



The Cathedral School of St Peter and St John

Growing together within God's loving family we support, challenge and inspire each other to become the best that we can be.

Exclusion Policy

Signed by:

_____ Headteacher Date: _____

_____ Chair of governors Date: _____

Exclusion Policy

There is a statutory entitlement for every child to receive a full-time appropriate education provision and The Cathedral School of St Peter and St John RC Primary believes that learning is the core purpose for all students. In order to ensure that all students can learn, we may at times need to consider exclusion as a consequence for preventing this happening, or for not following the high expectations we have.

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Section 1: Guidance Framework

This policy is written in line with the DfE Statutory Guidance – Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools/ academies and pupil referral units in England (2024)

Section 2: Links to other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school/academy's policies for;

- Behaviour and Positive Relationship Policy
- Behaviour Principles Written Statement
- Equal opportunities
- Special Educational Needs

Section 3: Principles

3.1 The Cathedral School of St Peter and St John RC Primary is a learning institution which aims to provide life chances for all of its students. We view exclusion as a last resort when all other possible methods of managing student behaviour have been exhausted. The decision to exclude is never taken lightly and careful consideration is taken of the facts and the underlying circumstances before reaching a decision to exclude.

3.2 We recognise the detrimental impact of exclusion on both the education and well-being of students and their families. We also recognise the impact of social isolation, which can result from the permanent exclusion of a student which we will try hard to avoid.

3.3 Permanent exclusion is an extremely serious step to take and has a significant impact on the ability of a student to access education in the future. It is only used where it is unavoidable and where every possible appropriate alternative has been considered. We are committed to using alternatives to permanent exclusion such as managed moves and alternative provision where appropriate.

3.4 We adhere to the Equality Act and of our duty not to discriminate against students for any reason.

3.5 We also take account of our statutory duties in relation to S.E.N.D

3.6 We aim to involve parents as early as possible in any process.

Section 4: The decision to exclude

4.1 The decision to exclude is made solely by the Head teacher (or in their absence, the acting Head teacher). The Head teacher may consult others, excluding anyone who may later have a role in reviewing the Head teacher decision.

4.2 The decision to exclude a student is not taken lightly and the Head teacher will:

- a) Ensure that a thorough investigation is carried out
- b) Consider all the evidence available to support the allegations
- c) Allow and encourage the student to give their version of events
- d) Keep a written record of the actions taken including the signed statements of witnesses
- e) Be confident that the procedures detailed later in this policy have been carried out
- f) Ensure S.E.N. expert advice has been taken into account where appropriate
- g) Take into account any contributing factors that are identified e.g. recent bereavement, mental health issues, subject to bullying or provocation
- h) Ensure that parents/carers have been kept informed throughout the process and consulted where appropriate

4.3 The standard of proof applied when deciding to exclude is 'balance of probabilities'. The more serious the allegation the more convincing the evidence substantiating the allegation needs to be.

4.4 Once the decision has been made to exclude, a student will only be sent home once contact has been made with parents/carers and where it is clear that the student will be returning to a place of safety. Work will be provided and either sent with the student or arrangements made for collection.

Section 5: Fixed-term Exclusion (up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year)

5.1 A decision to exclude a student for a fixed-term may be taken in response to breaches of the school behaviour policy

5.2 Examples of behaviour that may lead to a fixed-term exclusion are;

- Physical violence or verbal abuse to an adult
- Physical violence or verbal abuse to other children
- Damage to school property
- Bullying
- Racial Abuse
- Sexual Misconduct
- Drug or Alcohol Related
- Theft

- Persistent Disruptive Behaviour

5.3 The Head teacher may exclude a student for one or more fixed periods which do not exceed a total of 45 school days in any one school year.

5.4 During a fixed term exclusion of 5 or fewer days, work will be set by the School for the student to complete at home. This work should be returned completed at the end of exclusion for marking.

5.5 For an exclusion of longer than 5 days, the School will arrange a full-time educational provision from the sixth day of exclusion.

5.6 Before the end of any fixed-term exclusion, parents/carers will be invited to attend a reintegration meeting at the School with their child. The purpose of the meeting is to ensure that the student understands the reason for the exclusion and is committed to preventing the behaviour that led to the exclusion from being repeated. The School will consider all further support needed to help the student, including referral to external agencies if appropriate.

5.7 During the first five days of any exclusion, the parents of an excluded student must ensure that they are not present in a public place during normal school hours without reasonable justification, whether with or without a parent/carer. Failure to comply with this is an offence for which a fixed penalty notice can be issued.

5.8 Whilst each exclusion is treated on its own merit, the number of days of exclusion will be appropriate to the reason for the exclusion.

5.9 The Process:

Should exclusion be deemed necessary the chair of Governors would be notified and the situation explained. Information on exclusions is shared anonymously within the Effectiveness Committee and reported in the Headteacher's report on a termly basis. Data is also submitted to the Local Authority on an annual return. The Headteacher must notify the child's parents immediately and issue the exclusion letter, which explains the reason for the exclusion, the length of time and a date for a return to school interview with parents. Information on how to appeal and support from the LA must be included.

Section 6: Permanent Exclusion

6.1 The decision to permanently exclude is taken only:

a) In response to serious breaches of the School Behaviour Policy

AND

b) If allowing the student to remain would seriously harm the education or welfare of that student or others at the School

6.2 A student may be permanently excluded where there have been repeated breaches of the behaviour policy for which a range of consequences and strategies have been applied without success. It is an acknowledgement that the School has exhausted all available strategies for dealing with the student and is a last resort.

6.3 There may be exceptional circumstances where, in the judgement of the Head teacher it is appropriate to permanently exclude a student for a first or 'one off' offence. These might include;

- a) Serious actual or threatened violence against another student or member of staff
- b) Sexual abuse or assault
- c) Serious bullying including cyber-bullying

- d) Being in possession of an illegal substance and/or supplying an illegal substance
- e) Carrying an offensive weapon

Again this is not an exhaustive list and there may be other examples of behaviour where the Head teacher judges that a permanent exclusion is an appropriate sanction for a first or 'one off' offence.

6.4 In many cases investigation may not be immediately possible, for example, the incident is complex and a number of witness statements are required. In this case, a Head teacher may issue a fixed term exclusion for a short period (a maximum of 5 school/academy days is advised) in order to;

- a) Allow a full investigation to take place
- b) Give an opportunity for a reasoned decision

In exceptional cases, usually where further evidence, not available at the time of the investigation has come to light, a fixed term exclusion may be followed by a permanent exclusion at the end of the initial fixed term period.

6.5 The Head teacher/Principal will:

- a) Meet wherever possible, with the parents/carers and students before reaching a decision to permanently exclude a student.
- b) Notify the parents without delay, ideally by telephone and followed up by a letter within one School/Academy day
- c) Inform the governing body/management committee and LA within one School/Academy day of the decision to permanently exclude
- d) Continue to provide education for the pupil for five School/Academy days. From the sixth day of a permanent exclusion the LA is statutorily responsible for ensuring that full time education is available.
- e) Prepare all supporting papers for the exclusion and pass them to the Clerk for circulation to all parties **at least 5 days in advance** of the meeting. The paperwork should include:
 - The Head teacher's case for exclusion.
 - A copy of the exclusion letter of notification to the parent
 - Attendance records.
 - Witness statements (where appropriate and signed and dated). Pupils names must be redacted when presented to governors and parents. Original copies to be retained with the pupils' records.
 - Excluded pupil statement (where appropriate).
 - School/academy behaviour policy (Or at least the appropriate section).
 - Details of any Pastoral Support Programme or Individual Education Plan
 - Records of interventions
 - Details of any alternative or enhanced curriculum

6.6 The Process

A permanent exclusion would be for persistent poor behaviour after warning or a very serious offence. The parents/guardians would be informed that they could appeal against the decision by writing to the Chair of Governors. A sub-committee of the Governing Body would then meet to discuss the appeal. After the meeting, a letter would be sent to the parents/guardians informing them of the decision made by the committee. All these stages would be in line with the LA/DfE guidelines for exclusions.

Section 7: The Role of the governing Body to Review the Exclusion

7.1 The School has a Governing body which has responsibility for reviewing decisions in relation to exclusions. The committee consists of at least 3 members, none of whom have a conflict of interest regarding the exclusion.

7.2 The Behaviour Committee will automatically review any exclusion which results in a student being excluded for more than 15 school days in any one term, missing a public examination or any permanent exclusion.

7.3 Parents/carers have the right to appeal the decision to exclude their child. Full details of how these meetings operate can be found in Salford City Council's Exclusion Resources for Schools and also within the DfE Guidance (2024).

A parent/carer may request that the Governing body review the process within 50 school days of receiving notice of the exclusion. The request should be made in writing and should set out the question(s) which they wish the Behaviour Committee to consider. The committee will respond in writing within 15 days.

Fixed Term Exclusion (more than 15 days fixed-term)

Governing body meets to review on the exclusion within 15 school days or receiving notice of the exclusion.

7.4 An Independent Review Panel will consist of 3 members and will be chaired by a lay member and two other independent members, one with governance experience, the other with Headship experience. This panel will decide whether to uphold the decision to exclude a student.

7.5 The Independent Review Panel can either uphold the decision to exclude the student or recommend that the School reconsiders the matter. They cannot, however, direct the reinstatement of the student.

Section 8: Informing parents/carers

Following a decision to exclude, the Head teacher must without delay inform parents/carers of the reason and period of the exclusion. They must also, without delay put the decision to exclude in writing stating the date the exclusion takes effect.

The letter must also explain:

- The circumstances leading up to the decision to exclude
- Why the Head teacher decided to exclude the student
- If relevant, what steps were taken to try and avoid exclusion, details of any relevant previous warnings, fixed period exclusions or other disciplinary measures taken before the present incident.
- The arrangements for enabling the student to continue his/her education, including setting and marking of the student's work
- The parent's right to see and have a copy of their child's records
- The parent's responsibilities to ensure that their child is not in a public place in school hours during the first five days of an exclusion
- If the exclusion is for a fixed period, the letter will also state the length of the exclusion and the date and time the student should return to the School
- The arrangements for a parent interview at the end of the exclusion to discuss the process of reintegration

- For permanent exclusions, the letter will also state the parent's right to appeal to the Independent Appeals Panel and the appropriate mechanism for that to happen as well as the fact that the Behaviour Committee will meet to review the decision
- For fixed term exclusions, the letter will also state that if parents are concerned about the way in which the exclusion was managed, they may write to the Behaviour Committee to ask it to review the process. This may be done by just one member of the Committee. The Committee cannot overturn the decision to exclude but may put a note on the file.
- The involvement, if appropriate, or S.E.N. expert advice.

Section 9: Internal advice, guidance and procedures for staff involved in the exclusion process

9.1 All investigations should, where practical, aim to be completed within 24 hours of a first report. Ideally an investigation should be completed on the first day of the incident however it is recognised that this is not always possible

9.2 Investigations must be thorough:

- Initial statements should be as detailed as possible giving the names of potential witnesses
- The Young Person should be spoken with as soon as possible and given an opportunity to give their version of events verbally and in writing. They should be placed in Internal Exclusion or an appropriate venue whilst the investigation is carried out and before a decision is made. On a rare occasion it may be necessary to send this student home promptly (they may pose a Health and Safety Risk). This should only be done after speaking with their parent/carer. If the student has not been able to give a statement, arrangements must be made as soon as possible for them to do so.
- All witnesses must be spoken to promptly and individually as soon after the incident as possible. Their safety is paramount and statements should be given in confidence.
- If it is suspected that a student is carrying an item which is important as part of the investigation eg an item that it is suspected they have stolen or an illegal item, a search may be carried out in accordance with legal guidance and in the presence of a witness
- The community police officer can be used to advise and assist but not in a formal capacity unless agreed by the Head teacher. If they are used in a formal capacity parents/carers must be notified
- All statements must be written clearly and they must be signed and dated. If the statement is dictated this must be indicated. The statement must clearly explain areas of contest and this means that the statements should be discussed with the witness to ensure that understanding and interpretation are clear.
- Advice must be sought from relevant experts such as SENCO if appropriate

9.3 Once the investigation is complete all paperwork should be presented to the Head teacher for a decision. Any previous exclusions and the suspect's behaviour record should be part of this information. The checklist should be completed if a permanent exclusion is recommended.

9.4 All paperwork relating to the exclusion must be filed immediately and details recorded.

9.5 Behaviour/Disciplinary Review Committee

- Where a behaviour committee is called to review an exclusion the panel must consist of at least 3 members
- Parents/carers must be notified of the meeting date and be given at least 5 days notice ideally. They should also be notified that they may bring a representative if they wish

- All paperwork relating to the meeting should be available for the Behaviour Committee ideally at least 5 days before the meeting
- A clerk will minute all aspects of the meeting which will follow the guidance set out by the DfE. The clerk should not have taught the pupil or been involved in any of the incidents in the case, and should not contribute to the meeting other than in an administrative capacity. Where possible the clerk should be experienced in exclusion matters.
- The Head teacher will present to the panel
- The parent/carer will present to the panel
- The panel will meet on its own with the clerk present to discuss its advice (the case?)
- The panel will meet with the Head teacher to inform of their advice (or they may have further questions to ask)
- The panel will inform the parent/carer of their decision
- The panel will inform the Head teacher of their decision
- The LA officer will attend.

The Behaviour Committee must inform the parent, Head teacher and the LA officer of their decision, in writing without delay, preferably within one working day of the meeting, stating their reasons.

A note of the Behaviour/Disciplinary Committee's views on the exclusion should be placed on the pupil's school record.