



## Relationships for Learning & Behaviour Policy

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## 1 Policy Statement

The Brook Academy is a specialist school that understands the value of relationships to support children with a wide range of needs including, but not only, SEMH and SLCN, enabling them to learn and develop so they can become successful learners, becoming global citizens with self-agency.

Staff are aware of the potential trauma our students may have been through, as well as them having attachment difficulties, neuro-developmental delay, and neuro diversity. Through this awareness, staff are expected to adapt and personalise strategies to support students. At Brook, we practice trauma informed approach alongside pastoral care and are currently working towards achieve a Trauma Informed Award.

This policy underpins our purpose to prepare students for becoming a positive member of their community. Its aim is to ensure adults use a consistent approach to support students in recognising and regulating their own behaviour.

The policy has a key focus on both physical and emotional safety of all students and to ensure that staff can create and maintain a safe environment with clear boundaries where necessary, fostering a therapeutic and restorative approach. We understand that the young people we work with will, at times, display challenging behaviour, it the duty of all staff to be proactive in limiting this behaviour, as well as reacting where necessary in appropriate ways.

## 2 Policy Objectives

The objectives of the policy are to:

- Ensure positive reinforcement approaches are used consistently by staff.
- Promote the highest possible standard of student behaviour, ensuring clear expectations and boundaries.
- Ensure all staff understand that all behaviour is communication, and that staff have consistent responses to both positive and negative behaviours.
- To ensure staff can support young people with their behaviour through providing students with strategies to manage their own behaviour.
- Provide clarity to staff about the underlying pastoral ethos of the school.
- Ensure staff are proactive in creating an environment that reduces the amount of challenging behaviour.

## 3 School Ethos

The Brook Academy staff are responsible for modelling high standards of behaviour, both in their interactions with students and each other.

As a staff team we aim to:

- Understand that all behaviour is communication.
- Develop a classroom that offers a safe, happy, and friendly environment, which encourages everyone to achieve their potential.
- Set clear and achievable expectations for students.

- Ensure students feel valued, cared for, and understood, allowing a sense of belonging.
- Provide suitable opportunities for praise.
- Work alongside families and other agencies to ensure students are receiving a consistent message.
- Allow student voice to be heard throughout the school, allowing students to feel listened to.

#### **4 Approaches to Behaviour Management**

The response to challenging behaviour at The Brook Academy is both consistent yet personalised. All staff understand the spectrum of needs that exist for all students. All staff have awareness of the effects of adverse childhood experiences and trauma, and this is central to how we respond to, and manage, challenging behaviour or disengagement from learning.

Students are invariably caught in negative cycles of reactive behaviour. Whilst it is important for students to find an authentic voice of their own and to feel they can express themselves with confidence and honesty, it is the role of The Brook Academy to promote independence, emotional maturity, and responsibility for developing positive cycles of behaviour, wellbeing, and self-regulation.

This policy focuses on positive reinforcement underpinned by the principles of 'Team-Teach', which emphasise de-escalation whilst recognising the needs of the young person. Staff are responsible for young people at all times, ensuring appropriate supervision is in place. As a staff team, we aim to create a positive environment that provides a caring and safe space that is conducive to learning. Staff reinforce the importance of being an individual and ensure fair treatment is in place for all, based on honesty and respect.

Adopting the PACE approach and nurture principles is core to our interactions with young people.

##### **4.1 Roles and Responsibilities**

The Principal, Assistant Principal, SLT, and the staff team are responsible for the consistent and fair operation of this policy.

**In implementing this policy, staff will be responsible for:**

- creating an environment of trust, mutual respect, and aspiration.
- ensuring that teaching and learning is creative, interesting, challenging, relevant, and personalised to match the needs of the students.
- setting good habits and modelling positive behaviour to help students establish regular, punctual attendance, and good behaviour.
- promoting positive oracy and literacy habits across all areas of the students' experiences at The Brook Academy.
- providing early intervention with prompt but calm, solution-focused action.
- identifying underlying causes to negative behaviour, appreciating the need to solve issues in partnership with students and their families / carers.
- utilising the expertise of all members of staff and other external agencies to ensure positive and effective approaches to supporting complex needs of students.

- rewarding achievements daily through positive recognition of individual students.

**In support of this policy, parents / carers will be encouraged to:**

- promote good attendance and participation through reinforcing the expectations outlined in the Home / School Agreement.
- participate in the day-to-day life of the school, offering their views through the Parent / Carer Voice initiatives.

**In complying with this policy, students will be encouraged to:**

- involve themselves fully in the life and culture of The Brook Academy and contribute ideas through student voice events. These events will allow for consultation opportunities and group discussions.
- engage with the Pastoral Team, therapists, and other external agencies.
- take responsibility for their own behaviour.
- respect themselves, others, and their environment.
- learn from mistakes.
- commit fully to the principles of the Code of Conduct.
- understand their responsibility to ensure that incidents of disruption, violence, bullying, and any form of harassment are reported.

#### **4.2 Systems for Promoting Good Behaviour**

- Promoting positive behaviour is a collective responsibility – staff to be consistent, effective role models.
- Staff are trained in positive behaviour management and The Brook Academy seeks support from external agencies, as necessary.
- Staff use positive language when speaking with students and colleagues.
- The Brook Academy's expected Code of Conduct is displayed across the school site. Students are involved in the development of the document and are expected to adhere to it.
- Students are actively involved in setting targets for their own behaviour and learning.
- Students are encouraged to achieve their 'personal best' every day and take ownership of their 'Personal Best Report' which is tracked and recorded.
- Students work towards accruing Reward Points using their 'Personal Best Report'; points are then used to earn reward activities at the end of each week.
- Success is celebrated, whether individual or team, and in relation to expectations.
- Weekly celebrations of students who demonstrate exemplary behaviour. Awards are given in assembly on a Monday morning.
- At the end of each term, students achieving 90% and above attendance will be granted a celebratory extra-curricular experience with an educational element attached.

- Achieved learning goals and positive attendance data will be achieved in weekly assemblies.

### **4.3 Positive Behaviour and Achievement**

In addition to the above, the following will be used as positive responses:

- Oral praise, personal recognition.
- Written comments on individual pieces of work.
- Formal recognition in daily tutorial sessions and assemblies.
- Informal daily recognition from staff and members of SLT.
- Recognising and praising 'micro-skills' such as being helpful, active listening, or sharing.
- Communicating positively with parents every Friday.

Along with our core values – equity, resilience, and togetherness - students will be awarded points for displaying the following during the school day:

- 1 point – positive attitude to learning
- 1 point – positive engagement
- 1 point – following instructions
- 1 point – showing respect
- 1 point – being safe

Points will be recorded on Class Dojo. Staff will refer to the points throughout the day and points awarded should be discussed with the students. Discussions are essential for behaviour reflection, so students understand the connection between their behaviour and the points they earn.

### **4.4 Counterproductive / Disruptive / Inappropriate Behaviour**

At The Brook Academy, we strongly believe that consequences are only effective if used rarely, proportionately, and consistently.

The staff team make every effort to solve day-to-day behavioural issues, as seen below, as they arise. In SEMH context behavioural issues are likely to occur frequently.

- Poor attitude to learning
- Disengagement
- Failure to follow instructions
- Lack of respect
- Unsafe behaviour (throwing items, kicking doors, etc.,)

In certain circumstances, support may be required when behaviour is significantly defiant and counterproductive, or another student's learning is impacted.

We understand that some young people can behave inappropriately for a wide range of reasons. When young people display this behaviour, staff are trained through Team Teach to help deescalate.

There are several layers to consequences in place to remind of success criteria and the clear boundaries that are in place. It is important that all staff are always of the mindset that 'all behaviour is communication' and understanding of what the young person is trying to communicate. This needs to be a consistent approach, however, personalised to everyone, based on the range of SEMH and SLCN needs present at the academy.

#### **4.5 Addressing and Challenging Inappropriate Behaviour**

Students whose conduct falls below the standard, which could reasonably be expected of them, will be encouraged to engage in a process of reflection. The discussion will aim to ascertain the reason for the behaviour and identify an appropriate consequence.

**To be lawful, any consequence must be proportionate and satisfy the following conditions:**

- The decision to give a student a consequence must be made by a member of staff in consultation with SLT.
- The decision to give a student a consequence and the sanction itself must be made on the school premises or while the student is under the supervision of the member of staff.
- The consequence must not breach any other legislation e.g., in respect of disability, SEND, race, and any other protected characteristics.

Consequences may include:

- Reflection
- Restorative conversations
- Learning conversation
- Informing parents/carers
- Catch-up of work missed
- Student contracts
- Off-site reflection
- Fixed term suspension
- Suspensions / permanent exclusion (more extreme cases) - these always involve a reintegration meeting which parents/carers must attend

#### **4.6 Suspensions / Exclusions**

The Brook Academy makes every effort to avoid suspensions by offering strategies through a reflective process. This system of internal reflection helps to safeguard the students we work with and prevents them from losing a day of education. Suspensions will be inevitable where the process of reflection has not worked, and the student has repeatedly displayed inappropriate behaviour.

Before suspending a student, SLT will consider any risks to the student whilst at home and, where appropriate, draw up a risk assessment which includes daily contact and wellbeing visits. The school will not suspend a student if they feel it may present a risk, instead they will use alternative measures and liaise with relevant agencies to ensure the student is safeguarded. In certain circumstances, the school may decide that it is safer for the student not to be sent home but to be internally suspended instead. If this is the case, this will be communicated to parents / carers and learning will take place 1:1 or offsite.

Concerning behaviour that may warrant a Fixed Term Suspension (FTS) is logged on CPOMs, with a letter sent home and work provided.

SLT can authorise a suspension / exclusion, but it also needs to be agreed by the Principal. In the absence of the Principal, the Vice Principal or Assistant Principal can authorise any fixed term exclusions.

To make an informed decision, SLT will need the following information:

- A CPOMs incident log
- Where applicable, a physical intervention report
- An account from staff and students
- CCTV footage, if available

FTS during the school day will only be made if students have put themselves and the rest of the school community at risk or are beyond the school's care and control.

In circumstances where a student is suspended on multiple occasions, there will be an emergency serious incident review to discuss intensive support for the student to avoid permanent exclusion. Opportunities for a bespoke support package would be explored, this could include mentoring and external support such as CAMHS / Young Minds.

### **Behaviour Management Toolkit:**

Acceptable standards of behaviour, work, and respect depends on the collective example we set. Relationships are vital between everyone and at every level. Staff must take the initiative and apply the following:

Meet and greet:

- Smile and relate
- Communicate clearly
- Treat everyone as an individual
- Realise that certain behaviours are directly related to SEN needs and/or neurodiversity
- Understand that for many students, the legacy of adverse life experiences manifests in confusion about how to engage in contexts (such as school) that demand formality and self-control
- Set and expect high standards
- Expect to give and receive respect
- Model acceptable behaviour
- Apply expectations fairly and firmly

Students may be inclined to test boundaries of acceptable behaviour. Our behaviour management success is tested not by the absence of problems but by the way in which they are handled.

It helps to:

- avoid confrontation.
- listen and give students time to offer an opinion and to process information
- focus on strengths of students
- establish the facts and only make judgements when certain of the facts
- use consequences sparingly
- Encourage and coach reflection
- use emotion coaching language

All informal contact contributes to standards of behaviour. Staff must take the initiative to monitor and manage behaviour at every opportunity, taking responsibility to:

- meet and greet students.
- start the dialogue.
- set high standards of speech, manner, and dress.
- manage unacceptable behaviour in line with the policy.
- report damage, graffiti, or litter problems.

When presented with particularly challenging behaviour, staff must remain calm and professional, ensuring to avoid the following:

- Humiliating students (which breeds resentment). Clear examples of humiliation include mimicry of a student's behaviour or making concrete statements about behaviour being wholly attributable to a student's personality
- Overreacting (which causes the problem to escalate)
- Blanket / group punishments (which leads to innocent students feeling unfairly treated and resentful)
- Audience build-up (entertaining to the crowd exacerbates the situation)

It may be helpful to:

- use humour (sparingly and carefully as it may be perceived as humiliating) to diffuse a situation – this builds bridges and develops relationships.
- Use a PACE approach
- Use stages of Emotion Coaching
- remain calm and offer clear and simple instructions – this reduces tension and eases the situation.
- speak slowly – this can be interpreted as soothing.
- use distraction – this can diffuse a potentially explosive situation.
- refocus the student onto something more positive.
- listen to students in turn – this earns respect and helps to reach a judgement.
- reassure the students and set limits.
- motivate and empathise with the student – get to know students and their interests as individuals.
- Smile - it goes a long way.

Above all:

- Be flexible – treat every situation and student in the most appropriate manner.
- Provide support for less experienced colleagues – good behaviour management is a skill learned through taking advice and gaining experience.
- Remember that a student's behaviour is often the symptom not the cause and is always an attempt to communicate something. Try to depersonalise the situation, give the student time to calm down, and work collaboratively with them to understand what and why an incident has occurred and then generate a restorative solution.
- Remember it's a team effort; applying policies consistently will support colleagues and help create the culture that is envisaged.
- Focus on reward and celebration; take every opportunity to praise students who take responsibility and act as positive role models.

#### **4.7 Classroom Management**

To promote engagement, The Brook Academy operates a 'step' approach to positive classroom management. Students are reminded of their zones of regulation and given the opportunity to communicate their feelings throughout the day.

All classrooms have a visual representation of the steps of regulation, these help to:

- prompt students, when dysregulated, to use their strategies.
- encourage students, when dysregulated, to take time out to the group room / therapy room with / without support, depending on their strategy.

Students will be supported to regulate and return to class when ready - regulation strategies are child-led, staff supported.

Staff are expected to have an awareness of student triggers, or aspects of sensitivity, through regular review of the EHCP, PLPs, and Individual Risk Assessments.

Persistent 'low-level' disruptive behaviour can have a major negative impact on the learning environment. It is important that 'low-level' behaviour is resolved quickly and effectively, allowing the lesson to continue. Often, verbal reminders of expectation, classroom re-organisation or diversionary strategies will prove effective.

The following points are all considered important and should be applied by all staff:

- Respond with unconditional positive regard, sending a clear and genuine message of empathy and concern for them as an individual. It is a vital principle that the member of staff connects with a student before they correct the behaviour.
- Wherever possible, procedures that avoid confrontation should be adopted. For example, ignoring, distracting, sending on a supervised errand, etc.
- Negotiate, not impose, wherever possible, although minimum standards are not negotiable.
- Where confrontation is unavoidable, be calm, assertive, and positive.
- Always come back to the primary behaviour / ignore secondary behaviour.
- Criticise the behaviour, not the student.
- Use persuasive scripts.
- Reward wherever possible.
- Refer to Code of Conduct.
- Reminder of PLP targets and Reward Points.
- Restorative conversations, using key questions for both sides of any conflict, to resolve issues with minimal disruption to learning or routines.
- Recognise that students will sometimes need time out of an environment or situation. This must be supported appropriately by staff.

#### **4.8 Behaviour Management – Stepped Procedure**

Inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with by the following stepped procedures:

##### **Level 1 – Low Level**

- Dealt with by staff within lesson or present at the point of incident
- Learning conversation will take place
- The conversation will be recorded on CPOMs and monitored

##### **Level 2 – Mid Level**

- The student will be offered timeout / excused from the classroom and be asked to work with the Pastoral Team or support staff
- SLT will be informed
- Phone call / text home to discuss concerns
- SLT will have learning conversation
- If behaviour continues, home / school meeting to be arranged

### **Level 3 – High Level**

- 1:1 extra support / reflection (preferable over suspension)
- Internal suspension
- FTS to be determined by SLT
- Return to school meeting and Restorative Justice – with concerned parties and member of SLT
- PLP updated

#### **4.9 Team Teach**

All Teaching and Support staff at The Brook Academy are trained at Level 2, Team Teach. Staff are trained in de-escalation techniques, and safe and authorised techniques to physically support young people where needed. The academy adopts the ethos of Team Teach and the aim to resolve 95% or more of incidents through de-escalation, avoiding physical intervention when possible.

### **5 Specific Behaviours that Pose a Threat to Education / Welfare / Safety**

#### **Overview: Permanent exclusion will be considered:**

- In response to a serious breach, or persistent breaches, of the school's Behaviour Policy.
- Where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others, such as staff or pupils in the school.

#### **5.1 Smoking**

The Brook Academy is a non-smoking site. Any student who brings smoking paraphernalia, including but not limited to, lighters, tobacco, rizla papers, filter, vapes, will be immediately challenged, and be asked to hand it in. These items will be confiscated and not returned to the student. If students refuse to hand in anything deemed as smoking paraphernalia, The Brook Academy will, if needed, ask parents to come and collect the items.

Students will be offered support in giving up smoking through Personal Tutorial sessions and close collaborative work with healthcare professionals and / or our wellbeing team.

Parents / carers will be expected to attend a meeting to discuss the dangers and risks associated with the student's behaviour. If parents request the items to be returned, they will need to collect it from the school in person.

If associated behaviours become a threat to the welfare of other students, or persistently disruptive to the education and wellbeing of others, then the school will consider suspensions and exclusions.

#### **5.2 Vaping**

At The Brook Academy, we understand that students may be using puff bars / vapes in order to try and give up smoking. In these circumstances, SLT may hold a meeting with parents/ carers to arrange a referral to appropriate healthcare professionals.

Students are asked to hand over their puff bars / vapes at the beginning of the school day. If a student is caught with a vape / puff bar, it will be confiscated immediately. If the student refuses to hand over

their vaping belongings after 3 attempts, their parents / carers will be contacted, and the student will be suspended from the site for the remainder of the day.

If a student uses a puff bar / vape in front of a member of staff, SLT will explore the context of why the student has chosen to make the poor choice. The student's actions will result in a learning conversation / suspension.

### **5.3 Drugs and Alcohol**

The Brook Academy operates a zero-tolerance policy towards drugs / alcohol.

- If a student is known to have brought drugs or alcohol to school or appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, they will not be allowed to enter the school site; if onsite, they will be isolated from other young people.
- Staff will aim to remove the drugs or alcohol from their person. Drugs will be handed to the police.
- The parents and carers will be informed, and the young person returned home, if safe to do so or medical assistance obtained, if required.
- Police will be informed of any incident involving drugs.
- The student will receive a 1-day fixed term suspension / internal suspension to be taken the next school day after the incident.

All students who either bring in drugs, or are under the influence of drugs, will be offered support in relation to their drug / alcohol misuse. Support offered includes close collaborative work with healthcare professionals, other external agencies, and our Pastoral Team. Where a student is under the influence of cannabis, a referral will be made in accordance with the local authority guidance.

### **5.4 Child on Child Abuse**

- There is a zero-tolerance policy at The Brook Academy for any form of child-on-child abuse, each case is dealt with directly by the Pastoral and Safeguarding Team, using a graduated and restorative approach as outlined above.
- Repeated acts of aggression may lead to internal sanctions within the school or suspension.
- A young person carrying out child-on-child abuse may be removed from site and suspended. A risk assessment will be carried out regarding their ability to remain safely at the school.

### **5.5 Use of Weapons**

The Brook Academy has a zero-tolerance policy towards weapons onsite. A weapon is taken to be an object designed or used for inflicting bodily harm or physical damage.

- If a student is known to have brought weapons to school, they will not be allowed to enter the school site; if onsite, they will be isolated from other young people and returned home. The police will be informed and may visit the young person on the school site. If a young person creates a weapon onsite the same applies.
- Staff will aim to remove the weapon from their person. Weapons will be handed to / recorded by the police.
- Police will be informed of any incident involving weapons.

- A young person carrying, creating, using, or threatening to use a weapon will be removed from site and suspended. A risk assessment will be carried out regarding their ability to remain safely at the school.

### **5.6 Physical assault on staff/property**

- There is a zero-tolerance policy at The Brook Academy for physical assault with intent to harm staff or property.
- Each case is dealt with directly by the SLT, Pastoral, and Safeguarding teams, using a graduated and restorative approach as outlined above. EHCP needs and dysregulation will be considered when deciding upon appropriate responses.
- Parents / carers may be charged for wilful damage.
- A young person carrying out assaults on staff may be removed from site and suspended. A risk assessment will be carried out regarding their ability to remain safely at the school.
- The police will be informed and may be called to site.

### **5.7 Absconding Students**

#### **Removing themselves from class:**

Staff will undertake an immediate check to ascertain the whereabouts of the student – it may be that they are just finding somewhere to “cool off”, in which a quiet discussion may suffice. The use of appropriate ‘time-outs’ is acceptable.

#### **Absconding from the school site:**

If the student has been seen leaving site, staff will note the time and monitor them as long as possible, then take note of the direction that they were last seen heading.

Staff should not attempt to chase the student – this may lead to reckless behaviour on their part.

If they disappear from sight, staff to immediately inform the Office Staff. SLT will be informed. Office staff will notify parents/carers and the police after 20 minutes, when they have determined that the student is not in the immediate vicinity or returned to site.

When a student is caught absconding from site, their parents / carers will be informed as they have placed themselves in a vulnerable situation and they are beyond our care and control.

#### **Please note:**

- Students will not be allowed to leave site to go to the shops. If they need something, they will need to speak to a member of staff on duty at break / lunchtime, not during lessons.
- Staff will not open the gates to students to let them out of school after the school days starts or before it finishes.
- If a student decides to jump the fence / leave site, they do so at their own risk, and this is classed as absconding and will be dealt with accordingly.

#### **Absconding on a trip or visit:**

In the event that a student absconds whilst on a school trip / visit:

- Note the time and general direction.
- Immediately inform the police, providing details as observed and a description of the student.
- If the incident occurs during school hours, contact the school as soon as possible. If the incident occurs out of school hours, refer to the contact number provided on the Trips / Visit form.
- Absconding from a trip / visit will be treated the same as if a student absconded from the school site - a ban from a future trip may be considered.
- Prior to returning to school, parents / carers will be invited in for a reintegration meeting to discuss the severity and potential risk of a young person leaving supervision without permission.

## **5.8 Mobile Phones and Personal Technology**

To safeguard staff and students appropriately, students will not be allowed their personal technology within school hours. Students are required to hand their bags and phones over to staff as they enter the building; these will be returned at the end of the school day. If students are caught with a phone, it must be handed in – failure to hand in a phone will result in the student’s parents/carers being called. It will also mean that the student will be searched in the mornings.

If associated behaviours become a threat to the welfare of other students, or persistently disruptive to the education and wellbeing of others, then the school will consider a suspension.

## **5.9 Searching and Confiscation of Inappropriate Items**

The Brook Academy reserves the right to search students for items that are banned within school, including their school bag. If a student refuses to be searched, permission will be sought from parents / carers or, in extreme cases, the police will be contacted.

The Brook Academy can search students without consent for knives, weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, and stolen items. A search with a security handheld wand can be undertaken by The Brook Academy if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a student is in possession of a prohibited item. Items found will be retained by academy staff and may be handed to the police, where necessary.

Section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, enables academy staff to confiscate, retain, or dispose of a student’s property, where reasonable to do so. Academies are not required to inform parents / carers before a search takes place or to see consent to search their child. Due to the nature of our students, however, parents / carers will always be informed, where appropriate, about their child being searched.

## **5.10 Power to Use Reasonable Force**

Staff members at The Brook Academy have the power to use reasonable force to prevent students committing an offence, injuring themselves or others (including self-defence), or damaging property.

All incidents involving Restricted Physical Intervention will:

- be used as a last resort.
- be managed in accordance with Team Teach guidelines.

5.11 be reported on CPOMs

5.12 be written up on a Physical Incident Report with the corresponding completion of the Bound and Numbered Book.

- involve telephoning parents / carers.
- include a “cooling off” period.

5.13 include an update of the Risk Assessment and, where possible, a Restorative Justice meeting held with involved parties.

5.14 allow the student concerned to “de-brief” with a trusted adult

### **5.15 Staff Support**

In some of the circumstances outlined above, especially where anger and aggression have been shown, it is just as stressful for the staff involved as the students themselves. It is important, therefore, that we ensure staff involved have the opportunity to take time away from the teaching environment to calm themselves and discuss the incident with a supportive colleague.

The member of staff involved, and any witnesses, will have the opportunity to write up a report of the incident as soon as possible. Opportunities to have a debrief with the Principal / SLT should also be made available.

The Brook Academy has Employee Assistance Programme for staff.

## **6 Procedures for Permanent Exclusion**

- Dual registered students will return to the commissioning school / academy / authority.
- Students solely on The Brook Academy’s roll will be referred to the local authority.
- Students may be required to leave The Brook Academy where:
  - there is sufficient evidence that a student has committed a disciplinary offence which, if by allowing the student on site, may seriously harm the education or welfare of others.
  - a student is found guilty by the police of a serious criminal offence.

Only the Principal may take the decision to permanently exclude a student. The Principal will take into consideration mitigating factors and aggravating factors.

Mitigating factors may include:

- provocation from bullying
- the student’s emotional and / or medical condition
- potential coercion by other students
- the nature of the offence
- whether it is their first offence
- previous behaviour
- an apology
- an admission
- willingness to cooperate with the investigation
- willingness to make restitution towards any victim

Aggravating factors may include:

- failing to heed warnings about the risk of exclusion
- premeditation of the offence
- use of a weapon
- previous history of similar incidents
- witness intimidation
- the victim(s) sustaining injury
- the victim being a younger or vulnerable student
- lack of contrition or willingness to accept responsibility for his / her action
- not cooperating with the investigation or seeking to prevent it

### **6.1 Notifying Parents / Carers**

When the decision to permanently exclude a student has been made, parents / carers will be notified immediately by telephone, it will then be confirmed in writing.

### **6.2 Notifying Academy Council**

The Academy Council will review all exclusions and consider any representations made to them by parents / carers.

On receiving notification from the Principal, a representative from the Governing Body will invite the parents / carers to attend the meeting. The representative will request written statements and will circulate these at least five days in advance of the meeting. The Governing Body may uphold the exclusion or direct the student's reinstatement.

### **6.3 Appeals**

Parents / carers have a right to appeal any exclusion decisions. As an alternative provider (SEMH) of education, the Academy has a commitment to ensure that all students are progressed in a way that meets their needs. This will remain the objective in cases of exclusions; the Academy will work in partnership with parents / carers to ensure the appropriate progression routes are established.

In cases where this is not accepted, an independent appeals panel may be convened, and governors will consult with the relevant local authority.

## **7 Monitoring and Review of Policy**

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness, and updated in response to new research or changes within the school community. Regular feedback from students, parents, and staff will be sought to continuously improve our strategies.