



EXCLUSION POLICY

June 2023

The Serendipity School

Version History

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1	Michele Aldridge	June 2020	Policy review New format
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1 Monitoring and review

- 1.1 Monitoring and review will be undertaken annually by the Head Teacher. The formal review will determine the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than the review date, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This document contains The Serendipity Centre Ltd's (TSCL) policy on the use of exclusions at The Serendipity School.
- 2.2 This document is linked to school rules and policies including the *Rewards and Consequences (Behaviour) Policy* and the *Anti-Bullying Policy*.

3 Reference Documents

- [RD1] Rewards and Consequences (Behaviour) Policy
The Serendipity School
- [RD2] Anti-Bullying Policy
The Serendipity School
- [RD3] The Equality Act 2010: GOV.UK

4 Introduction

- 4.1 We are committed to ensure that every student receives an education in a safe and caring environment.
- 4.2 The objective of the school is not to exclude students however, it must also be remembered that it is the school's duty to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and security of all the students and staff.
- 4.3 The Serendipity School provides education for students who have had adverse childhood experiences who are often highly vulnerable as a result of the significant trauma in their lives.
- 4.4 It is therefore likely that our students will sometimes have multiple and complex needs and significant behavioural and emotional difficulties, which can lead to acting in ways that place themselves in situations of high risk.
- 4.5 We would rather try to help our students through their problems on site than at a distance, and it is important that any exclusion does not put the student in to a situation which the school has reason to believe may put their welfare at risk.

5 Aims

5.1 The Serendipity School aims to ensure that:

- The exclusions process is applied fairly and consistently
- The exclusions process is understood by Managing Director, staff, parents/carers and students
- Students are happy and safe in school
- Students do not become NEET (not in education, employment or training)

6 The Decision to Exclude

6.1 Only the Head Teacher, or in the absence of the Head Teacher the Deputy Head teacher who is acting in that role, can exclude a student from school. A permanent exclusion will be taken as a last resort.

6.2 The needs of the student will be balanced against the needs of the school before deciding on a particular course of action.

6.3 The school is aware that off-rolling is unlawful. Ofsted defines off-rolling as:

“...the practice of removing a pupil from the school roll without a formal, permanent exclusion or by encouraging a parent to remove their child from the school roll, when the removal is primarily in the interests of the school rather than in the best interests of the pupil.”

6.4 A decision to exclude a student will be taken only:

- In response to serious or persistent breaches of the school’s rules and policies, **and**
- If allowing the student to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others, including criminal damage

6.5 Exclusions will not be used for minor incidents, e.g. poor academic performance, truancy lateness, non-compliance with uniform rules, minor breaches of behaviour rules, but may be considered where these are persistent and defiant.

6.6 Before deciding whether to exclude a student, either permanently or for a fixed term period, the Head Teacher will:

- Consider all the relevant facts and evidence, including whether the incident(s) leading to the exclusion were provoked
- Allow the student to give their version of events
- Consider if the student has special educational needs or disabilities

7 Exclusion Procedure

- 7.1 A fixed term exclusion should be for the shortest time necessary; Ofsted evidence suggests that 1-3 days is usually enough to secure benefits without adverse educational consequences.
- 7.2 Exclusion for a period of time from half a day to 5 days for persistent or cumulative problems would be imposed only when the school had already offered and implemented a range of support and management strategies.
- 7.3 Exclusion will not be used for minor incidents (e.g. failure to do homework, lateness, poor academic performance or breaches of minor rules), except where these are persistent and defiant.
- 7.4 Temporary exclusion may be used in response to a serious breach of school rules and policies, or a disciplinary offence for which it is deemed necessary that a period of separation would be beneficial in reparation.
- 7.5 If the Head Teacher decides to exclude a student they will:
- Ensure that there is sufficient recorded evidence to support the decision
 - Explain the decision to the student
 - Contact the parents / carers / placing authority to explain the decision and if necessary, ask that the student be collected
 - Send a letter to the parents / carers / placing authority confirming the reasons for the exclusion, whether it is a fixed term or permanent, the length of the exclusion and any terms or conditions agreed for the student's return to school
 - 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 young person's needs on their return
- 7.6 A school reintegration meeting will be held following the expiry of all fixed term exclusions. This will involve a member of the Senior Management Team, other staff where appropriate, the parent/carer and the student.
- 7.7 An exclusion should not be enforced if doing so may put the safety of the student at risk. In cases where parents / carers will not comply by, for example, refusing to collect the student, their welfare is the priority.
- 7.8 There will be no refund of fees following fixed term or permanent exclusion. In the case of permanent exclusion, fees will not be returned / credited. Fees in lieu of notice will not be charged, but all outstanding fees will be payable in full.

8 Permanent Exclusion

- 8.1 A decision to exclude a student 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 if an exceptional 'one-off' offence has been committed, for example:

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- Serious violence, actual or threatened, against a student or member of staff for which the evidence indicates may recur
- Sexual abuse or assault
- Possession or use of an illegal drug on school premises
- Carrying an offensive weapon
- Persistent bullying
- Racial harassment

8.2 This is not an exhaustive list and there may be other situations where the Head Teacher makes the judgment that exclusion is an appropriate consequence.

9 Behaviour Outside School

9.1 While students are representing the school in the wider community, for example on school trips, or on a work experience placement, behaviour is subject to dynamic risk assessment.

9.2 Inappropriate behaviour in these circumstances will be dealt with as if it had taken place in school.

9.3 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 appropriate behaviour and discipline within the school, or if it is deemed damaging to the reputation of the school.

9.4 If students' behaviour in the immediate vicinity of the school or on a journey to and from school is inappropriate and meets the school criteria for exclusion then the Head Teacher may decide to exclude.

10 Students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

10.1 The school must take account of any special educational needs when considering whether or not to exclude a student.

10.2 We have a legal duty under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995, now replaced by the Equality Act 2010 not to discriminate against disabled students by excluding them from school for behaviour related to their disability. The Head Teacher should ensure that reasonable steps have been taken by the school to respond to a student's disability so the student is not treated less favourably for reasons related to the disability. 'Reasonable steps' could include:

- Differentiation in the school's behaviour policy
- Developing strategies to prevent the student's behaviour
- Requesting external help with the student
- Staff training

10.3 Where reasonable adjustments to policies and practices have been made to accommodate a student'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.

11 Marking Attendance Registers Following Exclusion

- 11.1 When a student is excluded temporarily, they should be marked as absent using the E code.

12 Removal from the School for Other Reasons

- 12.1 The Head Teacher may send a student home, after consultation with the student's parents / carers and a health professional as appropriate. If the student poses an immediate and serious risk to the health and safety of other students 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.

13 Procedure for Appeal

- 13.1 Parents/carers who are dissatisfied with an exclusion should make a complaint to the Head Teacher. Complaints about exclusions will be dealt with as per the *Complaints Policy* which is available on our website or as a hard copy on request.

14 Reporting

- 14.1 The number of exclusions is monitored and reported on a half termly basis by the Head Teacher to the Managing Director.