



YOUNG LEWISHAM PROJECT

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YOUNG LEWISHAM PROJECT EXCLUSION POLICY

Young Lewisham Project is committed to being a fully accessible and inclusive organisation, welcoming and respecting the diversity of its young person, staff, community and visitors to the school.

Rationale - This policy is underpinned by the commitment of all at Young Lewisham project to ensure the safety and well-being of the project and to maintain an appropriate positive environment in which all can enjoy, learn and achieve. We have an overall aim of reducing the need to use exclusion as a sanction.

Introduction - The decision to exclude a young person will be taken by staff in the following circumstances:-

- (a) In response to a serious breach of the Young Persons Contract;
- (b) If allowing the young person to remain in the project would seriously harm the welfare of the young person or others on the premises.

Exclusion will be used when there is an immediate threat to the safety of others in the project or the young person concerned. Before deciding whether to exclude a young person either permanently or for a fixed period staff will ensure appropriate investigations have been carried out, considering all the evidence available. Exclusion, whether fixed term or permanent may be used for any of the following, all of which constitute examples of unacceptable conduct, and are infringements of the Young Persons Contract:

- There will be no unacceptable behaviour towards everyone at the Project.
- There is a No Smoking policy that applies to everyone at the Project.
- Drugs and alcohol are not to be brought on to the premises and no user of the Project is to attend under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Users are not allowed to bring weapons of any sort on to the premises.

Following any exclusion, parents/carers are contacted immediately where possible. A letter will be sent by post giving details of the exclusion and the date the exclusion ends.

Parents/carers have a right to make representations to Board of Trustees.

A 'return to the project' meeting will be held towards the end of any fixed term exclusion and this will involve the young person, parent/carer and a member of staff.

It is the practice of the project to monitor behaviour of the young person closely for the period following exclusion. This may mean the use of a report or close support by staff.

Permanent Exclusion - The decision to exclude a young person permanently is a very serious one. There are two main types of situation in which permanent exclusion may be considered. The first is a final, formal step in a concerted process for dealing with disciplinary issues following the use of a wide range of other strategies, which have been used without success. It is an acknowledgement that all available strategies have been exhausted and is used as a last resort. This would include persistent and defiant misbehaviour e.g. repeated bullying (which could include racist or homophobic bullying) or repeated possession and or use of an illegal drug or weapons on project premises. The second is where there are exceptional circumstances and it is not appropriate to implement other strategies and where it could be appropriate to permanently exclude a young person for a first or 'one off' offence. These might include:

- Serious actual or threatened violence against another young person or a member of staff.
- Sexual abuse or assault.
- Supplying an illegal drug.
- Carrying an offensive weapon*.
- Arson.

The School will consider police involvement for any of the above offences. * Offensive weapons are defined in the Prevention of Crime Act 1953 as "any article made or adapted for causing injury to the person; or intended by the person having it with him for such use by him." These instances are not exhaustive but indicate the severity of such offences and the fact that such behaviour seriously affects the discipline and well-being of the Young Lewisham Project. Exercise of discretion in reaching a decision, staff will always look at each case on its own merits. In considering whether permanent exclusion is the most appropriate sanction, staff will consider the gravity of the incident, or series of incidents, and whether it constitutes a serious breach of the Young Persons Contract and the effect that the young person remaining at the project would have on the welfare of other young people and staff.

In line with its statutory duty, these same tests of appropriateness will form the basis of the deliberations at a Trustees exclusion appeals hearing/meeting, when it meets to consider the decision to exclude.