

Ysgol Caban Aur

Exclusion Policy



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This policy outlines the procedures for excluding learners from Ysgol Caban Aur (YCA), an independent school in North Wales exclusively serving students residing in Afon Goch Children's Homes (AGCH).

1.2 It is written in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance, including the Education (Wales) Act 2004, the School Discipline and Pupil Support (Wales) Regulations 2011, the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2024, and relevant care standards legislation.

1.3 This policy reflects our commitment to providing a safe, supportive, and therapeutic learning environment tailored to the specific needs of our student population, while acknowledging that exclusion is a serious measure of last resort. We prioritise proactive, trauma-informed strategies to address behavioural issues and avoid exclusion whenever possible.

2. PRINCIPLES

2.1 Given the unique context of our school, serving only residents of AGCH, exclusion will *only* be considered when a learner's behaviour poses a serious and imminent threat to the safety and well-being of themselves, other learners, or staff, and *all* other reasonable strategies, including those outlined in a learner's Behaviour Management Plan (BMP) and in consultation with the care home, have been exhausted.

2.2 Decisions regarding exclusion will be made fairly, consistently, and proportionately, considering the individual circumstances of each case. This includes the learner's age, special educational needs (ALN), any relevant medical conditions, their personal history (including experiences of trauma and attachment difficulties), their emotional and social development, and the specific context of the behaviour.

2.3 The best interests of the child will be paramount in all decisions regarding exclusion.

2.4 We are committed to working in close partnership with AGCH, parents/carers (where applicable and appropriate), relevant social workers, local authorities, and other involved professionals to address behavioural issues and facilitate successful reintegration following any period of exclusion. Open communication and collaborative decision-making are essential.

2.5 We recognise the particular vulnerabilities of children in care and the potential for exclusion to be re-traumatising. We will actively strive to avoid any action that could destabilise a learner's placement or negatively impact their long-term well-being.

3. TYPES OF EXCLUSION

3.1 Fixed-term exclusion: A learner is excluded from the school for a specified number of school days. Given our close partnership with AGCH, fixed-term exclusions will typically involve the learner remaining at the care home but not attending school lessons. Alternative educational provision will be arranged in consultation with the care home and relevant local authority representatives.

3.2 Permanent exclusion: Given the integrated nature of our school and the care home, permanent exclusion from the school will likely necessitate a review of the learner's placement at AGCH in conjunction with the placing authority and social work teams. This process will be managed in accordance with relevant care planning procedures.

4. GROUNDS FOR EXCLUSION

4.1 Exclusion may be considered only in extreme circumstances, such as:

4.1.1 Serious and sustained violent or threatening behaviour that poses a significant risk to others.

4.1.2 Possession or use of illegal substances or weapons on school premises.

- 4.1.3 Other serious behaviour that fundamentally and irreparably undermines the safety and therapeutic environment of the school, and where all other interventions have proven ineffective.
- 4.2 Given the complex needs of our student population, minor behavioural infractions will *not* be grounds for exclusion.

5. BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT PLANS (BMPs)

5.1 BMPs are central to our approach to behaviour management. They will be used to support learners experiencing behavioural difficulties and will:

- 5.1.1 Be developed collaboratively with the learner, AGCH staff, parents/carers (where applicable and appropriate), social workers, and other involved professionals.
- 5.1.2 Be informed by a thorough understanding of the learner's individual needs, history, and experiences, including any trauma or attachment-related difficulties.
- 5.1.3 Clearly identify the target behaviours, the underlying needs driving those behaviours, the strategies to be used to support positive behaviour change, and the expected outcomes.
- 5.1.4 Detail the therapeutic support to be provided, including any reasonable adjustments to teaching and learning, or other interventions.
- 5.1.5 Include agreed-upon support from external agencies where necessary.
- 5.1.6 Be regularly reviewed and updated, at least termly or more frequently as needed, to ensure their effectiveness. The review process will involve all key stakeholders and will consider the impact of the plan on the learner's behaviour, emotional well-being, and placement stability.

5.2 Crucially, the implementation and effectiveness of a learner's BMP will be a primary consideration in any decision regarding exclusion. Evidence that the BMP has been implemented consistently, with appropriate therapeutic input and in consultation with the care home, will be required before exclusion is considered.

6. PROCEDURES FOR FIXED-TERM EXCLUSION

- 6.1 The decision to exclude a learner for a fixed term will be made by the Headteacher in close consultation with the designated senior leader from AGCH.
- 6.2 Parents/carers (where applicable and appropriate), social workers, and the local authority will be informed immediately of the proposed exclusion, the reasons for it, the duration, and the alternative educational provision to be put in place.
- 6.2 A reintegration meeting will be held with the learner, AGCH staff, parents/carers (where applicable and appropriate), relevant school staff, social workers, and other involved professionals following a fixed-term exclusion to discuss the learner's return, review the BMP, and identify any necessary additional support.

7. PROCEDURES FOR PERMANENT EXCLUSION

- 7.1 The decision to initiate the process of permanent exclusion will be made by the Headteacher in close consultation with the school proprietor and senior lead from AGCH.
- 7.2 Parents/carers (where applicable and appropriate), social workers, and the local authority will be informed immediately of the proposed permanent exclusion, the reasons for it, and the potential implications for the learner's placement.
- 7.3 A multi-agency meeting will be convened to discuss the learner's future placement and educational provision, in accordance with relevant care planning procedures. This process may involve a review of the learner's care plan.

8. ROLE OF LOCAL AUTHORITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES

8.1 Given that our students are all residents of a care home, the local authority and social services have a significant role. We will maintain close communication and collaboration with them regarding any exclusion, working together to ensure the learner's continued well-being and appropriate educational provision.

9. SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS WITH ALN AND COMPLEX NEED

9.1 We recognise that all our learners have complex needs, including many with ALN. Our approach to behaviour management and exclusion is tailored to these needs.

9.2 We will:

9.2.1 Ensure that the individual needs of each learner are fully understood and considered before any decision regarding exclusion is made.

9.2.2 Work closely with AGCH staff, parents/carers (where applicable and appropriate), social workers, and other professionals to provide appropriate therapeutic support for learners who are experiencing behavioural difficulties.

9.2.3 Ensure that robust and regularly reviewed BMPs are in place for all learners.