

Exclusion Policy

Introduction

This policy supports Meadowcroft School's ethos to strive to provide a caring, structured learning environment in which all Young People can develop academically, socially and emotionally, to their full potential, and in which Children and/or Young People (CYP) and staff feel safe, secure and valued.

The school takes a positive approach to encouraging good behaviour, however recognises that discipline in the school is essential to ensure that all pupils can benefit from the opportunities provided by education. The Government supports head teachers in using exclusion as a sanction where it is warranted. Nevertheless, it is important to say that the exclusion of a pupil, either for a fixed period or permanently, from Meadowcroft School will only be used as a last resort. The school recognises that it is responsible for communicating to pupils, staff and parents, its' expectations for standards of behaviour. The school has a range of policies and procedures in place to promote good behaviour and appropriate conduct and strives to foster good parental engagement.

This policy recognises that it is the Head Teacher's responsibility to:

- Promote good behaviour and discipline on the part of the school's CYP
- Secure an orderly and safe environment for CYP and staff
- Provide and safe environment for CYP to learn

The School has policies, practices, procedures and Staff training in place that promotes good behaviour and prevent poor behaviour. The School's behaviour policies are shared and publicised with CYP, Parents/Carers, School/Home Staff, and LA's are aware of the standards of behaviour expected of CYP and the range of sanctions that can be imposed. The School applies its behaviour policies in a fair, consistent, rigorous and non-discriminatory way and all areas of their application are monitored routinely to satisfy legal requirements under race, disability and gender discrimination law.



This policy recognises that in order to meet these responsibilities the Head Teacher may have to exclude CYP, whether for a fixed term or on a permanent basis, and seeks to clarify the circumstances under which this might take place and the procedures to be followed.

Aim

This policy aims to ensure that the exclusion of CYPs operates in the best interest of the CYP and the other CYP in the School, taking into account the range of Learning Disabilities and Difficulties, and the vulnerability they display.

Objectives

The objectives of the policy are:

- To ensure a shared understanding of the exclusion of CYPs
- To identify the circumstances under which a CYP may be excluded
- To identify the circumstances under which a CYP will not be excluded
- To ensure a consistent approach to the exclusion of CYPs

Implementation

Only the Head Teacher or, in their absence, a designated senior member of staff acting with their authority, can exclude a CYP from school. A decision to exclude a CYP will only be taken:

- In response to a serious breach or breaches of the school's behaviour policy, and
- If allowing the CYP to remain in the school would seriously harm the education and/or welfare of the CYP or others in the school.
- In response to a serious breach or breaches of the school health and safety policy. NOTE- During the COVID19 pandemic period CYP that spit at Staff, pupils or within the school buildings can result in a fixed term exclusion.
- In response to the CYP failing to adhere to the Schools Personal items policy and/or failure to hand in prohibited items such as cigarettes, lighters and/or a mobile phone.



The School's preferred method of managing protracted difficulties, around meeting the needs of CYP, is to work with all Stakeholders/Parents/Carers, to identify the reasons why the placement is failing. This process enables all parties to prepare a suitable transition plan, for moving on.

The decision to exclude a CYP, whether for a fixed term or permanent, is a serious one. The decision to exclude on a permanent basis is extremely serious and should normally be the final step in the process when the use of a range of strategies has proved unsuccessful. Where possible and depending on the circumstances of the incident an alternative to a fixed term exclusion is sought.

Preventative Measures

Internal exclusion

This alternative is in the form of an internal exclusion. CYP are expected to complete periods 1-4 away from the rest of the CYP in the pastoral room with the support of a 1-1 staff member. In addition to this, CYP are expected to spend their breaks away from their peers. If the CYP adheres to the conditions placed upon them during periods 1-4, then they can re-join their class group for periods 5 and 6. If the CYP fails to adhere to the conditions of the internal exclusion it will be carried to the following day. In the event the CYP failed to adhere to the internal exclusion for a second day, a fixed term exclusion will be issued for 1 day.

Temporary Reduced Timetable

In some cases, the school may consider it appropriate to the needs of a particular child, to offer a reduced timetable for a limited period.

In this situation, paramount consideration would be given to the safeguarding of the child and a thorough risk assessment would be carried out. Any reduced timetable would be planned within an Alternative Curriculum (AC). The timetable would be time-limited with a clear plan to increase attendance back to full time.

Pastoral Support Plans

The PSP procedure and process is designed to support any pupil for whom the normal school based strategies have not been effective. It is a structured intervention for a pupil at risk of re-occurring exclusion. The main purpose of the PSP is to maintain the pupil in school and avoid exclusion. A PSP ensures that interventions for a pupil at risk of permanent exclusion are co-ordinated and targeted to their needs.



EHCP reviews

Any pupil who is at serious risk of disaffection or exclusion, an interim or early review will be called. It will then be possible to consider the pupil's changing needs and recommend amendments to the EHCP, as an alternative to the pupil being excluded.

Holistic assessment

Disruptive behaviour can be an indication of unmet needs. When the school has concerns about a pupil's behaviour we will try to identify whether there are any causal factors and intervene early in order to reduce the need for a subsequent exclusion. In this situation the school will give consideration to a multi-agency assessment that goes beyond the pupil's educational needs.

Early intervention to address underlying causes of disruptive behaviour should include an assessment of whether appropriate provision is in place to support any SEND that a pupil may have. Head teachers should consider what extra support might be needed to identify and address the needs of pupils from key vulnerable groups in order to reduce their risk of exclusion.

Safeguarding Children and Young People

The school will take account of their legal duty of care when sending a pupil home following the exclusion. The school will ensure that:

- We are meeting the legal duty of care towards pupils. Parents will be formally notified of the exclusion and the child will not be placed at risk by, for example, being sent home without adequate supervision
- Safeguarding and child protection issues will be taken into account prior to the authorisation of an exclusion e.g. any contextual safeguarding concerns, family circumstances and risk of additional vulnerability.

Fixed Term (temporary) Exclusions

A fixed term exclusion will be for the shortest time necessary. An exclusion for a period of time, from half a day to 5 days, for persistent or cumulative problems will be imposed only when the school has offered and implemented a range of support and management strategies. Examples of some of the strategies used are:

- Discussion with the pupil
- Support from the school's Family Liaison Officer
- Discussions with parents
- Sanctions (consequences) in school (see the Positive Behaviour Policy for details)

- Checking on any possible provocation
- Internal exclusions
- Referral to outside support agencies

It is important to note that an exclusion will not be used for minor incidents such as academic performance or lateness. A fixed term exclusion may be used in response to a serious breach of school rules or policies.

In such a case, the head teacher will investigate the incident thoroughly and consider all the evidence to support the allegation, taking account of all the school policies. The child will be encouraged to give their version of events and the head teacher will check whether the incident may have been provoked e.g. by bullying or racial harassment.

For the first 5 days of a fixed-term exclusion, the school must send homework for the pupil and arrange to have this homework marked. For fixed-term exclusions of more than 5 days, the school is responsible for arranging suitable alternative full-time education from the 6th day until the end of the exclusion. The school is also aware of its duty to provide a strategy for reintegrating pupils that return to school following fixed term exclusion, and for managing their future behaviour. If a pupil has received numerous exclusions or is approaching the legal limit of 45 school days of fixed-period exclusion in an academic year, the school has a duty to consider whether exclusion is considered an effective sanction.

Procedure for Making a Fixed Term Exclusion.

Once a decision has been made to exclude a CYP the Head Teacher is responsible for:

- Deciding the nature of the exclusion fixed term
- The period of any fixed term exclusion
- Informing the parents/carers, in writing, of the period of the exclusion, reasons for exclusion, any arrangements to hold a meeting regarding the exclusion
- Informing the LA, in writing, of the exclusion, the period of the exclusion, reasons for exclusion, any arrangements to hold a meeting regarding the exclusion
- Informing in writing, the relevant Children's Services Department, where appropriate, of the exclusion, the period of the exclusion, reasons for exclusion, any arrangements to hold a meeting regarding the exclusion
- Making arrangements to ensure the CYP can continue their education at home including the setting and marking of work.



When returning back to school a return to school meeting will be arranged with a senior member of staff and the parent/carer and child/young person on the school premises. Informal exclusions such as sending a child home to “cool off” are unlawful, regardless of whether they occur with the agreement of parents. Any exclusion of a pupil must be regardless of whether they occur with the agreement of parents. Any exclusion of a pupil must be formally recorded.

Permanent Exclusions:

In excluding a CYP permanently, the school is acknowledging that it has exhausted all available strategies for dealing with that CYP. Hence, it should normally be only used as a last resort.

There are, however, circumstances where a CYP may be permanently excluded for a first or one off offence. These could include:

- Where there has committed actual or threatened violence against another CYP or member of staff
- Sexual misconduct
- Supplying an illegal drug. (*This should take account of how far the CYP might have been vulnerable to pressure and/or bullying from peers and/or others. However, where it is clear that drugs have been supplied for profit or repeated use has taken place on the premises then this constitutes both a serious breach of school rules and a danger to other CYPs and as such justifies a permanent exclusion*).
- Carrying an offensive weapon

The decision to exclude either permanently or for a fixed term should be based upon:

- Evaluating the YP’s capacity to understand the consequences of their actions, based on our understanding of their Learning Disabilities, Difficulties, Mental or Physical Health
 - A consideration of all the relevant facts and such evidence as may be available to support the allegations made, taking into account the school’s behaviour and equal opportunities policies.

- A review of the CYP's version of events
- Checking whether the incident may have been provoked, for example by racial or sexual harassment
- A consultation with any other relevant parties

A CYP may be excluded for behaviour outside school if there is a clear link between the misconduct in question and the promotion of good behaviour and discipline in the part of the schools' CYPs.

Once a decision has been made to exclude a CYP the Head Teacher is responsible for:

- Deciding the nature of the exclusion either fixed term or permanent
- The period of any fixed term exclusion
- Informing the parents/carers, in writing, of the period of the exclusion, reasons for exclusion, any arrangements to hold a meeting regarding the exclusion
- Informing the LA, in writing, of the exclusion, the period of the exclusion, reasons for exclusion, any arrangements to hold a meeting regarding the exclusion
- Informing in writing, the relevant Children's Services Department, where appropriate, of the exclusion, the period of the exclusion, reasons for exclusion, any arrangements to hold a meeting regarding the exclusion
- Making arrangements to ensure the CYP can continue their education at home including the setting and marking of work.

Note:

Where the break of school rules has led to the involvement of the police, the Head Teacher will need to consider the period of any exclusion in terms of:

1. How far a return to school whilst investigations are ongoing could affect the effectiveness and outcomes of the investigation
2. How far a return to school either during or after ongoing investigations could affect the education of other CYPs



Where it is believed that an early return could impact on either (1) or (2) above the CYP should remain at home with the school making arrangements for the CYP's education to continue.

Monitoring and evaluation

The success of the policy will be monitored and evaluated through an annual review of the number of exclusions, their nature and the reason for their imposition.

Appendices

The School adopts the guidance from DFE, Promoting Positive Behaviour and Early Intervention

We have taken advice from the Department of Education document:

Exclusions from maintained schools, academies and CYP referral units in England January 2015