UNLOCKING POTENTIAL

LEVELLING THE SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC ARENA

EXCLUSION POLICY

Mission Statement

The Levels School exists to provide a nurturing environment in which students with specific learning difficulties and co-occurring diagnoses can develop their self-esteem and aspire to be independent young adults who value the rights, responsibilities and rules that exist to promote and support their future welfare. Our approach toward establishing this ideology is predicated on trauma-informed practice and an obligation to develop the social skills required to build their future aspirational communities. We exist to help them find their level.

This policy covers all premises known as The Levels School.

The Board of Governors acknowledge their responsibility to ensure that this policy is effective and follows regulatory requirements. Governors undertake a review to satisfy themselves that the implementation of this policy is effective.

The Board of Governors ensures the establishment of familiarity with and the effective operation through monitoring, of school policies, approving those requiring GB sign-off in line with a regular cycle of school policy reviews. This occurs through a cycle of governor committee meetings and full board meetings.

Date of policy	September 2026
Next review date	September 27
Frequency of policy review (annually, every two years)	Annually
Policy owner	Caroline Cook – Head teacher
Published policy	Yes ☒ No ☐
List of connected policies	Relational Policy, SEND Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Parental Contract, Student behaviour expectations, Complaints policy, Whistleblowing Policy
Approved / Date	Approved by Governors

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Introduction

The school publishes a Relational Policy that explains the school's overall vision and approach to promote positive behaviour.

Wherever possible, the positive aspects of any child will be emphasised. Any feedback regarding behaviour will be constructive, and designed to enhance a child's feeling of self-worth, not to dispirit and to encourage reflection.

This policy specifically deals only with major disciplinary issues.

The Board of Governors make available to the Head Teacher three forms of sanction for more serious disciplinary issues:

- Withdrawal (isolation) from usual class activities.
- Suspension (Temporary Exclusion)
- Permanent Exclusion.

In addition, parents may be asked to remove their child from the school in other circumstances (see below).

Withdrawal (Isolation) from usual class activities

In some cases, the sanctions outlined above will be invoked sequentially. However, a single breach of school discipline of a major kind may justify permanent exclusion without any previous Isolation having been invoked. Examples are listed below, although this should not been seen as an exhaustive list:

- Absconding or deliberately hiding from staff.
- Fighting.
- Throwing dangerous missiles. (EG: stones, sharp objects, items with broken or jagged edges).
- Physical Assault against students or staff.
- Certifiably malicious allegation against student or staff.
- Targeted diversity abuse of any group (EG: Trans/gay bullying, racism, sexism, ableism, religious identification & gender identity).
- Sexual misconduct (including, but not limited to: overtly sexualised language, purposeful disrespect of personal boundaries, upskirting, catfishing, and sexualised contact).
- Drugs and alcohol misuse.
- Deliberate damage to property.
- Persistent or repetitive disruptive behaviour (Persistent Level 2 and Level 3 behaviours where sanctions in line with the behaviour policy have not produced a significant improvement in behaviours); or associated parental behaviour.

Withdrawal/Isolation – The student will be withdrawn from a lesson, series of lessons, morning, afternoon or a day from their ususal lessons. They will work away from their usual peer group. The student will have break time and lunch time offset with their usual peer group. The student will complete work/alternative tasks set by their teachers in an area of

the school where they are supervised but are unable to interact with their usual peer group. This could occur for a maximum of two days depending on the severity of the offence. Whilst in isolation, time will be spent working with the student constructively and restoratively around the behaviour that led to this level of sanction. Any safeguarding needs will also be explored at this time.

Record Keeping

In line with the school's Relational Policy all sanctions set must be logged by the sanctioning staff member immediately on the school Management Information System (MIS). The date should be noted if different to the time recorded. The sanction must be executed within the same day where possible, or otherwise within the next working day.

This will allow a formal record of behaviours to be seen should there be an accumulative effect leading up to an exclusion for persistent failure to respond to efforts made to support the student.

The tutors will review the behaviour logs for each student regularly, concerns will be passed to a relevant member the Senior Leadership team. The Leadership team works closely to support the students as a team with students considered as at risk of suspension having increased support in place. This will help to quickly identify students that are at increased risk of further suspensions and possible permanent exclusion. The pastoral team will then work together with parents/carers and the staff team to put in an intervention for that student.

Serious disciplinary cases

The most serious penalties are only appropriate for serious offences or in cases where a student has already been repeatedly supported with little improvement seen in the behaviours causing concern.

Serious disciplinary offences that may result in exclusion may include but are not limited to:

- Physical assault against students or adults.
- Verbal abuse/ threatening behaviour towards students or adults.
- Malicious allegations against staff.
- Bullying.
- Abuse on grounds of race, religion/ belief, disability, SEND (etc.).
- Sexual misconduct.
- Drug and alcohol misuse.
- Deliberate damage to property.
- Theft.
- Persistent or repetitive disruptive behaviour (where support in line with the Relational Policy have not produced a significant improvement in behaviours); and Parental behaviour.

(Note – Parental behaviour: There are many avenues open for parents to take should they feel aggrieved in any way. It is hoped that these provide a way forward for respectful resolution of potential conflict and that it never becomes necessary to ask a student to leave The Levels School as a result of persistent unacceptable parental behaviour).

Only the Head Teacher or the member of staff acting as the Head Teacher in the Head Teacher's absence can exclude a child. Before deciding to exclude a child, the Head Teacher will:

- Ensure that an appropriate investigation has been conducted.
- Ensure that all the relevant evidence has been considered.
- Give the child an opportunity to be heard.
- Consult with the Chair of Governors – Geraldine O Sullivan / Governors that oversee education, Paul Easterbrook and Natasha Dangerfield.

Suspension (Temporary Exclusion)

A suspension is a fixed period of absence that will be agreed in advance. Students may be suspended whilst an investigation is completed as a neutral act, following which the appropriateness of any sanction would then be considered carefully. If the child has been suspended pending an investigation, this period of time may be considered as part of the temporary exclusion/suspension period.

The Head Teacher may suspend a student, for a period of between 24 hours and five working days, for serious indiscipline, or for less serious offences, where repeated punishment has proved ineffective. If suspension is ineffective, the school may be forced to permanently exclude the student, or to require him/her to be withdrawn.

It is usual for suspensions to be increased in severity for a series of significant offences that do not merit immediate permanent exclusion. The maximum temporary exclusion is usually for five days and carries with it the caveat that a repetition of any further serious disciplinary offence will put the student's position at the school in jeopardy.

Should a suspension continue for more than five School days, The Levels School will take reasonable steps to put in place arrangements to ensure the continuing education of the student. The Head Teacher will coordinate such arrangements with the pupil's parents/guardians.

In addition, consideration will be given to any relevant safeguarding concerns surrounding the excluded student and how they might be addressed in the interim, together with reintegration post-exclusion. The Head Teacher will consult with any relevant external agencies to ensure the excluded student is not placed in harm.

Any information within the EHCP relating to educational need and provision will always be considered.

The Head Teacher will inform parents of any offence or outcome of an investigation without delay either in person or by telephone, followed by a letter stating the length of suspension, and the reasons for this sanction.

Any suspension constitutes a clear warning about continued membership of the school and this warning should be regarded seriously.

Permanent Exclusion

Since temporary exclusion should always be regarded as a warning that permanent exclusion may follow next, the Head Teacher considers that all children and their parents should clearly understand the consequences of permanent exclusion from the school.

Only the Head Teacher can permanently exclude a child and before doing so the Head Teacher will follow the same procedure as for temporary exclusion. The Head will always consult with the Chair of the Governors/ Governors that oversee education, before any decision to exclude permanently is made.

In making decisions about exclusion the Head Teacher will take into account any contextual circumstances such as special educational needs, disabilities, gender and cultural differences that may be relevant to the case and any representations by the parents. Consideration will also be given to the child's continuity of education.

Following any meeting or correspondence about the sanction, parents will be informed immediately with confirmation of the decision in writing, including the reason for the sanction.

Reported suspected criminal activity

The school will report to the police any activity which it believes may amount to a criminal activity which takes place either within the school grounds or outside its grounds. Drugs and weapons will be confiscated immediately and held for the police as potential evidence. If the school believes a student may have taken drugs, then the school will seek immediate medical advice and may involve the police.

Serious sexual offences will always be reported to the police, including in cases where a student is suspected or alleged to have committed the offence, where a reasonable amount of evidence is available. The alleged victim's parents will be promptly informed and told that the police have been informed. Whether the victim and parents then speak to the police is a matter for them.

Breaches of discipline outside School

The school takes the conduct of its students outside school extremely seriously. A student's misbehaviour outside of school in uniform can be damaging to the reputation of both the student and the school. The school is unable to take action unless there are safeguarding concerns.

Appeal

The school will always offer the right of appeal to any student excluded from the school. Any appeal against exclusion will be dealt with under Stage 3 of the School's Complaints Procedure.

If parents wish to appeal against a decision to exclude their child either temporarily or permanently, they should set out the nature of their complaint in writing, detailing the nature of their grievance and the reasons they see for review. Guidance from the DFE states that parents have the right to appeal after 5 days (accumulative) suspension. Any such letter should be addressed to The Chair of Governors at the school. The request for a review should be acknowledged by Chair of Governors within five working days and a response made within ten working days. If the matter is not then resolved, Governors will convene a panel of at least three individuals not directly involved in the matters that are subject to the decision, one of whom will be independent of the management and running of the school. A hearing will be held as soon as practicable and within twenty-eight working days.

Parents will be entitled to attend, accompanied, if they wish, by one other person. This may be a relative, teacher or friend. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate. The findings, and recommendations, if any, will be made available within one week in writing and sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant, the Head teacher and the Governors.