



# Exclusion Policy

Name of policy	Exclusion
Review committee	SLT in absence of Board of Trustees
Last review date	September 2024
Next review date	September 2025

*GUST Independent School is committed to valuing diversity and equality of opportunity. We aim to create and promote an environment in which pupils, parents and staff are treated fairly and with respect and feel able to contribute to the best of their abilities.*

### **Partnership with parents**

Parents working in partnership with the school to consistently reinforce the school's expectations is an important factor in every child's success. At GUST Independent School, we will work in partnership with parents to ensure that expectations are clear and parents can reinforce them with their children. This includes ensuring that parents are kept informed about decisions made in response to a child's misbehaviour so that we can work together in the best interests of pupils to ensure expectations for behaviour are made clear.

The school is responsible for communicating to pupils, parents and staff its expectations of standards of conduct. A range of policies and procedures are in place to promote good behaviour and appropriate conduct. These are:

- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Alcohol and Drugs Policy
- Anti-Racism Policy
- Children Who Abscond Policy

### **Supporting pupils to succeed**

We aim to include, not exclude, and we approach all challenging behaviour in a supportive and positive way. We recognise that such behaviour can sometimes be symptomatic of a real, deeper need for our support and understanding. All children can go through times of inappropriate behaviour, and we strive to never "give up" easily on a child as we recognise that each person has a unique contribution to make to school life and we want to support them in achieving this.

We will use behaviour data to assess patterns of challenging behaviour in pupils. Where patterns emerge we will systematically intervene, drawing up an action plan with the child, parent and teacher. The learning mentor has overall responsibility for sharing data with class teachers and analysing the data. It is the class teacher's, parents' and the child's responsibility to ensure the action plan is followed.

No exclusion will be initiated without first attempting other strategies or, in the case of a serious single incident, a proper investigation.

Reasons for exclusion:

- Serious breach of the school's rules or policies
- Serious risk of harm to the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school

This can either be a very serious incident or the repetition of serious incidents.

Any exclusion will be at the decision of the headteacher, usually in consultation with other members of the senior leadership team (SLT) (particularly if they were involved in investigating the incident).

## **Types of exclusion**

### Internal exclusion

Internal exclusion is when a pupil is excluded from the rest of the school and must work away from their class for a fixed amount of time. This will be in a different classroom.

An internal exclusion is a discretionary measure, where a pupil's behaviour is escalating and more serious measures need to be taken but there are not yet grounds for an external/fixed-term exclusion. Typically, a child receiving a consequence of this level should be receiving additional support for their behaviour, intended to help them avoid their behaviour escalating to a point where a fixed-term exclusion is necessary (examples: behaviour chart to address specific behaviours causing a problem; support from the learning mentor; etc.).

### Temporary/fixed-term exclusion

A temporary/fixed-term exclusion is when a child is excluded from school and must remain home for a fixed amount of time. This should be for the shortest time necessary to ensure minimal disruption to the child's education, whilst mindful of the seriousness of the breach of policy.

### Permanent exclusion

A permanent exclusion is when a child is permanently excluded from school and not allowed to return. This is a very serious decision, and the headteacher will consult with the SLT as soon as possible in such a case.

## **Reasons for exclusion**

A decision to exclude a pupil, either internally, for a fixed period or permanently, is seen as a last resort by the school. The physical and emotional health of our children and staff is our primary concern, and we therefore accept that in some serious situations, exclusion may be necessary if all other strategies have been exhausted.

The decision to exclude will usually follow a range of strategies and be seen as a last resort, or it will be in response to a very serious breach of school rules and policies or a disciplinary offence, such as:

- Serious actual or threatened violence against another pupil or a member of staff
- Possession or use of an illegal drug on school premises
- Persistent bullying
- Persistent prejudice-based harassment or hatred-based acts

Exclusion may be the result of persistently poor behaviour or a serious single incident.

### Persistent or cumulative problems

Internal and temporary/fixed-term exclusion may be used in response to persistent poor behaviour that breaches school rules and policies. In the most serious cases where the problem persists and there is no improvement, permanent exclusion may be necessary.

This would be imposed only when the school had already offered and implemented a range of support and management strategies. These could be joint action plans with parents, child and school, behaviour intervention with the learning mentor, target setting, home/school communication book, etc.

The length of the exclusion will depend upon a number of factors, such as the severity of the incident and the likely impact on the child's learning and ability to succeed upon returning to school. Such decisions will be made in the best interests of the child whilst also being mindful of the need to maintain order and reinforce the rules and expectations of the school in a clear and consistent way.

### Single incident

Internal and temporary/fixed-term exclusion may be used in response to a very serious breach of school rules and policies or a disciplinary offence. In the most serious cases where the problem persists and there is no improvement, permanent exclusion may be necessary.

In such cases, the headteacher or a designated senior leader will investigate the incident and consider all evidence to support the allegation, taking account of the school's policies. The pupil will be encouraged to give their version of events, and the headteacher will check whether the incident may have been provoked – for example, by bullying or racial harassment.

The governing body will be informed of all exclusions on a termly basis; additional consultation may also take place about key incidents with the chair of governors.

### **The decision to exclude**

If the headteacher decides to exclude a pupil, they will:

- Ensure that there is sufficient recorded evidence to support the decision
- Explain the decision to the pupil if the pupil is in a state of mind to listen to the decision
- Contact the parents, explain the decision and ask that the child be collected
- Send a letter to the parents confirming the reasons for the exclusion, whether it is a permanent or temporary exclusion
- The length of the exclusion and any terms or conditions agreed for the pupil's return
- In cases of more than a day's exclusion, ensure that appropriate work is set and that arrangements are in place for it to be marked
- Plan how to address the pupil's needs and integration back into their class on their return
- Plan a meeting with the parents and the pupil on their return to be conducted by a suitable senior member of staff

### **Safeguarding**

An exclusion will not be enforced if doing so may put the safety of the pupil at risk. In cases where parents will not comply by, for example, refusing to collect the child, the child's welfare is the priority. In this situation, depending on the reason for exclusion, the school may consider an internal exclusion until the end of the day, implementing the original exclusion decision from the time the child is collected from school, or, in more severe circumstances, the school may contact social services and/or the police to safely take the pupil off site.

### **Reintegration**

After a fixed-term exclusion, the pupil and parent will be requested to attend a reintegration meeting with a senior member of staff. At this meeting, the behaviour leading to exclusion will be discussed and targets will be set for improvement. Support around behaviour will also be discussed. The meeting will be recorded on the school reintegration form and a copy retained by the parent, child and school.

### **Work set**

When a pupil is excluded for more than one day, work should be set by the school within a reasonable timescale, and this should be returned to the school when the exclusion is over. If a child

is excluded at the end of a school day, then it may not be possible to arrange for work to be set until the following morning. A pupil can be excluded for up to 10 continuous days on a fixed-term basis. On the 6th continuous day, the school is responsible for providing education for the pupil, which could be at another local school, the pupil referral unit (PRU) or by providing home education.

### **Behaviour outside school**

Pupils' behaviour outside school – for example, on school trips or at sports events – is subject to the school's behaviour policy. Unacceptable behaviour in such circumstances will be dealt with as if it had taken place in school; additionally, this includes any serious breach of policy that could 'bring the school into disrepute'.

### **Pupils with SEN and disabled pupils**

The school must take account of any SEN when considering whether or not to exclude a pupil. The headteacher should ensure that reasonable steps have been taken by the school to respond to a pupil's disability so that the pupil is not treated less favourably for reasons related to the disability.

### **Managed move**

In cases where the headteacher and parents agree that the progress of the pupil has been unsatisfactory and the pupil is unwilling or unable to profit from the educational opportunities offered, or if a parent's failure to engage in strategies implemented by the school results in a continuing pattern of poor behaviour or lack of improvement in behaviour, the headteacher may consult with the local authority (LA) and propose a managed move to another school. In such cases, the headteacher may assist the parents in placing the pupil in another school.

### **Removal from the school for other reasons**

The headteacher may send a pupil home, after consultation with that pupil's parents and a health professional as appropriate, if the pupil poses an immediate and serious risk to the health and safety of other pupils and staff – for example, because of a diagnosed illness such as a notifiable disease. This is not an exclusion and should be for the shortest possible time. A pupil cannot be 'sent home' for other reasons, including poor behaviour.

### **Equal opportunities**

The governing body recognizes that it is unlawful to take into account anyone's gender, marital status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, religious beliefs, age, or sexual orientation. Full consideration has been given to this during the formulation of this policy as it is the governors' aim that no one at GUST Independent School should suffer discrimination, either directly or indirectly, or harassment on any of these grounds.

### **Reintegration meeting**

After every period of fixed-term exclusion, the parent and child will be offered a reintegration meeting with a senior member of the school staff. At this meeting, targets will be agreed upon for improving behaviour and a written agreement produced for all parties to sign.

### **Procedure for appeal**

If parents wish to appeal the decision to exclude, the matter will be referred to the governing body and handled through the school and LA appeal procedure.