

STUDENT SUPPORT AND INTERVENTION PROCEDURE - Guidance for Parents and Carers

Purpose

At Orbital South Colleges, our core values are inclusion and aspiration for all students. The purpose of this procedure is to provide a standardised and consistent approach across the College Group to supporting students to achieve and progress. We recognise there are multiple challenges for some students to meeting College expectations and achieving their potential. We will work with students to support them with strategies and resources to enable this. This intervention procedure ensures all stakeholders including staff, students, and parents/carers can confidently navigate the discussions and actions which will support our students to be retained and achieve to the best of their ability.

Scope

This procedure applies to full and part time students enrolled at the College. This includes full time 14-16 year olds, 16-18 year olds, adults, HE students and apprentices. Where students are under 18, parents/carers will be informed and invited to meetings to support this process. Where students are over 18, the College will seek permission to share this information with parents/carers. The College cannot share information about students over the age of 18 without consent. This applies to students who turn 18 during the academic year.

Students studying under the 14-16 Schools Links programme will follow the relevant school's disciplinary policy and procedures.

Procedure Overview

The procedure comprises a series of stages as below:

1. Cause for concern - an informal discussion between staff and a student
2. Stage 1 meeting - Course tutor, students and parents/carers
3. Stage 2 meeting - Course leader/coordinator, students and parents/carers
4. Stage 3 meeting - Programme Manager, students and parents/carers
5. Stage 4 - withdrawal decision - Director of Learning, Assistant Principal

This procedure provides a simple framework to ensure all students experience the Support and Intervention process in a consistent way. The framework describes a series of escalated discussions involving various stakeholders. It is the power of the discussions which is the instigation of change, and these discussions are at their most powerful when:

- Both staff and student feel psychologically safe and the discussion takes place when both feel calm
- The discussion results in a deep understanding of the issue the student is struggling with
- The discussion results in actions for both the student and College to meet needs, support change and move forward.

We would normally expect to see a student escalate through each step when issues are not resolved. Presenting issues that escalate from a cause for concern to a Stage 1 meeting could include (but are not limited to):

- Persistent absence or lateness
- Non completion of work
- Plagiarism
- Minor disruption to learning in classroom or workshop spaces
- Refusal to follow reasonable staff requests
- Non-compliance with Health and Safety guidance for uniform or PPE
- Disrespectful, bullying or discriminatory behaviour to staff, students or the local community.

For serious issues which impact on other students' ability to learn or achieve or present a risk to a student's own or others' safety, this could result in immediate escalation to a Stage 3 action plan to support urgent intervention. These issues could include (but are not limited to):

- Attending College whilst intoxicated or under the influence of substances
- Bringing alcohol, illegal or dangerous substances onto campus
- Bullying, harassment or discriminatory behaviour towards others that results in substantial harm
- Assault or destruction of College property.

On occasions where there are serious safeguarding or welfare concerns, Stage 4 (withdrawal from College) can be instigated without going through any previous stages. These issues could include (but are not limited to):

- Selling/Distribution of illegal substances on campus
- Violent behaviour resulting in threat to the wellbeing of others
- Gang membership including the recruitment/exploitation of others
- Bringing a bladed article or weapon on campus
- Any behaviours that place others at significant risk.

Involvement of the Student Support Team

The Student Support Team provide key support for all students, particularly the most vulnerable. Intervention processes should involve the Student Support Team, particularly students with the following characteristics:

- Those with an EHCP or identified learning need
- Care experienced young people including care leavers (this must be the Designated Teacher or Officer)
- Those with a social worker or defined as a 'Child in Need'
- Those with protected characteristics including LGBTQ+ and transitioning individuals.

The Student Support Team can provide not only wraparound support and strategies for students and staff, but also ensure that duties to inform statutory agencies are complied with.

The Additional Learning Support team must be informed and involved at all stages of the intervention process for students who have an Education Health and Care Plan. College staff should be aware of the EHCP content and required intervention and demonstrate all strategies and reasonable adjustments have been put in place to manage and support SEND behaviours.

ESSENTIAL ACTION FOR STUDENTS WITH EHCPs at Stage 3

Section B of the EHCP highlights any barriers the person may have to learning. Staff must ensure that they have read this part to ascertain the strengths and areas for development the person has. Section F will detail the reasonable adjustments staff need to make for this person to access their learning and this is accompanied by one page guidance for teachers. These strategies must have been worked through at Stage 1, 2 and 3 before the decision for a placement breakdown can be made (Stage 4) unless behaviours are such that the student is immediately escalated to Stage 3 or 4.

Staff will contact the ALS team to arrange an emergency EHCP review highlighting concerns. They will then organise the review meeting and alert the local authority of the possible placement breakdown (Stage 4). The local authority will need 6 weeks' notice if a placement has broken down but that depends greatly on the level of risk identified for that person remaining in College.

Stages of Intervention

The Informal Action Stage - Cause for Concern

The Informal Action Stage should be a rapid response to issues as they arise. Informal discussion should happen as quickly as is practical, at a place and time where the student and staff member feel calm and safe. This discussion should build on the positive relationship the student and staff member already have achieved. This discussion can and should be led by any member of staff. This should then be recorded as a 'Cause for Concern' on OnTrack Pastoral clearly noting the expected outcome and actions.

Stage 1 – Action Plan

Reasons for moving to Stage 1 Action Plan include:

- The issue has not changed despite using the Informal Action Stage
- The issue is a pattern happening in different settings reflected in several Cause for Concerns
- The issue is of sufficient concern that a formal action plan is necessary
- The issue is of sufficient concern that parents/carers need to be aware.

This is the first formal meeting to discuss unresolved issues or a pattern of behaviour and will include the student and their parent/carer. The meeting should result in a written Stage 1 action plan which is on OnTrack Pastoral and visible to students and their parents/carers. This action plan identifies strategies both the student and College will take to support the changes needed.

Stage 2 – Action Plan

Reasons for moving to Stage 2 Action Plan include:

- The strategies identified in the first action plan have not been implemented
- The strategies identified in the first action plan have not had the desired impact.

This is the second stage formal meeting to discuss unresolved issues or a pattern of behaviour and will include the student and their parent/carer. The meeting should result in a written Stage 2 action plan which is on OnTrack Pastoral. This action plan identifies strategies both the student and College will take to support the changes needed.

Stage 3 – Action Plan

Reasons for moving to Stage 3 Action Plan include:

- The strategies identified in the second action plan have not been implemented
- The strategies identified in the second action plan have not had the desired impact
- The behaviour is highly concerning and impacts on others' learning or on the student's or others' safety. Urgent strategies must be put in place immediately and monitored closely. At this point potential withdrawal from College will be discussed.

This is the third stage formal meeting to discuss unresolved issues or a pattern of behaviour and must include the student and their parent/carer. The meeting should result in a written Stage 3 action plan which is on OnTrack Pastoral. This action plan identifies strategies both the student and College can take to support the changes needed. This discussion may include the possibility that College may not be the right place for the student at this time. The student and parent/carer should understand that Stage 4 is recommendation for withdrawal. The Director should ensure that all practical strategies the College has access to have been employed to support the student.

Stage 4 - Recommendation for withdrawal (internal process, no meeting required)

Led by Director of Learning, in consultation with Assistant Principal Student Support

Stage 4 can be progression from Stage 3, or a Direct to Stage 4 concern depending on the behaviour issue. It consists of a meeting between the relevant Director and the Assistant Principal Student Support or their delegate. The Assistant Principal Student Support will act as a critical friend to ensure due process has been followed, that safeguarding has been considered, and that all College strategies have been employed to retain the student. If withdrawal is agreed, a formal letter will be sent to the student and parent/carer as appropriate, and copied to the Executive PA. The student will be informed that they have a right to appeal. This appeal will be heard by the Assistant Principal, Curriculum and Standards, within 5 working days.

Sending a Student Home

Led by a Director of Learning or Incident Manager

Students will be asked to leave the College premises when there has been an incident which needs de-escalation, where student emotions are heightened, or where we suspect that a student is intoxicated.

This is not a suspension, but a short period of time out of College, usually no longer than one College day, which allows a student to calm down and reflect on what has happened.

The student/s will be sent home at the time of the incident, parents/carers informed if under 18, and will be contacted the following day to arrange return to College.

Students under the age of 16 should not be released from College until parents/carers have been contacted and are in agreement as to how these young people will travel home.

On occasions this may become a suspension if it becomes clear that the situation has not de-escalated, or further information becomes available that meets the conditions for suspension of the student/s.

Suspension

Led by a Director of Learning

There are times when we need students to remain at home as a neutral act while an investigation takes place. Suspension is a way to mitigate risk to the student or to others and is not a judgement or punishment. Suspension may be seen as a viable option when the College needs to consider how to put strategies in place to provide a safe environment for learning for the student or others involved in the incident or where an investigation must take place to establish whether the student and others are safe.

Parents/Carers should always be informed of suspension before the student leaves the premises. In the case of 14-16 year olds, the relevant school and parent/carer must be informed before the student is released and arrangements made for the safe transport of the student home.

Some reasons to consider suspension include (but are not limited to):

- Physical threat or assault on staff or students
- Urgent Health and Safety issues
- Gang involvement
- Distribution/selling of illegal substances
- Bringing a bladed article onto campus
- Restrictions imposed by police or other external agencies
- Serious safeguarding incidents.

The decision to suspend will be made by the Director of Learning for the department the student belongs to. If this Director is not available, another Director or Assistant Principal may make this decision.

Suspension meetings will be chaired by a Director of Learning who has not been involved in the management of the incident and will be coordinated and recorded. Recorded actions will be shared with parents/carers. If escalation and withdrawal at Stage 4 is a potential outcome, the Director of Learning will meet with the Assistant Principal Student Support to discuss and agree this.

The decision letter will be emailed to both parents/carers and students within 2 days unless significant further investigation is necessary. The right of appeal is explained in the letter and will be heard by the Vice Principal, Curriculum and Standards within 5 working days.

Feedback

Feedback on this document is welcome, both on the clarity and accessibility, and the content. Please send any feedback to CMcCartney@esc.ac.uk