Exclusion Policy

The Grange School

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Exclusion Policy

The Grange School

1. Purpose and scope

This policy sets out the School's principles and decision-making framework for suspension, fixed-term exclusion, permanent exclusion, required removal and withdrawal at the School's request. It applies to all pupils, including pupils in the EYFS. It does not apply where a pupil leaves because of ill health, non-payment of fees or a parent's independent decision to withdraw the pupil.

As an independent school, the School is not within the settings governed by the Department for Education statutory guidance on suspension and permanent exclusion for maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units. The School nevertheless has regard to the guidance's core principles, including fairness, proportionality, safeguarding, equality, the pupil's voice and permanent exclusion as a last resort, alongside the School's contractual terms and relevant independent-school requirements.

2. Definitions

Precautionary suspension: A neutral, temporary measure used where necessary to protect pupils, staff, evidence, safeguarding arrangements or the integrity of an investigation. It is not a disciplinary finding.

Fixed-term exclusion: A disciplinary exclusion for a specified period following a finding of serious misconduct. It is recorded on the pupil's School record.

Permanent exclusion: The dismissal of a pupil following serious misconduct. It is recorded on the pupil's School record.

Required removal: A requirement that a pupil leave the School for reasons permitted by the School's terms and conditions, without the disciplinary label of permanent exclusion.

Agreed withdrawal: An arrangement voluntarily agreed with parents as an alternative leaving status after the School has explained the available options and their implications. Parents will not be pressured to withdraw the pupil. Where agreement is not reached, the School will use the applicable permanent exclusion or required-removal procedure. Written confirmation of any agreed withdrawal will be retained.

3. Policy principles

- Decisions will be lawful, fair, reasonable, proportionate and based on the balance of probabilities.
- The School will consider the seriousness and circumstances of the incident, the pupil's age and understanding, relevant safeguarding information, the impact on others, prior support and sanctions, and any mitigating or aggravating factors.
- The pupil will be given an appropriate opportunity to be heard and parents will be informed and involved.

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- Reasonable adjustments will be made where disability or special educational needs affect behaviour or participation in decision-making. Relevant religious requirements will also be considered.
- The School will consider whether conduct may be linked to unmet need, exploitation, bullying, child-on-child abuse or another safeguarding concern. Safeguarding action may run alongside disciplinary action.
- Permanent exclusion will normally be used only as a last resort, including where there has been a serious breach or persistent breaches of the Behaviour Policy and allowing the pupil to remain would seriously harm the education, welfare or safety of the pupil or others.
- The School will avoid informal or unlawful exclusion. A pupil will not be sent home for disciplinary reasons without the decision being properly authorised and recorded.
- The Grange School will not use required removal as a means of avoiding a permanent exclusion decision or of placing pressure on parents to withdraw their child. Any decision to require removal will be made transparently by the Head of The Grange School, in accordance with The Grange School's Terms and Conditions, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, SEND Policy, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, and the pupil's best interests. The Grange School will accurately record the pupil's leaving status and comply with all applicable admission-register and local-authority notification requirements.

4. Conduct that may result in exclusion or removal

The following non-exhaustive categories may justify a fixed-term exclusion, permanent exclusion or required removal, depending on seriousness, context and proportionality:

- possession, supply or use of controlled drugs, alcohol, tobacco, vaping devices, solvents or related paraphernalia;
- theft, blackmail, physical violence, intimidation, racism, discriminatory conduct or persistent bullying, including cyberbullying;
- child-on-child abuse, including sexual violence, sexual harassment, harmful sexual behaviour, and consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images where applicable;
- possession, supply or deliberate access to pornography or other seriously inappropriate material;
- persistent conduct or attitudes inconsistent with the School's values or Behaviour Policy;
- serious misconduct on or off School premises that affects the welfare or safety of the School community or brings the School into disrepute.

5. Authority and delegated responsibilities

The Head retains overall responsibility for the operation of this policy and the School's exclusion decisions. The Head delegates defined functions to the Head of the Junior School and Deputy Head Pastoral (Senior School) and other senior leaders as set out below.

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Delegation does not remove the Head's accountability and does not extend to a final decision to permanently exclude or require removal.

Investigations

An investigation will be conducted promptly, fairly and proportionately. The investigating officer will identify the allegation, obtain and preserve relevant evidence, record material accounts and give the pupil an age-appropriate opportunity to provide their account. Where reasonably practicable, written accounts will be dated and attributable to the person providing them.

The investigating officer will distinguish established facts, disputed evidence and unsubstantiated allegations. A person who has undertaken the investigation may present the findings but will not determine a permanent exclusion or required removal.

Pupils will be spoken to in a manner appropriate to their age, understanding and circumstances. Reasonable adjustments will be made for pupils with SEND, communication needs, disability, anxiety, trauma, safeguarding vulnerabilities or other relevant needs. Where appropriate, the pupil may be supported by a suitable adult or member of staff.

Stage or decision	Lead	Authority / accountability
Investigation	Deputy Head Pastoral (Junior School) Assistant Head (Key Stage 3) or Assistant Head (Key Stage 4 and Sixth Form)	Oversees a fair and proportionate investigation and reports findings to the Head of the Junior School or Deputy Head Pastoral (Senior School).
Disciplinary meeting where fixed-term exclusion or another sanction is being considered	Deputy Head Pastoral (Senior School) Deputy Head Academic (Senior School) Head of the Junior School	Chairs the meeting under delegated authority from the Head, considers the evidence and representations, and determines the outcome within the scope of that delegation.
Possible permanent exclusion or required removal	Head	Chairs the disciplinary meeting and makes the final decision. This authority is not delegated.
Review / appeal of permanent exclusion or required removal	Governors appointed in accordance with the School's governance arrangements	Undertakes an impartial review without substituting operational management for the Head, subject to the School's terms and conditions.

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6. Decision-making and communication

Parents will be told the substance of the concern, the potential seriousness of the matter and the arrangements for the relevant disciplinary meeting. Where a fixed-term exclusion, permanent exclusion or required removal is being considered, parents will receive sufficient written information in advance to understand the concern, the evidence on which the decision-maker proposes to rely and the possible outcome. This may be provided through a redacted investigation summary, a summary report, relevant documents or a summary within the meeting invitation, depending on the circumstances, safeguarding considerations, confidentiality and data-protection requirements.

The pupil and parents will have a reasonable opportunity to respond to the evidence and to identify relevant context or mitigation.

The decision-maker will first determine whether the allegation is established on the balance of probabilities. Previous disciplinary history will not normally be used to determine whether the present allegation occurred. If the allegation is established, relevant previous conduct, interventions and support may then be considered when deciding the proportionate outcome.

Where the possible outcome is a fixed-term exclusion or another disciplinary sanction, the disciplinary meeting will normally be held by the Head of the Junior School or Deputy Head Pastoral (Senior School) under authority delegated by the Head. Where the possible outcome is permanent exclusion or required removal, the disciplinary meeting will be held by the Head and the final decision will be the Head's alone.

The decision and reasons will be communicated in writing. The communication will state the sanction, start and end dates where relevant, expectations during the exclusion, arrangements for education and reintegration where applicable, and any available route of review or appeal.

7. Precautionary suspension

A precautionary suspension will be authorised by the Head or a senior leader acting under recorded delegated authority. It will be used only where reasonably necessary and where less restrictive arrangements are not sufficient.
Parents will be informed promptly of the reason, the neutral status of the measure, education arrangements and the anticipated review point. The suspension will be reviewed regularly and ended as soon as it is no longer necessary.

8. Education, welfare and reintegration

The School will arrange suitable education and provide access to appropriate learning during a disciplinary or precautionary suspension. The arrangements will take account of the pupil's age, SEND, the length of absence, safeguarding circumstances and ability to access learning remotely. Work will be marked or otherwise reviewed, and the School will maintain appropriate pastoral contact with the pupil and parents.

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Following a fixed-term exclusion, the School will normally arrange a reintegration meeting. Reintegration will consider support, expectations, relationships, safety and any reasonable adjustments required to reduce the risk of recurrence. Reintegration is not an opportunity to re-open the disciplinary decision.

9. Review and appeal

A parent, guardian or pupil aged 18 or over may request a review of a decision to permanently exclude or require removal. The decision letter will explain the permitted grounds, deadline and submission arrangements. The review will be conducted by an impartial panel appointed through the School's governance arrangements. The panel may uphold the decision or require the Head to reconsider it in light of identified evidence, fairness, proportionality or procedural concerns.

A disciplinary suspension or fixed-term exclusion is not subject to the review procedure in this section. A parent may raise a complaint about whether the published procedure was followed through the School's Complaints Policy. The complaints process will not ordinarily rehear the merits of the disciplinary decision unless a material procedural defect or significant new evidence is identified.

10. Records, confidentiality and monitoring

- The School will keep an accurate record of the allegation, evidence considered, representations, decision, reasons, sanction, support and review outcome.
- Information will be shared only with those who need it for safeguarding, education, governance, legal or regulatory purposes.
- The Head and governors will monitor exclusion data for patterns, proportionality, equality considerations, safeguarding themes and the effectiveness of preventative support.

Permanent exclusion, required removal or withdrawal at the School's request will not, by itself, result in immediate deletion from the admission register. The pupil's name will be deleted only in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. The School will make the required return to the local authority and retain evidence of the applicable statutory ground for deletion.

For children in the EYFS and other younger pupils, the School will adopt an age-appropriate process, place particular weight on safeguarding and welfare, involve parents appropriately and ensure that the child's account is obtained in a developmentally appropriate manner.

11. Related documents and guidance

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Complaints Policy
- School terms and conditions / parent contract

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12. Legal and regulatory context

This policy has regard to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, the Equality Act 2010, current statutory safeguarding and attendance guidance, and the School's contractual terms. The Department for Education guidance on suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units does not directly govern The Grange School. The School nevertheless uses relevant principles from that guidance as a best-practice comparator where they are appropriate to an independent-school and contractual context.

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Appendix 1: Procedural flowchart

This flowchart summarises the allocation of responsibility under this policy. It does not replace the fair consideration of the individual circumstances of each case.

Concern or allegation of serious misconduct is received

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Immediate safeguarding and welfare needs considered. The Head and Deputy Head Pastoral (Junior and Senior) are informed as appropriate.

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Deputy Head Pastoral (Junior School), Assistant Head (Key Stage 3) OR Assistant Head (Key Stage 4 and Sixth Form) oversees a fair and proportionate investigation.

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Investigation findings are reported to the Head of the Junior School or Deputy Head Pastoral (Senior School).

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Is there sufficient evidence, on the balance of probabilities, to support a finding of misconduct?

NO	YES
No disciplinary finding. Record the outcome and consider whether any safeguarding, pastoral, SEND or restorative support is required.	Proceed to consider the appropriate and proportionate outcome.

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Could the possible outcome be permanent exclusion or required removal?

NO	YES
NO: Head of the Junior School or Deputy Head Pastoral (Senior School) chairs the disciplinary meeting under authority delegated by the Head and determines any fixed-term exclusion or other sanction within that delegation.	YES: The Head chairs the disciplinary meeting and makes the final decision on permanent exclusion or required removal. This authority is not delegated.

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Written outcome issued to parents, including reasons, sanction or leaving status, relevant dates, education and reintegration arrangements where applicable, and any available route of review or appeal.

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For a fixed-term exclusion: reintegration meeting and support arrangements. For permanent exclusion or required removal: an eligible request for review is considered by an impartial panel appointed through the School's governance arrangements.

Key safeguard: The Grange School will not use required removal to avoid a permanent exclusion decision or to pressure parents to withdraw their child. Leaving status will be recorded accurately.

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