

Exclusion Policy

Meir Heath Academy



Approved by:

Mrs M Southern
(Principal)

Mr J Spencer
(Chair of Governors)

Date: September 2023

Last reviewed on: September 2023

Next review due by: September 2024

Rationale

This document deals with the policy and practice which informs the school's use of exclusion. It is underpinned by the shared commitment of all members of the school community to achieve two important aims; to ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community and to maintain an appropriate educational and happy environment in which all can learn and succeed.

Introduction

Only the Principal/Head of School (or in the absence of the Principal the Assistant Principal if required) of Meir Heath Academy can take the decision to exclude a pupil. Before any decision to exclude a pupil is made, witness statements from all parties will be gathered and recorded in the teacher's Welfare Files.

The decision to exclude a pupil will be taken in the following circumstances:-

- In response to a serious breach of the school's Behaviour Policy
- If allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school.

The law allows for two types of exclusion:

Fixed period exclusions

If a pupil has seriously broken school rules or allowing them to stay in school would seriously harm their education or welfare, or the education or welfare of other pupils, they may be excluded for a fixed period of time (usually for one to five days), with a date set of when they can return to school.

Examples of this behaviour may include:

- Verbal and/or physical abuse to staff, pupils and/or members of the school community
- Indecent behaviour
- Damage to property
- Theft
- Threatened violence against another pupil or a member of staff
- Unacceptable behaviour which has previously been reported and for which school sanctions and other interventions have not been successful.
- Bringing in an offensive weapon e.g. bladed/sharply pointed and other weapons.

A pupil may be excluded for one or more fixed periods, up to a maximum of 45 days in a single academic year. For a fixed period exclusion of more than 5 school days, a Pastoral Support Plan will be drawn up. This needs to be agreed with the school, pupil and parents. Where the pupil is to be at home, parents are advised that the pupil is not allowed on the

school premises, and that daytime supervision is their responsibility as parents/guardians. Following exclusion, parents are contacted immediately where possible. A letter will be sent by post giving details of the exclusion and the date the exclusion ends. If a parent or carer wishes to discuss this letter with the Principal or a member of the Senior Leadership Team, they are welcome to make such an appointment via the school office.

A return to school meeting will be held following the expiry of the fixed term exclusion and this will involve the Principal/Head of School or a member of the Senior Leadership Team and other staff where appropriate.

Permanent Exclusion

The decision to exclude a pupil permanently is a serious one. If necessary, a series of fixed term exclusions can be made to allow time for all options to be explored and for an emergency review to be arranged. Only after all parties have agreed that all options have been discussed and exhausted, will the Principal/Head of School (or in the absence of the Principal the Assistant Principal) take the decision to exclude permanently.

There are two instances where permanent exclusion may be considered:

- The first is a final, formal 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 all available strategies have been exhausted and is used as a last resort. This would include persistent, repeated and defiant misbehaviour as listed in the examples in the above 'fixed period' section.
- The second is where there 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 or 'one off' offence. Such an offence might include a serious act of physical violence against a member of staff, pupil or member of the school community or bringing in a sharply pointed or bladed weapon with intent.

If the school feels that police involvement is necessary for specific and serious offences, this will be considered by the Principal/Head of School and all parties involved. Parents or carers will be notified of the exclusion immediately and will receive further details of reasons for the exclusion in writing.

Discipline and physical contact

Teachers cannot and will not punish pupils physically, but can physically restrain pupils using reasonable force where it's necessary to stop a pupil injuring him or herself or someone else, damaging property or causing serious disruption.

Further Information Exclusion will not be imposed instantly unless there is an immediate threat to the safety of others in the school or the pupil concerned.

The Principal (or appointment Assistant Principal if required) must notify the Governing Body and the Local Authority of a permanent exclusion, exclusions exceeding more than 5 days in a term and/or when it will result in the pupils missing a National Curriculum Test.

For all other exclusions the Principal (or appointment Assistant Principal if required) must notify the Governing Body and Local Authority once a term.

The Governing Body has a duty to consider parents' representations about an exclusion.

- The Governing Body may delegate their functions with respect to the consideration of an exclusion decision to a designated sub-committee consisting of at least 3 governors.
- The Governing Body must consider the reinstatement of an excluded pupil within 15 days of receiving the notice of the exclusion.
- If requested by the parents, the Governing Body must consider the reinstatement of an excluded pupil within 50 school days of receiving notice of the exclusion if a pupil would be excluded from school for more than 5 school days, but not more than 15 in a single term.