Exclusion Policy

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1.0 Introduction

This policy contains guidelines, which will be adapted as necessary, explaining the circumstances under which a pupil may be excluded from Cobham Montessori School ('the school'), or required to leave permanently for misconduct or other reasons. The policy applies to all pupils at the school but does not cover cases when a pupil has to leave because of ill-health, non-payment of fees, or withdrawal by his/her parents.

The following definitions apply in this policy.

Parent: includes any person having parental responsibility for the child which may be one or both of the parents, a legal guardian or education guardian.

Exclusion: means a dismissal from the School following serious or persistent misconduct formally recorded.

Removal: means that a pupil has been required to leave, but without the stigma of exclusion.

2.0 Policy statement

2.1 Aims:

The aims of this policy are:

- to support the School's behaviour policy
- to ensure procedural fairness and transparency
- to promote co-operation between the School and parents when it is necessary for the School that a pupil should leave earlier than expected.

2.2 Misconduct:

The main categories of misconduct which may result in exclusion or removal include but are not limited to:

- persistent attitudes or behaviour which are inconsistent with the School's ethos or which adversely affect the education of other pupils, including bullying & intimidation, persistent defiance or refusal to follow reasonable instructions from adult; vandalism or deliberate damage to school property; physical violence or aggression towards other pupils, staff, or

visitors; repeated or serious incidents of inappropriate or disrespectful language towards staff or peers.

- serious misconduct which affects the welfare of a member or members of the School community or which brings the School into disrepute (single or repeated episodes) on or off School premises.

  Whilst it is understood that seriously challenging behaviour may be an expression of a developmental need requiring support, the School, having made reasonable adjustments – see 2.3 below, must prioritise the safety and wellbeing of the whole community in reaching a decision about exclusion.

2.3 Behaviour related to a disability:

The School will make reasonable adjustments for managing behaviour, which is related to a pupil's disability. Where exclusion needs to be considered, having already made reasonable adjustments, the School will ensure that a disabled pupil is able to present their case fully where their disability might hinder this.

2.4 Other circumstances:

A pupil may be required to leave if, after all appropriate consultation, the Head of School is satisfied that it is not in the best interests of either or both the pupil or the School, that he/she remains at the School.

3.0 Procedure

The procedure followed by the School in cases where a sanction of exclusion or required removal may be imposed by the Head of School are summarised in this policy.

The three stages of this procedure are as follows:

3.1 Investigation procedure

When an issue is raised by a member of the community that merits considering excluding a student from the School, the Head of School investigates further. If the initial investigation suggests that there is cause to proceed the Head of School will arrange to meet with the student in the presence of their parents.

3.2 Disciplinary meeting with the Head of School

At the meeting, if the student gives an acceptable explanation of his/her conduct, then no further action will be taken. If no action is taken, no record of the meeting will appear on the student's file.

Should no acceptable explanation be given of a student's conduct, the Head of School has to decide what further action is appropriate.

This may be to:

- issue a written instruction such as a warning.
- issue an appropriate disciplinary sanction such as a suspension of freedoms.
- refer the matter to the final stage of review and inform the student and their family accordingly.

3.3 Final Review

During a final stage of review, the Head of School will consider the question of whether or not to exclude the student. The student and their family will have a further opportunity to present their perspective. The courses of action open to the Head of School are as follows:

- expel the student
- ask the parents to remove the student (but without the stigma of exclusion); If it is suspected that the student may require specialist support, the School will endeavour to signpost the student's family via the Surrey Local Offer: https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/children/support-and-advice/local-offer
- suspend the student for a finite period
- issue a written instruction such as a warning.

- issue an appropriate disciplinary sanction such as a suspension of freedoms.

The parents have the right at any point in this process to pursue a complaint against the school as per our Complaints Policy.