

*WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL
RC PRIMARY SCHOOL*



EXCLUSION POLICY

Spring 2020

Personnel responsible for the policy: Senior management and governors.

Review date: Spring 2022 (unless legislation changes)

It is the policy of Westminster Cathedral Primary School to try to deal with all behavioural issues in an active, positive way, employing a wide range of strategies, including those specifically designed to avoid issues that may reach the point of exclusion. This policy should be read in partnership with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Purpose of this policy

This policy is designed to briefly outline the school's approach to exclusions and has been written with reference to the DfE *'Exclusion from maintained schools, Academies and pupil referral units in England'* September 2017 and within the statutory framework as defined in the *The School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012*. It outlines only where the school applies its own additional guidance and policies, which complement and reinforce the statutory guidance, for purposes of clarity in the day-to-day operation of the school.

Principles

- 1) Exclusion is a sanction used by the school only in cases deemed as serious breaches of the School Behaviour Policy and is the last resort. A student may be at risk of exclusion from school for:
 - Verbal or physical assault of a student or adult;
 - behaviour that is deemed to put the safety of themselves and others at risk
 - Persistent and repetitive disruption of lessons and other students' learning;
 - Extreme misbehaviour which is deemed outside the remit of the normal range of sanctions.
- 2) A Fixed Term Exclusion from the school can only be authorised by the Headteacher or the deputy headteacher acting on their behalf. If none are available to authorise the exclusion a decision should be deferred until the opportunity for authorisation is available.
- 3) In the case of a Permanent Exclusion this can only be authorised by the Headteacher and must only be done after consulting the Chair of Governors of the intention to impose this sanction, although the final decision rests with the Headteacher of the school. A permanent exclusion must only be used as a last resort, in response to a serious breach, or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy; and where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school.
- 4) The school seeks to reduce the number of incidents leading to exclusions by promoting a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and discipline within the school and through proactively engaging with parents.
- 5) The decision to exclude a pupil must be lawful, reasonable and fair. Westminster Cathedral Primary School has a statutory duty not to discriminate against pupils on the basis of protected characteristics, such as disability or race. The school should give particular consideration to the fair treatment of pupils from groups who are vulnerable to exclusion.
- 6) Exclusion must only ever be for a disciplinary reason. For example, it would be unlawful to exclude a pupil simply because they have additional needs or a disability that the school feels it is unable to meet, or for a reason such as: academic attainment / ability; the action of a pupil's parents; or the failure of a pupil to meet specific conditions before they are reinstated. Pupils who repeatedly disobey their teachers' academic instructions could, however, be subject to exclusion.
- 7) The school regularly monitors the number of Fixed Term Exclusions to ensure that no group of students is unfairly disadvantaged through their use and that any underlying needs of individuals are being fully met.
- 8) Nationally, children with SEN or Looked After Children have disproportionately higher rates of exclusion than others. The Head teacher should ensure that every possible step has been taken to support children from these vulnerable groups, before the measure of Exclusion is taken. Where the Headteacher has concerns about the behaviour, or risk of exclusion, of a child with additional needs, a pupil with an EHCP or a looked after child it should, in partnership with others (including the local

authority as necessary), consider what additional support or alternative placement may be required. This should involve assessing the suitability of provision for a pupil's SEN. Where a pupil has an EHCP, schools should consider requesting an early annual review or interim / emergency review.

9) Exclusions will be for half a day, 1 to 3 days or 5 days. On the first instance a child will be excluded for half a day. Following the second incident, it will be a full day exclusion. The third incident would warrant a 3 day exclusion and the fourth incident a 5 day exclusion; however, there may be incidences where a longer or permanent exclusion is necessary. The length of any exclusion is at the discretion of the head. A child is not permitted to be excluded for more than 45 days in a school year.

Before an exclusion:

Exclusion will not be imposed instantly unless there is an immediate threat to the safety of others in the School or the student concerned. Before deciding whether to exclude a pupil either permanently or for a fixed period the Headteacher will:

- Ensure appropriate investigations have been carried out
- Consider all the evidence available to support the allegations taking into account the school policies
- Allow the student to give her/his version of events
- Check whether the incident may have been provoked.

If the Head is satisfied that on the balance of probabilities the student did what he or she is alleged to have done and if appropriate, all other alternatives have been explored or exhausted, exclusion will be the outcome.

Notification of an Exclusion (See the sample letter in the Appendix)

1) Parents will be notified as soon as possible of the decision to exclude a student and the reason for the exclusion. This will be done on the day of the exclusion being authorised by either direct phone contact or a face-to-face meeting. A written confirmation of the reason(s) for the exclusion will be sent to parents the same day.

2) The parents will be informed of the number of days the child is being excluded for and the return date.

2) In the case of a Permanent Exclusion parents will be notified by the Headteacher in a face-to-face meeting.

3) A student who has been excluded will have the reason for his/her exclusion explained to them by a member of staff so that they understand the nature of their misbehaviour.

4) The school will also work to put in place a programme for the pupil on his/her return. This will include input from staff at the school, parents, if appropriate, and any other appropriate bodies e.g. School Home Support Practitioner, Attendance Service or the Local Authority. Should it be decided for whatever reason that the matter needs to be put in the hands of another agency i.e. the incident leads to the discovery that there is a child protection issue, the school will continue to monitor the situation and work closely with that agency. It is hoped that in most cases following an exclusion, the child will be able to return to school and that further input will promote in him/her a more positive attitude and a subsequent improvement in behaviour.

5) The Chair of Governors, LA Inclusion Officer and relevant school staff will be notified of all Fixed Term Exclusions the same day of the production of the exclusion letter, which they will receive a copy of; it will clearly outline the reasons for the exclusion.

During an exclusion

1) To ensure as much continuity in education as possible, work will be provided for the child.

2) For the first five school days of an exclusion (or until the start date of any alternative provision where this is earlier) parents are legally required to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, and that parents may be given a fixed penalty notice or prosecuted if they fail to do so.

Students Returning from a Fixed Term Exclusion

1) All students returning from a Fixed Term Exclusion are required to attend a reintegration meeting, accompanied by a parent. This meeting will seek to establish practical ways in which further exclusion can be avoided and behaviour modified to acceptable standards in partnership between student, parent and school. This meeting may be led by the Headteacher or member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Permanent Exclusions

A school will usually only permanently exclude a child as a last resort, after trying to improve the child's behaviour through other means. However, there are exceptional circumstances in which the Headteacher may decide to permanently exclude a pupil because of ongoing issues or even for a 'one-off' incident.

If your child has been permanently excluded, be aware that:

- the school's governing body is required to review the Headteacher's decision and you may meet with them to explain your views on the exclusion
- if the governing body confirms the exclusion, you can appeal to an independent appeal panel organised by the local authority
- the school must explain in a letter how to lodge an appeal
- the local authority must provide full-time education from the sixth day of a permanent exclusion

Appeals

All correspondence regarding an exclusion from the school will inform parents of their right to appeal to the Governing Body against the decision to exclude. This procedure is clearly set out in the statutory guidance. The person who should be contacted to initiate an appeal is the Clerk to the Governors.

Relationship to other school policies

The Exclusion Policy should be read in tandem with the school's Behaviour Policy as well as other relevant school policies, particularly the Inclusion Policy, Special Educational Needs Policy and the Equality & Diversity Policy. It also has a close inter-relationship with the Anti-Bullying Policy and Attendance Policy.

Monitoring and Review

- 1) The impact of this policy will be reviewed by the governors' Staffing and Community Committee
- 2) The Headteacher will provide the Committee with regular monitoring reports which will help it to evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and procedures.
- 3) The policy and procedures will be reviewed and amended in the light of such evaluation and in consultation with representatives of all key stakeholders.

Agreed by

Reviewed:

Next Review: