

Norwich Steiner School

Exclusion Policy

Revised February 2012

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1. Aim of Exclusion Policy

To provide an ultimate sanction against unacceptable behaviour, whereby any pupil who seriously or repeatedly breaches the school's behaviour policy making the school unsafe, unpleasant or an environment where other pupils are no longer able to learn, may be excluded from the school on a temporary or permanent basis.

2. Definition of Exclusion

Exclusion means the removal of a student from the school premises either temporarily (formerly known as Suspension) or permanently (formerly known as Expulsion).

A temporary exclusion may occur for a specific length of time, from 1 day up to a maximum of 45 days within a school year.

A permanent exclusion may occur following a serious incident or accumulation of incidents.

3. Procedure for Temporary Exclusion

1. The lower school teachers or kindergarten teachers (in the case of a pupil age 5 or 6 years of age) will meet as a teaching group to draw together all the relevant information and decide whether there is sufficient cause to temporarily exclude a pupil or not. Reasons for temporary exclusion may include:
 - a. Persistent disregard for school rules
 - b. Verbal abuse
 - c. Physical abuse – threatened or actual
 - d. Indecent behaviour
 - e. Damage to property
 - f. Theft
 - g. Persistent bullying
 - h. Substance/alcohol misuse

2. However, except in emergencies (see 3 below), before implementing an exclusion, the teachers will ensure appropriate investigations have been carried out and that all the evidence to support any allegations has been considered. The pupil will have been allowed to give his/her version of events and staff will have checked whether the incident was provoked, for example by bullying or racial/sexual harassment.
3. In an emergency, whereby the health and safety of the pupil, other pupils or others in the school could be affected, this decision may be taken by any combination of two teaching staff (not including assistants or learning support staff) and/or one member of teaching staff and the administrator, and in such circumstances the pupil will be expected to wait in the office to be collected by his/her parents.
4. The school will contact the parents immediately a decision has been taken to exclude a pupil, giving the reasons for it and identifying a provisional date when the pupil may return to school. A letter will be sent to the parents confirming these details.
5. During the pupil's absence, the teaching staff and parents will meet to review the pupil's behaviour, any existing IEPs and develop or update a Behaviour Management Plan for the pupil. A behaviour management plan is a holistic document which brings together the issues being presented by the pupil's behaviour, identifies what has been attempted already to support the pupil and any further actions that may be considered for implementation. Once a Behaviour Management Plan has been produced, IEP's identifying small, achievable goals may be derived from it, so that progress can more readily be monitored.
6. If the temporary exclusion is greater than three days, the class teacher will make relevant work available for the pupil to complete at home. It will be the parents' responsibility to collect this work and return it to the school for marking.
7. During the course of a temporary exclusion, the pupil is not allowed on the school premises and responsibility for supervision during such exclusion rests with the parents.
8. On returning to school, the pupil's behaviour will be closely monitored, using an individual report book, which will follow the pupil to each lesson and be completed by each teacher. The parents will be kept informed by regular dialogue with the teachers and by exchange of the report book.
9. If there is no improvement in a pupil's behaviour on returning to school following a temporary exclusion, despite implementation of measures agreed in the behaviour management plan, then the school may need to consider excluding the pupil either on a further temporary basis or on a permanent basis.

4. Procedure for Permanent Exclusion

Permanent exclusion is a last resort.

It is used only:

- a) When the pupil is not responding positively at any level to measures put in place following temporary exclusion, so that the learning environment of others is compromised in a prolonged and unacceptable way;
- b) As a consequence of any single serious, dangerous incident carried out without reasonable provocation and with intent – e.g. arson, serious injury or intent to injure another person.

Before taking a decision to permanently exclude a pupil:

- a) Staff will discuss any recent events with the parents; notes will be taken.
- b) Staff will talk to the pupil, ideally in the presence of his/her parents, but if the pupil requests a meeting without the parents, then this may also be agreed. Notes will be taken.
- c) The views of the parents and the pupil will be presented to the teachers responsible for the pupils' education. Minutes to the meeting will be taken.
- d) Together, the teachers will review the whole situation and take a decision together. No single member of staff may take the decision alone. The pupil's class or kindergarten teacher, along with a majority of subject teachers who actually teach the pupil, must agree that this is the only course of action left to take before a decision to permanently exclude a pupil can be implemented. Minutes to the meeting must be taken.

Once a decision to permanently exclude a pupil from the school has been taken, two teachers will meet with the parents to inform them of the decision, which will also be given in a written letter at the same time. If parents refuse or are unable to attend this meeting, a letter will be posted to the parents, informing them of the decision and their right to appeal.

Except in the circumstance whereby a pupil poses an immediate threat to health and safety of others, the school may consider on a case-by-case basis, whether to defer a permanent exclusion in order to allow the parents time to find an alternative school.

5. The right of appeal against a decision to permanently exclude a pupil

In the event of a permanent exclusion, parents have the right to appeal and must do so as soon as possible after being informed of the decision. In the event of an appeal, the school will establish an independent panel incorporating a member of teaching staff (not involved in the decision), a trustee and one other, who may be another trustee, or a member of administration staff not involved in the decision to exclude.

The purpose of such an appeal hearing is for the independent panel to decide whether:

- The pupil actually committed the disciplinary offence
- Permanent exclusion was a reasonable response

Parents, the pupil and any staff involved will each have the opportunity to present their views to the panel, and then the panel will withdraw to come to a decision in privacy. The decision will ideally be one where the panel can make a unanimous decision; if not they may choose to make a majority decision. If the panel decide to uphold the original decision to exclude a pupil, the parents will be informed within 48 hours, unless advised by the panel of an alternative timescale before or during the hearing.

6. Exclusions due to parental breach of contract

Pupils may also be excluded because of a fundamental breach of contract by the parents, including:

1. Parents who fail to pay agreed fees, refuse to discuss their circumstances and/or fail to pay a re-negotiated fee which takes into account a family's current financial difficulties;
2. Parents consistently refusing to meet their child's teachers when so requested to do so.

The school will always be reluctant to exclude a pupil in these circumstances; however whilst the school receives no state funding, the school is totally dependent upon the financial contribution of each parent in order to fulfill its side of the contract to provide a Steiner education to their child/children. Thus, in

the absence of the agreed funding, a fundamental breach of contract is considered to have taken place, which if not quickly rectified, undermines the school's ability to provide the education.

7. Related policies

Behaviour & discipline policy

Bullying Policy

Child Protection Policy

Special Educational Needs Policy

Physical Handling and Use of Reasonable Force Policy