



Lower Darwen Primary School

We are proud of our school.

Exclusion and Suspension of Pupils Policy

Background

This policy deals with the policy and practice which informs the School's use of exclusion and suspension. 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 education environment in which all can learn and succeed
- to reduce the need to use exclusion as a sanction

Introduction

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

- (a) In response to a serious breach of the school's Behaviour for Learning Policy
- (b) If allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of other persons or the pupil him/herself in the school.

Exclusion or suspension is the ultimate sanction and is only administered by the Headteacher. Exclusion, whether for a fixed term (known as a suspension) or permanent (referenced in this document as exclusion) may be used for any of the following, all of which constitute examples of unacceptable conduct, and are infringements of the school's Behaviour for Learning Policy:

- Verbal abuse to staff and others
- Verbal abuse to pupils
- Physical abuse to/attack on staff
- Physical abuse to/attack on pupils
- Indecent behaviour
- Damage to property
- Misuse of illegal drugs
- Misuse of other substances
- Theft
- Serious actual or threatened violence against another pupil or a member of staff
- Sexual abuse or assault
- Supplying an illegal drug
- Carrying an offensive weapon
- Arson
- Serious discriminatory behaviour
- A criminal offence has been committed
- Unacceptable behaviour which has previously been reported and for which school sanctions and other interventions have not been successful in modifying the pupil's behaviour.
- Serious inappropriate use of computing devices including mobile phones, laptops and tablets

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

At times the Headteacher will decide not to use the extreme sanction of an exclusion or suspension but will decide that a Pastoral Support Plan should be drawn up to try avoid the sanction of an exclusion or suspension in the future. This might be accompanied by an internal exclusion.

In determining whether an exclusion is just the Educational and Inspections Act 2006, says the penalty must be reasonable in all the circumstances and that account must be taken of the pupil's age, any special educational needs or disability they may have, and any religious requirements affecting them.

Exclusion and suspension procedure

Suspensions are of a fixed term nature and are of short duration (usually between one and five days).

The DfE regulations allow the Headteacher to suspend a pupil for one or more fixed periods not exceeding 45 school days in any one school year.

The Governors have established arrangements to review promptly all exclusions from the school and all suspensions that would lead to a pupil being suspended for more than 15 days in a school term or missing a public examination.

The Governors have established arrangements to review suspensions which would lead to a pupil being suspended for more than five days but not more than 15 days in a school term where a parent has expressed a wish to make representations.

Following suspension, parents are contacted immediately where possible. A letter will be sent by post giving details of the suspension and the date the suspension ends. Parents have a right to make representations to the Governing Body and the Local Authority as directed in the letter.

A return to school meeting will be held following the expiry of the suspension and this will involve a member of the Senior Management Team (usually the head teacher) and other staff where appropriate. During this meeting a Pastoral Support plan or Individual Behaviour plan will be drawn up, which will include a review date.

During the course of a suspension 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. The school will provide work to cover the length of the suspension.

Records relating to suspensions will be stored confidentially.

Exclusion (Permanent exclusion from school)

The decision to exclude a pupil permanently is a serious one. There are two main types of situation in which permanent exclusion may be considered:

1. 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 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, discriminatory or homophobic bullying) or repeated possession and/or use of an illegal drug on school premises.
2. 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. These might include:
 - Serious actual or threatened violence against another pupil or a member of staff
 - Sexual abuse or assault
 - Supplying an illegal drug
 - Carrying an Offensive Weapon (Offensive weapons are defined in the Prevention of Crime Act 1993 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").

The school will involve the police for any relevant 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.

General factors the school considers 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 pupil concerned. Before deciding whether to exclude a pupil either permanently or for a fixed period (suspension).

The Headteacher will:

- Explore a placement at the Heights or St Thomas's PRU to avoid exclusion. These are provisions within the borough for children displaying challenging behaviour
- Ensure appropriate investigations have been carried out
- Consider all the evidence available to support the allegations taking into account the Behaviour Policy, Equal Opportunity and Race Equality Policies
- Allow the pupil to give her/his version of events
- Explore the wider context, taking into consideration how much the incident may have been provoked (for example by bullying or by racial or sexual harassment).

If the Headteacher is satisfied that on the balance of probabilities the pupil did what he/she is alleged to have done, then exclusion will be the outcome.

Equality statement

The school aims to ensure that all its stakeholders (pupils, staff, parents, governors and the wider community) are treated with respect and are not discriminated against because of their economic circumstances, race, disability, special

educational needs, sex, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief. The school will ensure that this policy implements the principles of equality.

Outcomes

This policy will promote the excellent ethos of Lower Darwen Primary School. It will ensure that children and staff are happy and that they enjoy coming to school. It will underpin excellent teaching, learning and progress. It will promote the high standards and high expectations set out in the school’s aims and rules of conduct. It will be used to promote and support British values and beliefs and ensure the reduction in suspensions and permanent exclusions.

Monitoring and review

The headteacher and governing body are responsible for monitoring the policy. This policy is reviewed annually by the governing body as part of the Behaviour for Learning Policy.

Adopted and approved by the Governing Body: September 2024
Next review date: September 2025

This revised document was approved by the Governing Body of Lower Darwen Primary School.

On 16th September 2024

signed: Sinead Scotting
Chair of Governors

To be read in conjunction with:

- Behaviour for Learning policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Anti-Bullying statement
- Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- Inclusion policy
- Safeguarding Policy