

Dixons Sixth Form College

Discipline Policy

1.0 Purpose of the policy

This policy outlines the key features of our expectations for students' attendance, punctuality and conduct, which are central to students' success.

1.1 Dixons Sixth Form College

Dixons Sixth Form College (D6A) is a non-compulsory further education establishment, and we are therefore not bound by the Department for Education 'Guidance for maintained schools, academies, and pupil referral units in England' regarding suspensions and permanent exclusions.

1.2 D6A Learner Agreement

Students choosing to study at D6A do so under the terms of our D6A Learner Agreement ("the Learner Agreement"). This is built around the principles in this policy. Therefore, by signing our Learner Agreement, students accept the terms and conditions of this policy. Where the Learner Agreement is unsigned the student is deemed to have accepted the terms and conditions of this policy where the student has presented themselves for attendance at D6A.

1.3 Student Attendance

Students are made aware via the Learner Agreement that they must attend all timetabled obligations and arrive punctually and must be available from 9:00- 17:00 Monday to Friday. They are aware that the college does not authorise routine medical appointments during term time and does not allow any holidays, family visits and/or religious pilgrimages during term time. Not following these requirements this could result in a loss of place. Where a student breaches the attendance requirements through being absent (e.g. for a holiday, routine medical appointment, pilgrimage etc.) upon their return a meeting will be arranged with the student and their parent/carer to discuss the breach and to determine whether the student may retain their place at D6A.

1.4 Progress Tutors

Pastoral care at D6A is led by a team of dedicated Progress Tutors. Crucial to the role of the tutor is being a bridge between subject teachers, students, families and the rest of the college community. Progress Tutors provide students with support with their wellbeing in addition to agreeing rigorous action plans to demonstrate excellent studentship and maintain high levels of attendance and achievement.

1.5 Improve

Improve is the D6A online portal for student information and pastoral logs. This system is visible to students, staff and parents/carers and is used to track exam results, commendations and progression plans. When it is required, staff will use the Pastoral Log section to highlight concerns, log conversations with students/parents/carers and document Action Plans. At D6A we provide access to this system for all

parents/carers and we outline in our D6A Parent Pack that we encourage parents/carers to engage using this system.

1.6 YR1 to YR2 Transition

All students at D6A are enrolled onto a 2-year Level 3 programme of study. At the end of YR1 students will sit University Prediction Exams (UPE) in A level courses and receive an end of year monitoring grade for BTEC courses. Following the UPE Results release there will be a review for any student who demonstrates academic and attendance concerns. As a result of the review, based on performance and conduct, as outlined in the Learner Agreement students may be required to follow an alternative programme of study. Where no suitable alternative programme of study can be offered it may be decided by the **panel of senior leaders** that the student can no longer continue their studies at D6A.

2.0 Discipline stages

Our Discipline Stages are used to support a student to make the positive changes required to ensure that they are meeting college expectations (as outlined in the Learner Agreement)

D6A is fully aware of its obligations with regards to the Equality Act 2010 and recognises that a one size fits all approach does not reflect the individual nature of students. Staff use their professional judgement to determine where to place students on the discipline stages. Students do not necessarily start at the initial stage. Neither do they remain on a particular stage for their entire time in college. For example, if an individual incident is deemed to be serious enough, a student may lose their place, with no warnings being issued (this includes Serious Incidents outlined in the Appendix). Likewise, if a student reaches Stage 2 and then meets the targets outlined, no further action may be required. This process allows flexibility for Progress Tutors and Senior Leaders to act in the best interests of the college community and provides students with the opportunity for a fresh start. At every stage, specific and achievable targets should be set with an agreed review period of usually no longer than 4 weeks. It is recommended that records of all meetings, targets and reviews should be recorded on Improve.

The discipline stages are outlined below, and these will be documented on Improve:

Stage	Description
1 Tutor Warning	Progress Tutor meets with student and contacts Parents/Carers to signpost to agreed targets.
2 Formal Warning	Parents/Carers are invited to attend a formal meeting in college with student and Progress Tutor.
3 Final Warning	Parents/Carers are invited to attend a formal meeting in college with student, Progress Tutor and Senior Tutor or SLT member.

2.1 Recommendation for Loss of Place

If a student fails to meet the agreed targets a Senior Leader within the pastoral team may recommend a loss of place. This recommendation will be communicated during a meeting with a Parent/Carer.

Following this an internal panel of college leaders and members of the pastoral team (including a Designated or Deputy Designated Safeguard Lead) will be formed to discuss the recommendation and agree an outcome and next steps. The decision to whether a student has lost their place will be confirmed in writing and sent via email to the student and Parent/Carer. This will be followed by a phone call by a Pastoral Senior Leader informing the student and parent/carer of the outcome and agree any next steps. Students have the right of appeal, but the grounds for appeal must be based on procedural error or that the student was affected by unknown circumstances.

3.0 Serious incidents and gross misconduct

All members of staff challenge and deal with inappropriate behaviour and academic underachievement. In the event of serious misconduct, or a failure to meet our expectations, relevant staff should be informed, giving the name of the student and ID (if known) as well as details of the incident. If immediate action is needed, the Progress Tutor will make a Pastoral Senior Leader aware of the situation.

If they are not available, any member of the Senior Leadership Team can be informed. The Senior Leadership Team member will decide on the action which follows. They will communicate with the Progress Tutor and decide on an appropriate action, recording their decision and outcomes on Improve. Guidance on issues deemed serious misconduct can be found in Appendix 1 below.

3.1 Remaining off site

When it is alleged that a serious incident has occurred or other relevant circumstances, students may be asked to leave D6A immediately pending an investigation. In these instances, the student's lanyard will be removed to prevent them from returning until being invited to do so and a Parent/Carer will be contacted. During this time, D6A will investigate the allegations as detailed below (see section 3.2). It is expected that the student will complete sent work from home (emailed by the Progress Tutor) and respond to communications from their Progress Tutor within a reasonable timescale (although there is no expectation for teachers to set online work). In the case of students with pending external examinations, the Senior Leadership Team will take a decision on how the incident is dealt with and whether or not to allow the student back onto site to sit their exams.

3.2 Investigation

In the event of a student being required to remain off site, an investigation will be conducted prior to any formal disciplinary action being taken. The student must engage with the investigation process where D6A deems it appropriate and/or necessary. Parents/Carers and the student may be invited into college to understand the evidence uncovered or contribute relevant mitigation to the investigation. Following this, the decision may be made that the matter can be resolved in the interests of and by agreement with all parties, without the need for further action. Equally, the investigation could result in a loss of place.

3.3 Notification of loss of place

Following the investigation process, a decision will be reached by a member of the Senior Leadership Team about whether the student should lose their place in college. Parents/Carers and the student will be notified of this decision via email. Any further correspondence from this stage will be sent by the college centralised email address info@dixons6a.com.

3.4 Appeals Process

An appeal may be made by the student against the loss of place decision. The grounds for appeal must be based on **procedural error**, or that the student was affected **by circumstances that were unknown** during the investigation. The appeal must be made in writing within **ten working days** of the date of the written notification of loss of place (sent via email). It should be emailed to info@dixons6a.com marked for the attention of the Executive Principal. The appeal will then be considered usually within ten working days. The outcome of the appeal will be shared in writing within five college days¹. There is no further appeal right, but a complaint can be raised to the ESFA.

¹ College days are days that the college is open in term time.