



# Greater Grace School of Christian Education

## Exclusions Policy

This procedure describes the Exclusions Policy for Greater Grace School. This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Motivation and Behaviour Management Policy. It 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:

- The first is to ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the School community, and to maintain an appropriate educational environment in which all can learn and succeed;
- The second is to continue to keep the need to use exclusion as a sanction to a minimum.

Exclusion, temporary or permanent, is extremely rare at Greater Grace School, as most behaviour issues are dealt with according to Stages 1 and 2 of the Motivation and Behaviour Management Policy. However, Stages 3 - 5 which deal with exclusion should be read alongside this procedure if it is needed.

### INTRODUCTION

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

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

Exclusion is an extreme sanction and is only administered by the Head teacher, in consultation with the Chair of Trustees.

Exclusion, whether fixed term or permanent, may be used for any of the following, all of which constitute examples of unacceptable conduct and are infringements of the School's Behaviour Management Policy:

- Verbal abuse to students, staff or others
- Physical abuse to/attack on students, staff or others
- Indecent behaviour
- Serious actual or threatened violence against another student or a member of staff.
- Sexual abuse or assault
- Misuse of illegal drugs or other substances
- Supplying an illegal drug
- Carrying an offensive weapon
- Theft
- Damage to property
- Arson
- Unacceptable behaviour which has previously been reported and for which School sanctions have been applied
- When other interventions have not been successful in modifying the student's behaviour

This is not an exhaustive list and there may be other situations where the Head teacher makes the judgement that exclusion is an appropriate sanction.

Alternative strategies to exclusion are included in the Motivation and Behaviour Management Policy. Exclusion is only considered in exceptional cases where these have been exhausted without the necessary improvement in the student's behaviour.

There is no corporal correction in school. Our behaviour management policy utilises five stages. Actions at each stage and progression to the next are always at the discretion of the Head teacher and the child's Supervisor, depending on the individual case and taking into account the child's age and any Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (statemented or otherwise). However, **in the case of an offence of a sexual nature, staff should follow the statutory procedures laid out in the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.**

If there is no positive response with clear evidence of changed attitude and behaviour at stages 1 and 2, Stages 3 and 4 include temporary fixed term exclusions, and stage 5 is permanent exclusion.

## **EXCLUSION PROCEDURE**

- Most exclusions are of a fixed term nature and are of short duration (usually between one and three days).
- The DfE regulations allow the Head teacher to exclude a student for one or more fixed periods not exceeding 45 school days in any one school year.
- Arrangements will be established to review promptly any permanent exclusion from the School and all fixed term exclusions that would lead to a student being excluded for over 15 days in a school term.
- 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. Parents have a right to make representations to the Senior Management Team and the Trustees.
- The parents are required to attend a return to school interview following the expiry of the fixed term exclusion at which the student must express repentance including the intention to cooperate before being allowed back. The student can be required to write a letter of repentance confirming this in writing so that it can be referred back to if necessary. This interview will involve the Head teacher, and a member of the Senior Management Team such as the Learning Centre Supervisor, or other staff where appropriate. The Chair of Trustees will be present if the exclusion(s) total 5 or more days. The student is also warned not to talk unduly with other students about these matters, that is, to be showing a respectful attitude to staff and not using it for "bravado."
- The School will place the student on report to the Head teacher, usually for one week, or for the remainder of the half term, to monitor behaviour and work.
- If the fixed term exclusion is greater than five days or an accumulation of exclusions exceed five days, a Pastoral Support Plan will be drawn up. This needs to be agreed with the School, student and parents.
- A fixed term exclusion will result in the student being required to remain at home because of the severity of the incident or because of practical and logistical constraints
- During the course of this fixed term exclusion where the student is to be at home, parents are advised that the student is not allowed on the premises during school, and that daytime supervision is their responsibility, as parents/guardians.
- The student may be required to do their PACE work at home and must agree to do so to the best of their ability. If the suspension is six days or longer, they will definitely be required to do so, and the parent will be asked to take responsibility for ensuring that this is done and that the work is available for the supervisor to check regularly. If the student is already enrolled with the International Certificate of Christian Education, both student and parents will be warned that it may not be possible for the student to complete the requirements for graduation with an ICCE Certificate unless he/she ceases from any and all unacceptable attitudes and behaviour from this point forward so that work for ICCE credit is done in school under the supervision of the ICCE Coordinator.

## **PERMANENT EXCLUSION**

The decision to exclude a student permanently is a serious one. An alternative is to consider allowing the parents to withdraw their child if appropriate, however, the student may need to learn that certain behaviour, if adhered to, have serious consequences such as the loss of the blessing of Christian schooling which could affect his/her opportunity to complete the required credits and graduate with the International Certificate of Christian Education. However, the school will always consider allowing back truly repentant individuals.

Full records are kept and care taken to ensure that any letters written are clear and precisely worded, since they may affect the student's attitude to Christian matters in the future. Care is taken to express love for the student while deprecating his/her continued unacceptable behaviour.

There are two main types of situation in which permanent exclusion may be considered:

- The first is a final, formal step (stage 5) 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 that all available strategies have been exhausted and is used as a last resort. This would include persistent and defiant misbehaviour including bullying (which would include racist or homophobic bullying) or repeated possession and or use of an illegal drug on School premises.
- 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 student 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 assault.
  - Supplying an illegal drug.
  - Carrying an offensive weapon \*.
  - Arson.

The School will consider police involvement for any of the above offences.

These instances are not exhaustive but indicate the severity of such offences and the fact that such behaviour seriously affects the discipline and well being of the School.

\* Offensive weapons are defined in the Prevention of Crime Act 1953 as "any article made or adapted for causing injury to the person; or intended by the person having it with him for such use by him."

## **GENERAL FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED BEFORE MAKING A DECISION TO EXCLUDE**

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 student either permanently or for a fixed period the Head teacher will:

- Ensure appropriate investigations have been carried out.
- Consider all the evidence available to support the allegations taking into account the Behaviour Management and Equal Opportunity Policies.
- Allow the student to give her/his version of events.
- Check whether the incident may have been provoked for example by bullying or by racial or sexual harassment.
- Consideration is given to bringing in another family (chosen by the "offending" student and parents but in agreement with the school authority so that we do not get into a protest movement situation) to ensure that their case is not only heard fairly, but that it is seen to be fair, just in case there appears to be, or actually is, a personality clash with either a teacher or the Head teacher.
- If the Head teacher is satisfied that on the balance of probabilities the student did what he or she is alleged to have done, exclusion will be the outcome.

## **EXERCISE OF DISCRETION**

In reaching a decision, the Head teacher will always look at each case on its own merits. Therefore, fixing a standard penalty for a particular action is both unfair and inappropriate.

In considering whether permanent exclusion is the most appropriate sanction, the Head teacher will meet with the Senior Management Team and the Chair of Trustees to examine the reasons for the decision and look at appropriate evidence, such as the witness statements and the strategies used by the School to support the student prior to exclusion, and to consider:

- The gravity of the incident, or series of incidents, and whether it constitutes a serious breach of the School's Behaviour Management Policy and
- The effect that the student remaining in the School would have on the education and welfare of other students and staff. Nonetheless, in the case of a student found in possession of an offensive weapon, whether there is an intention to use it or not, it is the School's usual policy in this particularly serious matter to issue a permanent exclusion.

## **LUNCHTIME EXCLUSION**

Students whose behaviour at lunchtime is disruptive may be excluded from the School premises for the duration of the lunchtime period. This will be treated as fixed term exclusion and parents will have the same right to gain information and to appeal.

## **BEHAVIOUR OUTSIDE SCHOOL**

Students' behaviour outside School on school "business" for example, school trips and journeys, games lessons or a work experience placement is subject to the School's Behaviour Policy. Bad behaviour in these circumstances will be dealt with as if it had taken place in School. For behaviour outside School but not on school business this policy will still have effect if there is a clear link between that behaviour and maintaining good behaviour and discipline among the student body as a whole. If students' behaviour in the immediate vicinity of the School or on a journey to and from school is poor and meets the School criteria for exclusion then the Head teacher may decide to exclude.

## **DRUG RELATED EXCLUSIONS**

In making a decision on whether or not to exclude for a drug-related offence the Head teacher may seek advice from the LEA's Drugs Education Advisor if appropriate.

## **STAFF WELLBEING**

While there is always great concern for the welfare of the individual student affected, the welfare of the student body and staff is paramount. All these things put strain on staff especially the Head teacher, so much prayer is needed for all the persons concerned including the Trustees who will be in close contact throughout even when they are not involved up-front. The time involved in after-school meetings and keeping detailed written records can be significant. The wellbeing of individual staff members needs to be protected since the whole scenario can be very wearying, and depressing if taken personally. Staff prayer and unity will be strengthened by these things, but they are never welcome.

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