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Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions Policy

This policy applies to Steephill School, including the EYFS setting.

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Policy Statement

Steephill School is committed to providing a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment for all pupils. Suspension and permanent exclusion are used only as a last resort, once all other appropriate strategies have been explored, and always in a fair, reasonable, and lawful manner.

This policy is written with reference to:

- The Education Act 2002 (as amended)
- The Independent School Standards Regulations (ISSR) 2014 (Part 3)
- The DfE Guidance: Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England (2023)
- Equality Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025

Aims

- To ensure suspension and exclusion decisions are lawful, fair, transparent, and proportionate.
- To safeguard pupils and staff and uphold the welfare and good order of the school community.
- To protect the rights of pupils and parents to a fair hearing and appeal process.
- To ensure no pupil is discriminated against on the basis of disability, SEND, race, religion, gender, or other protected characteristics.

Definitions

Suspension - a temporary removal of a pupil from the school for a fixed period of time. A suspension may be for part of a school day, one day, or up to a maximum of 45 school days in an academic year.

Permanent Exclusion - permanent removal of a pupil from the school. This is a serious sanction and will only be applied when all other strategies have failed, or where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education, welfare, or safety of others.

Grounds for suspension or exclusion

Suspension or exclusion may be considered for:

- Serious breach, or persistent breaches, of the school's Positive Behaviour Policy.
- Conduct which endangers the safety or welfare of others.
- Bullying, harassment, or abuse (including online).

- Serious damage to property or theft.
- Behaviour which undermines the good order of the school.
- A single, one-off offence which is sufficiently serious (e.g. physical assault, bringing prohibited items to school).

The Head will consider:

1. The seriousness of the incident.
2. The proportionality of the sanction.
3. Whether reasonable adjustments need to be made for pupils with SEND or other protected characteristics.
4. The impact on the pupil's education and wellbeing.

Decision-Making Process

Only the Headteacher may suspend or permanently exclude a pupil.

Before deciding, the Headteacher will investigate the incident, speak with relevant staff and pupils, and give the pupil an opportunity to present their account.

Parents will be informed in writing without delay, stating:

- The reason for the suspension/exclusion.
- The period of suspension (if applicable).
- Arrangements for collecting the pupil.
- The right of the parent to make representations.

Suspension Procedure

Parents will receive written notice of the length of the suspension and the reasons.

Work will be provided to complete at home during the suspension period.

A reintegration meeting with parents and the pupil will be held before the pupil returns to school.

Permanent exclusion procedure

Parents will be informed in writing immediately, with full reasons.

A copy of this policy will be provided.

The Chair of Governors will be notified.

The decision will be reviewed by a Governors' Discipline Panel if requested by parents.

Right of appeal

Parents have the right to appeal a suspension of over 5 days or any permanent exclusion.

1. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the **Chair of Governors** within 5 school days of receipt of the decision.
2. An **Appeals Panel** of at least 3 members, one of whom will be independent of the management and running of the school, will meet within **15 school days**.
3. Parents may be accompanied by one other person (not legal representation, unless agreed).
4. The Appeals Panel will review all evidence, hear representations, and decide to:
 - Uphold the Headteacher's decision; or
 - Reinstatement the pupil.
5. The Panel's decision is **final**.

Safeguarding considerations

The DSL will be informed of all suspensions and exclusions.

Where a pupil is known to children's social care, or where there are safeguarding concerns, the DSL will liaise with relevant agencies.

Alternative provision will be arranged if exclusion results in a pupil being out of education for more than 5 school days.

Monitoring and record keeping

All suspensions and exclusions are recorded in the Behaviour Log and reported termly to Governors.

Data is reviewed to ensure no group of pupils is disproportionately affected.

Records will be kept securely for at least 7 years.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher and Governing Body to ensure continued compliance with statutory requirements and best practice.