



Acorn Park

Exclusion Policy

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Owner- Job Title	Head of School of Service

Acorn Park School

Exclusion Policy

Introduction

Acorn Park School provides education for pupils with a statement and a diagnosis for Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD). Some of our pupils display challenging behaviours which may be considered reasons for exclusion in a more mainstream environment: the school therefore focuses on means of changing unwanted, inappropriate behaviours and teaching more appropriate, wanted behaviours. The school considers it appropriate that all behaviour be regarded in the light of the pupil's ASD; we do not consider a diagnosis as an excuse for challenging behavior, however the difficulties individuals with ASD experience e.g. sensory, social communicative, rigid behaviours, can be a reason for such behaviours which we seek to change and / or moderate.

This policy supports our Behaviour Policy and the document outlining our statement of purpose, ethos and vision.

This policy recognises that it is the Head of School of school's responsibility to:

- Ensure the school provides pupils with an environment and education that is responsive to their needs in relation to their Autism / Asperger Syndrome.
- Promote good behaviour and discipline across the school.
- Secure an orderly and safe environment for pupils and staff.

This policy recognises that in order to meet these responsibilities the Head of School of school may in exceptional circumstances have to exclude pupils, whether for a fixed term or on a permanent basis, and seeks to clarify the circumstances under which this might take place and the procedures to be followed.

Aim

This policy aims to ensure that the exclusion of pupils operates in a fair and reasonable manner.

Objectives

The objectives of the policy are to:

- Ensure a shared understanding of the exclusion of pupils
- To identify the circumstances under which a pupil, may be excluded
- To identify the circumstances under which a pupil not be excluded
- Ensure a consistent approach to the exclusion of pupils

Implementation

Only the Head of School can decide to exclude a pupil from school. A decision to exclude a pupil will only be taken:

- In response to a serious breach or breaches of the school's discipline policy
- If allowing the pupil to remain in the school would seriously harm the education, physical or emotional welfare of the pupil themselves or others in the school
- In the case of a proposed permanent exclusion, in consultation with the Acorn School Governing Body.

Consequences of Exclusion

We recognise that there are some tangible advantages of exclusion;

- It can relieve pressure on the school, other pupils and staff.
- It can offer the pupil a chance for emotional relaxation and personal recovery in a context less fraught with anxiety.
- It gives the school a chance to involve parents and other agencies in the problem and its resolution.

Equally we recognise that there may be disadvantages of exclusion

- It takes the child out of the educational and clinical support of the school.
- It presents families with additional difficulties and can create parental resentments
- Being 'sent home' is a very attractive idea to some pupils and some might see it as a 'reward' for bad behaviour.
- It could prove to be totally counter-productive if it is used too frequently and may be a symptom that there is something within the school environment that is not fully meeting the child's needs.

Should exclusion become necessary however, it is important to follow our procedures. These will help to limit adverse effects and protect the pupil, the school and the family.

Reasons for Exclusions

Each situation must be assessed on its own circumstances; each pupil's individual reactions and needs must be taken fully into account. We cannot adopt 'standard procedures' for all pupils in these situations. We do not generalise from the particular where our pupils are concerned. There are circumstances, however, in which the only decision left to us (and sometimes the best course of action in the situation we face) is to make a decision to exclude the pupil.

Generally a pupil could be excluded for a fixed term if it is felt that they are in control of themselves and have some knowledge of what they were doing and

- cause intentional deliberate and serious harm to another pupil or member of staff
- continue to act in a dangerous and threatening manner despite verbal and visual prompts to stop, which could lead to the serious injury of another person.

A permanent exclusion from our school is something that is an extremely rare event as we always seek to keep pupils we have agreed to accept into our school community. However, we reserve the right to permanently exclude a pupil in some exceptional circumstances;

- There may have been an error in our selection, assessment and admission process and if the Head of School in consultation with staff considers that the school does not have the appropriate expertise and cannot provide the correct learning environment to fully meet a child's needs.
- It is felt that a pupil is displaying a significant level of risk to themselves and others which cannot safely be controlled within the school environment.

Again, the important thing is to make careful and informed decisions which are in the best interest of the child, the school community and other pupils. These collective interests cannot always be reconciled and we accept the fact that on some occasions the collective good has to prevail over individual considerations.

A pupil should not be excluded for minor incident e.g.

- Failure to complete work
- Poor academic performance
- Lateness or truancy

Exclusion Procedures

Once a decision has been made to exclude a pupil the Head of School of school is responsible for:

- Deciding the nature of the exclusion either fixed term or permanent
- The period of any fixed term exclusion.
- Informing the parents/carers, in writing, of the period of the exclusion; reasons for exclusion; any arrangements to hold a meeting regarding the exclusion.
- Informing the LA, in writing, of the exclusion, the period of the exclusion, reasons for exclusion; any arrangements to hold a meeting regarding the exclusion.
- Making arrangements to ensure the pupil can continue his/her education at home including the setting and marking of work.
- Contacting the Acorn School Advisor in reference to a permanent exclusion.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The success of the policy will be monitored and evaluated through an annual review of the number of exclusions, their nature and the reason for their imposition.