



Snowflake School

***‘Improving the quality of family life’***

## Exclusion Policy

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## Policy

Snowflake School will do everything in its power to ensure that it does not discriminate against students on any unlawful basis in considering any form of exclusion. This policy is aligned with the Equality Act 2010 and the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2024), ensuring that all decisions regarding exclusion are made lawfully, fairly, and with due regard to pupils' individual needs.

## Removal of students on health and safety grounds

The Head Teacher may decide to send a pupil home, after consultation with that pupil's parents/guardians and a health professional as appropriate, where because of a diagnosed illness such as a notifiable disease the pupil poses an immediate and serious risk to the health and safety of other students and staff. This is not an exclusion and will be for the shortest possible time.

## Students with special educational needs/disability (SEND)

It is recognised that statutory guidance on identifying, assessing and making provision for pupils with SEND, including those with behavioural, social and emotional needs, is provided in the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, which supports the Children and Families Act 2014 and was most recently updated in 2024. Snowflake School will have regard to this guidance. The Board of Trustees has a statutory duty to do its best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has a special need.

Where a child is permanently excluded, the Head Teacher will use the period between his or her initial decision and the meeting of the Board of Trustees to work with the pupils' Local Authority and/or parents to see whether more support can be made available or whether the statement should be changed to name a new school. If either of these options is possible, the Headteacher will normally withdraw the exclusion.

It is extremely important that parents/guardians of pupils with SEND who are excluded from school receive advice on the options available for their child's future education. Advice and information on SEND is available through local SEN Parent Partnerships. The Parent Partnership will also be able to provide details of voluntary agencies that offer support to parents/guardians, including those that can offer advice concerning exclusions.

## The decision to exclude

A decision to exclude a pupil will be taken only:

- In response to serious breaches of the school's behaviour policy
- If allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the student or others (including staff) in the school

A decision to exclude a child **permanently** is a serious one. It will usually be the final step in a process for dealing with disciplinary offences following a wide range of other strategies, which have been tried without success.

There will, however, be exceptional circumstances where, in the Headteacher's judgement, it is appropriate to permanently exclude a child for a first or 'One off' offence. These might include:

- Serious actual or threatened violence against another student or a member of staff
- Sexual abuse or serious assault
- Carrying an offensive weapon

The Head Teacher must consider whether to inform the police where such a criminal offence has occurred. They will also consider whether to inform other agencies.

These instances are not exhaustive but indicate the severity of such offences and the fact that such behaviour can affect the discipline and well-being of the Snowflake School community.

In cases where the Head Teacher has permanently excluded a student for:

- One of the above offences; or
- Persistent challenging behaviour and defiant behaviour including bullying (see Bullying Policy)

The Secretary of State would not normally expect the Board of Trustees or an Independent Appeal Panel to reinstate the student.

## Factors that will be considered before deciding to exclude

Exclusion will not be imposed in the heat of the moment unless there is an immediate threat to the safety of others in the school or the pupil concerned. Before deciding whether to exclude a pupil, either permanently or for a fixed period, the Head Teacher will:

- Ensure that a thorough investigation/review has been carried out
- Consider all the evidence available to support the allegations, taking account of Snowflake School's behaviour and equal opportunities policies, and, where applicable, the Equality Act 2010
- Work with the parents/outside agencies to try to resolve issues
- Allow the pupil to give his or her version of events, as far as it possible
- Check whether the incident/s may have been provoked and check that all procedures have been followed correctly
- Ensure that school staff and parents have met to plan/offer a modified timetable/curriculum for a set period to try to positively change behaviour (behaviour data and other assessments will be shared with parents to help this process)
- If necessary, consult others i.e. the Carbone Clinic Consultants (but not anyone who may later have a role in reviewing the Head Teacher's decision, for example a member of the Board of Trustees)

The standard of proof to be applied is the balance of probabilities. However, the more serious the allegation, the more convincing the evidence substantiating the allegation will need to be. This is not the same as requiring the criminal standard to be applied but it does mean that, when investigating more serious allegations, the Headteacher will gather and take account of a wider range of evidence (extending in some instances to evidence of the pupil's past behaviour), in determining whether it is more probable than not that the pupil has committed the behaviour/alleged offence.

Where a police investigation leading to possible criminal proceedings has been initiated, the evidence available may be very limited. However, it will still be possible for the Head Teacher to make a judgment on whether to exclude the pupil.

## Fixed period (non-permanent) exclusion

- Snowflake School will not give a fixed period (non-permanent) exclusion for longer than a total of 45 days in any school year
- fixed period exclusions will be for a set period, typically 1 – 3 days
- the Head Teacher will telephone the pupil's parents/guardians on the day an exclusion is given and follow up with a letter that explains the period of exclusion, the reasons for it and who to contact if parents/guardians would like to give their views
- pupils will be excluded only if their presence at school would harm other pupils or seriously disrupt the learning of others

## Considerations following a fixed period exclusion

The Head Teacher will consider:

- How the time might be used to address the pupil's difficulties/problems and plan for a reintegration into the school
- b) Together with pupil's maintaining LA, what educational arrangements will best help with the pupil's reintegration into Snowflake School at the end of the exclusion

The Head Teacher will arrange a reintegration meeting with parents/guardians following the expiry of a fixed period exclusion. This will be an opportunity to discuss how best the pupil can return to school. This may well involve the establishment of an individual home school contract.

## Parental co-operation

If efforts to resolve the issue with the parents/guardians are unsuccessful the Head Teacher will consider whether to contact the Education Welfare Service and seek the advice of the LA about available options.

In cases where a child in the care of the local authority or 'looked after' is excluded, the legally defined parent will have the right to make representations and to appeal. The definition of a parent for the purposes of the Education Acts is broadly drawn and includes any person who has parental responsibility (which includes the Local Authority where they have a care order in respect of the child) and any person (for example, a foster parent) with whom the child lives. These are in addition

to the child's birth parent(s). This means that there could be several people whom the Headteacher must notify about exclusions and who will have the right to make representations and appeal.

Even where the Local Authority does not have parental responsibility, the child's social worker (if appropriate) will be informed about any exclusion.

## Permanent exclusions

When a child has been permanently excluded:

- The school's Board of Trustees will be required to review the Headteacher's decision, and the parents may meet with them to explain their views on the exclusion
- If the Board of Trustees confirms the exclusion, the parents can appeal to an independent appeal panel.
- The Head Teacher will explain in a letter to the parents about how to make an appeal
- All local authorities have made a commitment to provide a child with a full-time education after a permanent exclusion - they will discuss the options with the parents once informed of the exclusion

The **independent appeal panel** consists of at least three Trustees. Panels must not include people whose connections may cast doubt on their impartiality.

## Revision

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