



APPLEFORD SCHOOL EXCLUSIONS POLICY

This policy applies to the whole school, including boarding

The Policy is publicly available on the school website and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the School Office. All who work, volunteer or supply services to our school have an equal responsibility to understand and implement this policy and its procedures both within and outside of normal school hours including activities away from school.

We have a whole school approach to safeguarding, which is the golden thread that runs throughout every aspect of the school. All our school policies support our approach to safeguarding (child protection). Our fundamental priority is our children and their wellbeing; this is first and foremost.

All who work, volunteer or supply services to our school have an equal responsibility to understand and implement this policy and its procedures both within and outside of normal school hours including activities away from school. This policy also takes into consideration the National Minimum Standard (NMS) for residential special schools (RSS).

Applies to:

- The whole School, all staff (teaching, boarding and support staff), proprietors and volunteers working in the School

Related Documents:

- Anti-bullying Policy
- Safeguarding Children - Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Management including Discipline and Sanctions Policy
- Complaints Policy

Monitoring and Review: This policy is subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by Dr Peter Gardner (Managing Director), the Advisory Board and Mr David King (Headmaster). The Proprietor will undertake a full annual review of this policy and procedures, inclusive of its implementation and the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged. This discussion will be formally documented in writing. The Proprietor recognises the expertise staff build by undertaking safeguarding training and managing safeguarding concerns. Any deficiencies or weaknesses recognised in arrangements or procedures will be remedied immediately and without delay. All staff will be informed of the update/reviewed policy and it is made available to them in either a hard copy or electronically.

Date reviewed: September 2023

Date of next review: September 2024

Signed:

Dr Peter Gardner
Directing Lead and Proprietor

Mr David King
Headmaster and Company Director

Exclusions Policy: a pupil may be excluded from the school for behaviour which endangers the welfare of themselves or others either directly or by example.

Ultimate sanctions at Appleford School are Fixed Term and Permanent Exclusions. Neither sanction is used lightly. Only the Headmaster, in agreement with the Managing Director, has the power to exclude a pupil from school. If the Headmaster excludes a child, the parents are informed immediately, giving reasons for the exclusion. At the same time, the Headmaster makes it clear to the parents that they can, if they wish, appeal against the decision to the Managing Director. The school informs the parents how to

make any such appeal. It is the responsibility of the External Visitor to monitor the rate of exclusions, and to ensure that the school policy is administered fairly and consistently.

Fixed Period Exclusion and Permanent Exclusions: Appleford School will apply its behaviour policies in a consistent, rigorous and non-discriminatory way and all areas of application of these policies will be monitored routinely. Ultimate sanctions at Appleford School are: Exclusions which may be permanent or for a fixed period of no more than two weeks.

Serious Offences and Exclusions: serious offences are those that may have a significant impact on the individual pupil or others in the school. Examples include:

- extreme or persistent bullying, racism or harassment;
- stealing, including from school or fellow pupil;
- displayed persistent and malicious disruptive behaviour, including open defiance of authority;
- extreme or persistent violence, actual or threatened, against a pupil or member of staff;
- inappropriate sexual behavior, sexual harassment, sexual abuse, assault or activity;
- smoking, illegal drugs (possession and/or use), legal substance with similar effect, or solvent or alcohol (consumption or possession), selling or attempting to sell illegal drugs;
- significant and wanton vandalism;
- going out of bounds, including leaving school or boarding house without permission.
- persistent misbehavior when normal disciplinary measures have failed;
- carrying an offensive weapon.

Responsibilities of the School: if the School commences an investigation which may lead to a fixed term temporary exclusion or to permanent exclusion the Headmaster must inform the parent/carer (and inform the Local Authority if relevant) without delay. Before resorting to exclusion, the School will normally try alternative solutions (for example, a restorative justice process - whereby the harm caused to the 'victim' can be redressed. This will ideally be done through liaison with parents by a telephone call which will be followed by a letter within one school day. The letter will include information about:

- the nature of the offence and the results of any investigation to date.
- that the sanction of a fixed term temporary exclusion or permanent exclusion may be imposed.
- the parents' right to state their case to the Headmaster and if that is not satisfactory then to the Managing Director. Whom they should contact to do this and the latest date that the parent may give a written statement to the discipline committee.
- the parents' right to see their child's school record under the Education (School Records) Regulations 1989. Under these regulations, the Headmaster of the school must comply with such a request within 15 school days, although in exclusion cases compliance should be prompt.
- Telephone number for the Advisory centre for education. (ACE) exclusions information line is 0207 704 9822 or www.ace-ed.org.uk

Where reasonable adjustments to policies and practices have been made to accommodate a pupil's needs and to avoid the necessity for exclusion as far as possible, exclusion may be justified if there is a material and substantial reason for it. A specific incident affecting order and discipline in the school may be such a reason.

The decision to exclude for a fixed term will be notified to the parent in writing with reasons. If the School determines that a child should be excluded for a fixed period, the Headmaster will provide the parents in writing with information as to:

- the period of the Fixed Term Exclusion
- the arrangements, such as setting work, to allow the child to continue their education during the Fixed Term Exclusion.

If the School decides (after completing the investigation or as a result of new evidence and further investigation) that it is necessary to extend a fixed period Temporary Exclusion or to convert it into a Permanent Exclusion, the Headmaster will write again to the parent with the reasons for this decision. The decision to exclude a pupil permanently will only be taken as a last resort when a wide range of strategies for dealing with disciplinary offences has been employed to no avail or is an exceptional 'one-off' offence has been committed.

Parental co-operation forms part of the contract between the school and all the parents at the school. A refusal to abide by the terms of the exclusion may be considered a breach of contract.

The correspondence will be easily intelligible and in plain English.

Appeals: if parents or guardians wish to appeal the exclusion then they must do so in writing to the Managing Director within one week of the letter notifying the parents or guardians of the exclusion. The Managing Director will establish an Appeal Panel to consider the appeal. This Appeal Panel will consist of three members including an independent person to act as Chair of the Panel.

The Appeal Panel will normally convene within three weeks of the receipt of the letter requesting the appeal. The parents or guardian may bring a representative to the meeting. The Headmaster will not be a member of the Panel but will be asked to present the supporting facts and materials. All letters and documents relied on by the Headmaster shall be made available to the parents or guardian prior to the hearing. The parents or guardian or their representative may ask questions of the Headmaster or may raise any relevant matter for the consideration of the Panel. The Panel may call for any further information it requires. No evidence or argument shall be presented to the Panel in the absence either of the parents or guardian or their representative, or in the absence of the Headmaster.

At the conclusion of the hearing, the Panel shall retire to consider what recommendation it may make. The Panel may recommend:

- The exclusion is confirmed
- The exclusion is rescinded
- The exclusion be rescinded and replaced with an alternative sanction.

The recommendation shall be communicated to the Managing Director, the parents or guardian and the Headmaster. Every child has a right to confidentiality – it will be kept in the strictest confidence and only disclosed to those who need to know. We appreciate that such sensitive matters must be dealt with in confidence. If the School decides (after completing the investigation or as a result of new evidence and further investigation) that it is necessary to extend a fixed period temporary exclusion or to convert it into a permanent exclusion, the Headmaster will write again to the parents with the reasons for this decision.

Appleford School

- requires all staff to use positive strategies for handling any unacceptable behaviour by helping children find solutions in ways that are appropriate for their ages and stages of development. Such solutions might include, for example, acknowledgement of feelings, explanation as to what was not acceptable and supporting children to gain control of their feelings so that they can learn a more appropriate response;
- ensures that there are sufficient resources and activities available so that children are meaningfully occupied without the need for unnecessary conflict over sharing and waiting for turns;
- supports each child in developing self-esteem, confidence and feelings of competence;
- avoids creating situations in which children receive adult attention only in return for unacceptable behaviour;
- explains the effect of unacceptable behaviour, making it clear to the child that it is the behaviour that is unacceptable, and not the person.

When children behave in unacceptable ways, we help them to understand the outcomes of their actions and support them in learning how to cope more appropriately. We provide opportunities for children to learn how to interpret and cope with feelings, listening to them and offering the necessary support to enable them to verbalise their own frustrations, hurts and disappointments. We do not shout or raise our voices in a threatening way to respond to children's unacceptable behaviour. We do not use techniques intended to single out and humiliate individual children. Corporal punishment, which is strictly forbidden at Appleford School, is a criminal offence.