

FamilyCare

Healing pasts • Building futures

Education

Exclusions Policy

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Exclusions Policy

Reviewed: July 2025

Review Due: July 2026



1. Statement of Intent

Family Care Schools are a nurturing, trauma-informed specialist setting for pupils with significant and complex SEND. We are commissioned by local authorities and operate under a therapeutic, relational approach underpinned by the Secure Base model. We are committed to inclusion, understanding that many behaviours are expressions of need. As such, the use of exclusion is rare and only ever considered as a last resort to ensure safety and stability for the individual or others. Where concerns arise, we work in full partnership with families, professionals, and placing authorities to explore all support options.

2. Legal and Contractual Context

As an independent school, exclusion procedures are not governed by DfE statutory guidance for maintained schools. Instead, exclusions are determined by the school's behaviour and safeguarding policies, the terms of the school-Local Authority and -parent contract, and relevant legislation including the Equality Act 2010, the SEND Code of Practice, and the Children and Families Act 2014. Permanent exclusion must also align with contractual terms between the school and the placing authority.

3. Principles and Approach

All decisions regarding exclusion will be lawful, proportionate, and fair. They will be trauma-informed and aligned with the Secure Base model, which considers emotional availability, sensitivity, acceptance, and repair. Exclusion decisions will be based on evidence and made with full consideration of the pupil's SEND profile, background, and any known vulnerabilities. Before exclusion is considered, the school will ensure that risk assessments and support plans have been reviewed, multi-agency professionals have been consulted, and alternative provision or flexible solutions have been explored.

4. Grounds for Exclusion

Exclusion may be considered where a pupil presents serious or sustained risk to themselves or others, where there is persistent disruption that cannot be safely managed within the current placement, or where the pupil's needs have changed to such an extent that the current placement is no longer appropriate. Behaviours that may lead to exclusion include (but are not limited to) physical aggression causing significant injury, repeated violent incidents despite interventions, dangerous

behaviour in the community such as absconding to unsafe areas, or criminal activity on school premises.



5. Temporary Suspension

In exceptional circumstances, a short-term suspension (usually 1 to 5 days) may be used as a response to a critical incident requiring assessment, planning, or mediation, or to provide safety for all parties during investigation or de-escalation. During this period, the school will provide work or therapeutic activities where appropriate and will convene a planning meeting with the family and relevant professionals.

6. Permanent Exclusion

Permanent exclusion will be considered only when all strategies and resources have been exhausted, the placement is no longer viable or safe, or a transition to a more appropriate setting is agreed with the local authority. Where a permanent exclusion is proposed, the family will be informed immediately, a review meeting with the placing authority will be convened, and the school will provide supporting evidence and a transition plan to ensure continuity of education.

7. Secure Base in Practice

All exclusion decisions will take into account the child's attachment history, trauma profile, and relational needs; the impact on their sense of belonging and safety; and the opportunity for reconnection and repair where possible. We seek to avoid exclusion through strong pastoral care, co-regulation, and by adapting the environment. Staff are trained to respond with empathy, structure, and consistency in line with our trauma-informed ethos.

8. Recording and Communication

All exclusions, whether fixed or permanent, are recorded internally in the pupil's safeguarding file, shared with parents or carers and the local authority immediately, and reviewed in terms of learning and improvement for the school. This ensures transparency and ongoing development of inclusive practice.

9. Appeals and Representation

Parents and carers may request a review of the decision with the Headteacher or Family Care. Where the exclusion involves a pupil with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), the placing authority will be fully involved in discussions and planning to ensure that statutory duties are met and appropriate provision is maintained.

10. Monitoring and Review

The Senior Leadership Team monitors all exclusions termly and reports patterns and

trends to governors and commissioning authorities. This policy is reviewed annually or in response to any changes in law, contractual obligations, or safeguarding guidance to ensure it remains compliant and aligned with our values.

