

High Grange

Adaptive thinking, Communication, Emotional wellbeing, Independence

Promoting Wellbeing & Safety		
Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy		
Last Update: November 2025	Responsible: Principal	Page: 1 of 7

This policy promotes ACE because;	
	This policy promotes ACE: Adaptive thinking through calm, safe decision-making and early help-seeking. Communication is supported via clear language, restorative dialogue, and agreed reporting routes. Emotional wellbeing and independence are developed through resilience, self-advocacy, and consistent routines, enabling pupils to reintegrate successfully after time out of class and feel confident in school.

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Legislation

- Education Act 2002 (as amended by the Education Act 2011)
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012 (context; applies to maintained schools/academies)
- Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended 2014 (context; applies to LAs for maintained settings)
- Equality Act 2010; Human Rights Act 1998
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2025 (effective 1 Sept 2025)
- School suspensions and permanent exclusions (DfE statutory guidance, 19 Aug 2024 update)
- Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (19 Feb 2024)

High Grange School is an independent special school. The DfE's statutory Suspension and permanent exclusion guidance does not apply to independent schools; we mirror its safeguards and timelines as best practice, with reasonable adjustments for our context.

This policy also has due regard to statutory and non-statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Department for Education (DfE) School suspensions and permanent exclusions (updated 19 August 2024)
- DfE Behaviour in schools (19 February 2024)
- SEND Code of Practice: 0–25 years (January 2015; page updated 12 September 2024)
- Mental health and behaviour in schools (2018)
- Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2025 (in force from 1 September 2025)
- This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies
- Empowering Resilience Through ACE Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Child on Child Abuse Policy
- Pupil Code of Conduct
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy / SEN information
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Sexual violence/harassment policy

High Grange School Statement

1. We are an Independent special school that has a clearly identified cohort of children and young people who have a primary diagnosis of high functioning autism with potentially additional diagnosis of pathological demand avoidance or 'avoidance type behaviour', ADHD and identified mental health difficulties. All children and young people that attend High Grange School have an education health and care plan. As a result of our pupil's complex diagnosis, we therefore understand that our pupils may or will display behaviours that challenge. We accept that our staff need high quality training in team teach, autism, PDA and mental health to ensure collectively as an educational provision / team we have the capability, capacity and skill set within the school staff team that is sufficient to cope with most diagnosis associated behaviours that we encounter.
2. The consistent approach to behaviours that challenge through the school's trauma informed approach, team teach and the additional intervention of a highly qualified and extensive multi-disciplinary team are central to our philosophy and ethos in supporting pupils who will display various behaviours that challenge. We accept that children and young people that come to High Grange School will have difficult educational experiences, a number of previously failed placements, potentially will have been out of education for various periods of time and will transition into High Grange School with varying levels of anxiety and often low self-confidence, self-

belief, self-worth and self-esteem. Their acceptance into the school is not conditional upon 'good behaviour' but more of an acceptance that over time they will work towards building positive relationships with staff and existing pupils and learn to 'work with us' to support their academic, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Their behaviours that challenge are part of the presenting problems which have caused their referral. We work with these behaviours in a restorative, reflective and where possible by showing a 'better way' of behaving or managing each situation.

3. Many pupils coming to High Grange School will have experienced potentially being permanently excluded or may have had several fixed term exclusions. This makes us extremely cautious about following a similar course of action. This cycle of continually being excluded, for the child or young person's sake, has to be stopped. We are experienced at managing behaviours that challenge, that are often anxiety driven due to the child or young person's autism. It is the school's belief that pupils over time need to become more independent in managing their anxiety and therefore their behaviour to ensure they are ready for the next step often into adulthood. High Grange Schools responsibility is to prepare pupils for the 'working reality' that they will face in accessing society when they leave High Grange School. Over time pupils must learn to accept responsibility for their actions and often the associated consequences of their actions. This is something that each child or young person encounters throughout their individual journey at High Grange School.
4. High Grange School work with these behaviours that challenge wherever possible and to the extremes of our professional tolerance. This is the nature of our therapeutic and educational resilience as experienced practitioners. It is part of our professional obligation in working with children and young people with autism, PDA and additional mental health difficulties.
5. Permanent Exclusions are used only for disciplinary reasons, never for non-disciplinary reasons. Decisions are lawful, reasonable and proportionate, taking account of SEND and any relevant safeguarding risks. A "no-exclusion" stance is not adopted where exclusion is the safest/most appropriate step.

6.

Procedures

High Grange School uses two types of exclusions;

Suspension: This is temporary and usually involves the pupil/student reintegrating back into the school. A pupil/student may be suspended for a maximum of 45 school days in an academic year. A suspension does not have to be for a continuous period.

Permanent Exclusion: This is where the pupil/student is permanently removed from the school roll and will not return to school.

Informing parents/carers about the exclusion:

1. Discuss with LAs and parents/carers the possibility of suspension or exclusion where possible well in advance of any decision being made (ongoing dialogue throughout where possible).

2. The Principal or Head Teacher will inform the board of directors / governors of any pupil being suspended. Any pupil suspension will be reported and recorded to the board of directors / governors in the 'report to the board.'
3. Once a suspension period has been decided, parents/carers, LAs and social workers will be notified immediately, ideally by telephone followed up by a letter / e mail within one working day. Letters of notification of the suspension period must state the date it takes effect, details of the serious incident(s), the precise period of the suspension and the reintegration meeting date once confirmed.
4. The school-based decision about suspension will ultimately rest with the Principal / Head Teacher in consultation with other senior staff. The opinions of other members of staff involved with the child (i.e., teachers and teaching assistants) must be taken into account within 15 working days
5. In cases of alleged sexual/physical/drug abuse the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will make the initial assessment and then communicate with appropriate outside agencies.
6. Often suspension has, unavoidably, to be arranged urgently. Even then proper arrangements must be made. If required travel arrangements will be made should the pupil need to leave site within the school day.
7. The Principal or Head Teacher at High Grange School have the authority to sanction a permanent exclusion. The Principal and Head Teacher will inform and consult the board of directors / governors before confirming a permanent exclusion. A Permanent exclusion will not be confirmed until both the parents/carers and LA have been given an opportunity to meet with the Principal / Head Teacher to discuss the matter. The Principal/Headteacher will offer parents/carers (and the LA) a meeting within 15 school days. The Principal/Headteacher may take up to 5 school days to consider points raised before confirming the decision. If confirmed, the exclusion becomes permanent at the end of that period.
 - Exclusions are not used for minor incidents.
 - Each situation must be assessed on its own individual set of circumstances; each pupil's individual reactions and needs must be taken fully into account.

In response to serious behaviour the school may choose to exclude a pupil. For example (but not exclusively);

- Peer on peer violence
- Persistent bullying
- Damage to the school site

- Aggression towards staff
- Carrying a weapon
- Setting the fire alarm more than twice in a day
- Prejudice-based incident (e.g., disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation)

HGS may use restorative approaches, off-site direction, and targeted support as appropriate to avoid repeated suspensions and to support behaviour improvement, especially where SEND and/or mental-health needs are factors. Part-time timetables are not used to manage behaviour except in exceptional, time-limited circumstances with a clear plan to return to full-time education.

The Principal/Headteacher power to suspend and exclude

The Principal/Headteacher may cancel any suspension or exclusion that has already begun; however, this power will only be used if the suspension or exclusion has not already been reviewed by the board of directors/ governors. Where a suspension or exclusion is cancelled, the Principal will notify the pupil's parents / carers, the board directors / governors and the LA, and, where relevant, the virtual school head (VSH) and the pupil's social worker. The Principal will offer the pupil's parents / carers the opportunity to meet with the Principal to discuss the circumstances that led to the cancellation of the exclusion, and the pupil will be allowed back into school.

The Principal will report the number of suspensions and exclusions that have been cancelled, alongside the circumstances around and reasons for cancellation, to the board of directors / governors on a termly basis in the Principals report to the board, to allow the governing board to have appropriate oversight.

All suspensions and permanent exclusions will be documented and recorded on the schools 'behaviour watch' system. The schools Deputy Head Teacher and behaviour co-ordinator will keep a record of all serious incidents that have led to a suspension or permanent exclusion, and this will be readily available during an inspection.

A decision to permanently exclude a pupil will only be taken:

- It will usually (but not always) be the final step in a process for dealing with disciplinary offences following a wide range of other strategies, which have been tried without success. It is an acknowledgement by High Grange School that it has exhausted all available strategies for helping support and manage the child/young person and should normally be used as a last resort.
- In response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's Empowering Resilience through ACE policy.
- Where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in school These criteria are not the only factors which can contribute to decisions about exclusion. There may be deeper clinical and psychological considerations; there may be insuperable pressures from the family

and home contact; unexpected deteriorations in a child's psychological condition/presentation can occur; and so on. Again, the important thing is to make careful and informed decisions which are in the best interest of the child, the school community and other pupils. These collective interests cannot always be reconciled, of course. We are well aware of this, and we accept the fact that on some occasions the collective good will have to prevail over individual considerations.

Length of Suspension

A pupil may be suspended for one or more fixed periods, up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year. Suspensions do not have to be continuous. A lunchtime suspension counts as half a school day. A suspension must not be for an unspecified period.

A suspension cannot be "converted" into a permanent exclusion; if circumstances change, a new decision must be made and notified.

During the period of suspension, the young person will:

- Return to the care of the parent/carer or LA
- The School Principal / Head Teacher may offer work for the child / young person to complete
- The Principal will convene a meeting at the earliest opportunity with the LA. The outcome of this meeting will be a strategy plan to be adopted for the young person's return.
- In the case of a looked after child (LAC child) the Principal will convene an urgent review meeting to agree the next steps with social worker and key professionals working around the child – this may include the child's independent reviewing officer or Virtual School Head.
- If a pupil has a social worker, they will be informed of any exclusion or suspension where possible within 24 hours of a decision being undertaken.
- During any suspension longer than five school days, HGS will arrange suitable education so far as is reasonably practicable (recognising the statutory day-6 duty in DfE guidance applies to maintained/academy settings). A re-integration meeting with parents/carers, the pupil, LA and relevant staff will be arranged at the earliest opportunity, with a brief support plan agreed.

Permanent exclusion will not be confirmed until both the LA and parents/carers have been given an opportunity to meet with the Principal or Head Teacher to discuss the matter. This must be within 15 school days. The Principal may take up to 5 days to consider the points raised before determining whether to uphold the exclusion. Exclusion is deemed permanent upon expiry of these 20 days.

Reintegration After Suspension

The Principal should arrange a reintegration discussion / meeting with the parents/carers, the pupil and the LA, relevant educational and teaching staff and the pupil following the expiry of a suspension period. This should be an opportunity to discuss how best the pupil/young person can return to High Grange and can be a useful forum to consider with parents/carers the possibility of suitable interventions. However, a suspension period ideally should not be

extended if such a discussion cannot be arranged in time, or the parents/carers do not attend. This will be decided by the Principal / Head Teacher as a discussion / meeting may be required before the pupils is deemed safe to return to the school environment.

Reporting & Recording

All serious incidents are recorded on the school's School Pod system. In the event of an exclusion copies of the incident are shared with the family of the pupil/student and the Local Authority. Where a pupil has a social worker or similar copies will also be shared with these professionals.

Appeals

Parents/carers (and the LA for an EHCP pupil) may appeal in writing within 10 school days of a permanent exclusion decision. Appeals are heard by a panel of directors/governors, who review the decision on the basis of lawfulness, reasonableness and procedural fairness. *(Independent review panels under the 2012 Regulations apply to maintained schools and academies; HGS mirrors equivalent safeguards through this internal process.)*