

St Stephen's Junior School

Exclusion Policy

The school's Behaviour Management Policy sets out the standards and expectation of behaviour in and around the school. It incorporates the procedures to be followed in the event of unacceptable behaviour and possible sanctions and rewards which may be used.

The school's Anti-Bullying Policy defines different forms of bullying, identifies possible causes of bullying and ways of raising awareness of bullying. It establishes procedures to be followed and possible sanctions if bullying takes place.

The school's Exclusion Policy would need to be invoked for persistent or very serious incidents and/or persistent or very serious breaches of behaviour and/or Anti-Bullying policies or School Rules.

Aims of the policy

- To establish the context when it may be necessary to exclude a pupil, for a fixed term or permanently
- To establish the procedure by which a pupil may be excluded
- To determine periods of exclusion
- To explain notification of exclusion
- To establish the appeal procedure following exclusion

Reasons why it may be necessary to exclude a pupil

- It may be necessary to exclude a pupil if:
- There is a very serious incident or very serious breach of the school's Behaviour and/or Anti-Bullying policies
- The School Rules, school's Behaviour Policy or Anti-Bullying Policies are persistently breached
- Allowing a pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or other members of the school.

Exclusion can be fixed-term or permanent, depending on the nature of the incident or situation. Fixed-term exclusion would be considered for persistent or serious breaches of school rules, the school's Behaviour policy or Anti-Bullying Policy. Consideration would need to be given to the age of the child and the circumstances but some examples of when it may be appropriate to consider permanent exclusion for a first or 'one off' offence are as follows:

- Serious actual or threatened violence against another pupil or member of staff
- Sexual abuse or assault
- Possessing or supplying an illegal drug and/or alcohol
- Serious case of theft
- Carrying an offensive weapon.

The decision to exclude a pupil permanently is a serious one. There are two main types of situation where permanent exclusion would be considered.

The first is a final step in a concerted process for dealing with disciplinary offences following the use of a wide range of other strategies, which have been used without success. It is an acknowledgement that all available strategies have been exhausted and is used as a last resort. This would include persistent and defiant misbehavior including bullying (which would include racist or homophobic bullying) or repeated possession and or use of an illegal drug on the School premises.

The second is whether that are exceptional circumstances and it is not appropriate to implement other strategies and where it could be appropriate to permanently exclude a pupil for a first one off offence.

The Headteacher would decide whether it is necessary to report an incident to the police or another external agency.

Procedures by which a pupil may be excluded

Exclusion is a serious step and wherever possible it is at the end of a disciplinary process where all other measures and sanctions as outlined in school policies have been exhausted. The disciplinary process is most likely to have already involved parents. Occasionally the behaviour of a pupil will be such that exclusion will be a necessary immediate response. However, such action would be exceptional and would generally relate to extreme and very serious poor behaviour.

Pupil's need to be aware that exclusion is a possible extreme sanction. Wherever possible, pupils will have been supported to modify their behaviour, to avoid the need for exclusion.

Only the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher in his absence, has the power to exclude a pupil from school. The Headteacher may exclude a pupil for one or more fixed-term periods, or permanently.

Wherever possible, exclusion should not be imposed in the heat of the moment. The following procedure should be followed by the Headteacher when considering exclusion:

- Ensure that an appropriate investigation has been carried out
- Consider all the evidence available, taking into account school policies
- Allow the pupil to give her own version of events
- Consider the context of the incident and whether there may have been provocation
- Consult others, if necessary, but not anyone who may later have a role in reviewing the Head's decision
- Be satisfied that, on the balance of probabilities the pupil did what he/she is alleged to have done
- Keep a record of events and meetings

After having followed the above procedure as closely as is possible under the circumstances, the Head may decide that exclusion is appropriate. The pupil's parents or guardian must be informed immediately of the Head's decision to exclude. The parent or guardian needs to be informed of:

- The period of exclusion
- The reason for exclusion
- The right to appeal to the Governing Body regarding the exclusion and the process of appeal.

The Head will write to the parent within one school day of the decision to exclude confirming the information above. Reference will also be made to the continuing education of the pupil, including setting and marking work, if the exclusion is for more than one school day. If the fixed-term exclusion is changed into a permanent exclusion, parents must be informed in writing and must again be given the right to appeal to the Governing Body.

If a parent refuses to co-operate with exclusion and still sends their child to school or refuses to collect her, the school must have due regard for the pupil's safety and it may be that it is not possible to enforce exclusion in these circumstances. If this was the case, the pupil would need to be internally excluded.

Period of exclusion

Pupils may be excluded for one or more fixed-term periods, not exceeding 45 school days in any one school year. Exclusion should be for the shortest time necessary and can not be for an unspecified period.

In circumstances where a pupil is excluded for more than 15 school days, plans will be made on how the pupil's education will continue during the period of exclusion and how the time might be used to address the pupil's problems. Consideration will need to be given on how to reintegrate the pupil into school at the end of the fixed term period of exclusion.

Notification of exclusion

When the Head has taken the decision to exclude a pupil, for a fixed –term or permanently, the Chair of Governors will be informed of the decision. The Head will report any exclusions to Governors once a term through the Head’s Report to Governors.

Appeal procedure following exclusion

Parents have the right to appeal to the Governing Body following the exclusion of their child. An appeal can be made on grounds of:

- The facts of the event leading to exclusion
- The severity of the sanction

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