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Appendix 2

Stages and actions leading to suspension and/or expulsion of the student

1. The School shall be informed in writing by a staff member or student of an incident involving one of the students of the School

a. Types of incidents:

- i. The rules of the School were violated, which endangered the emotional, psychological and/or physical safety of a student or a member of the staff of the School;
- ii. The rules of the School were violated, which caused the damage of a student's and/or School's property;
- iii. School rules have been violated, which has led to the image of the school being damaged or in danger of being harmed

b. Examples of types of student behaviour that can lead to various incidents:

- i. including but not limited to any of the actions taken by a student that are described in Appendix 1 to this policy;
- ii. any type of behaviour of a student that could have a negative impact on the emotional, psychological and / or physical safety of another student or a staff member of the School;
- iii. any type of behaviour that harms or may harm the property of students and / or Schools;
- iv. any type of behaviour that harms or may harm the image of the School;

2. School's disciplinary investigation of the incident

The School Director will be able to contact the competent authorities (including but not limited to the Police, the Timiș Child Protection Directorate) at any time during the disciplinary investigation, including after its completion, in so far as he considers it necessary.

Within the School, sanctions of „hot-spotting”, exclusion at noon and suspension that was ordered during disciplinary research can be ordered without prior disciplinary research.

The investigation / Disciplinary research includes the following stages:

- a. Listening to the person who made the notification, in the presence of parents, insofar as he is a student under the age of 14, and otherwise, in the presence of at least two School staff members and the drawing up of a report in this regard, which will contain both the date and time of the incident, its description, the persons who were present, as well as the possible answers of the respective person to the additional questions addressed by the School. To the extent that the person who made the complaint is a School staff member, he shall make a written notification indicating all the elements mentioned above.
- b. Whenever necessary, as there are good reasons, the backpacks and/or other goods of the students involved may be checked by BIST staff, based on the School Director's decision. To the extent that if prohibited objects and/or substances are found, they will be confiscated and a report will be drawn up stating these issues.
- c. The School Director shall appoint a Disciplinary Committee to investigate the incident and to verify that the student has committed an act which constitutes a disciplinary offense, as listed in Appendix 1. /The School Director shall refer the matter to the Discipline Committee to investigate

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the incident and to verify whether a student has committed an act which constitutes a disciplinary offense, as listed in Appendix 1.

During the disciplinary investigation period, the Committee may submit to the School Director a proposal to suspend the student under investigation for a period of 30 days or during the disciplinary investigation. To the extent that he considers the proposal to be well-founded, the School Director will issue a suspension decision which will be communicated by e-mail to the student's parents/legal representatives. The suspension decision can be contested at the Board of Directors within 5 days from the communication, and later at the Timiş Courthouse.

- d. The Disciplinary Committee will listen to all persons indicated as present when the incident happened, as well as any other possible person involved, in the presence of parents, in so far as they are under 14 years of age and to the contrary, in the presence of at least two School employees and report will be drawn up in this regard.
- e. If possible and available, after the School conducts an assessment of its legitimate interest in accessing the video recordings of the incident, the Commission will watch the videos and a report will be drawn up in which they will be made record the relevant issues resulting from those records.
- f. The student under disciplinary investigation will be summoned to the Disciplinary Committee at least 5 days before the date of the convocation, in order to be heard in regarding to the investigated event, in order to present the evidence and express his point of view, in the presence of parents, in so far as he/she is under 14 years old and to the contrary, in the presence of at least two School employees. The School will also allow the presence of parents to be convened to the extent that they want to be present. During this convocation, the existing evidence will be presented and the point of view and defences of the student in question will be recorded. Failure to introduce the student and/or parents to convene without an objective reason entitles the School to order its sanctioning, without carrying out disciplinary research.
- g. The Disciplinary Committee will draw up a final report which it will communicate to the School Director, which will contain a description of the incident, including the date and time, an indication of the articles of the regulations and policies of the school violated, the committee's detentions, the evidence, the student's point of view, as well as the proposed sanction.
- h. The School Director shall issue a Classification or Sanctions Decision following the settlement of the disciplinary investigation carried out. The decision issued shall be reasoned and shall contain the date and description of the incident, the student's deviations which constitute violations to the school regulations and policies, the evidence considered, the student's point of view, as well as the sanction and the manner of attacking the issued Decision (competent body and term).
- i. The School Director shall convene the parents for communication of the issued Decision, and in case of no-show, the communication of the Decision shall be made by e-mail within a maximum of 2 working days from the date of their non-appearance.

Parents of students who were involved in the incident (student witnesses and/or students who were the victim of an incident) will be informed (via telephone and email) about the incident and, the fact that during the call two members of BIST staff are present to witness the information being transmitted, to the extent that they are over 14 years of age; otherwise, they will be asked by the School to present themselves within the institution in order to be able to listen to the students in their presence.