



Exclusions Policy

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Guiding Principles

Government guidance on exclusions – both to aid the decision making process and to support the administration of procedures – does not automatically apply to independent schools. However, in order to promote good practice, we have regard for the principles of this guidance and this informs our working practice.

There are many strategies set out regarding initial intervention which is used in school to avoid the use of exclusion. In addition to these leaders will also consider the following: a) an off-site activities or b) managed moves (permanent measure) as preventative measures to exclusion. Any use of alternative provision should be based on an understanding of the support a child or young person needs in order to improve their behaviour, as well as any SEND or health needs. Off-site direction may only be used as a way to improve future behaviour and not as a sanction or punishment for past misconduct. Off-site direction should only be used where in school interventions and/or outreach have been unsuccessful or are deemed inappropriate and should only be used to arrange a temporary stay in AP.

Principles

Pupils are admitted to school after a full and thorough assessment period. Many have experienced exclusions from previous schools or educational settings.

The special educational needs of the pupils include Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties, communication problems, learning difficulties. Many also have Trauma resulting from Adverse Life Experiences. This may lead to socially destructive behaviour presentation or communication frustrations or social misunderstandings arising from the pupil's prior experiences.

The staff work closely to support the pupils during their daily routines and the teaching and support staff work closely with all the pupils in the school to support them and to help them overcome or minimise the impact of their special educational needs. The aim is for the pupils to become full and active citizens who are able to live well within their own community.

Support for the pupils continues during difficult times.

Exclusion is not seen as a system for managing difficulties within the school. It is the action of last resort and will only happen when an incident is deemed so serious there is no other option or all other options have been tried. It will only be use after a meeting of the school's senior management team (SMT). The SMT will review all action taken to date, together with the nature of the pupil's difficulty and will make a decision on whether an exclusion is the only option available. The Head teacher will take the final responsibility for the decision to exclude a pupil and will then initiate the appropriate procedures. If exclusion is made, the Head teacher will inform school's proprietor, the parents/carers of the child/young person, and the placing authority.

The Head teacher will ensure that parents /carers are informed of the terms of the exclusion, whether it is a suspension form school for a number of days or a permanent exclusion, when the period of exclusion will end and how to appeal or receive further information relating of the Exclusion Procedures. Letters will be sent to parents/ carers and copied to the LEA. Parents/ carers will have the right to discuss the procedures with the senior management team and with a representative from the proprietary body.

Removal from lessons or activities / individual route timetable

We aim to include all pupils in all activities at all times. Pupils often have difficulties in communicating in a socially constructive way leading to difficulties in regulating their own behaviour and the school will provide opportunities for inclusion that are not dependent on high levels of internal control by pupils. Providing differentiated amounts

of external control supports pupils. Nevertheless, it is sometimes necessary to provide an individual route through parts of the curriculum for a period of time, for some pupils.

If pupils are finding it difficult to follow the group timetable (maybe one aspect of this is causing them problems) they may need to be withdrawn for all or part of the lesson. These absences are fully logged and the replacement activity carefully considered and documented. If this happens for more than five sessions / lessons a review meeting is called to decide if the pupil needs to be placed on an individual timetable. When pupils are not following the group timetable, for a prolonged period, their individual route is discussed fully with the placing authority, parents/ carers, carers and social workers at the review meeting. All aspects of the timetable they actually follow (charted against any activities they miss) are logged. The meeting will also decide when to reconvene to discuss progress. A pupil will be on an individual timetable for a maximum period of one term before a review meeting is called.

For some pupils in the school an individual timetable needs to be in place whilst staff work on aspects of the behaviour that prevent the pupil from following the group timetable. All pupils on an individual timetable will work in a group situation or participate in regular activities whenever they can. For example, some pupils may be able to eat with all the pupils, or participate in the horticultural sessions, etc. The senior management team do not want pupils isolated from their peers and every effort will be made to ensure that all pupils gain as much from the community as is possible for them. Any worries about isolation will be fully explored in the review meeting.

Internal Exclusions are used as per Government Guidance on Internal Exclusion.

What are the different types of exclusion?

A suspension (also sometimes referred to as a fixed-term exclusion) is for a specific period of time. A pupil may be suspended for one or more fixed periods (up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year). The law does not allow for extending a suspension or 'converting' a suspension into a permanent exclusion. In exceptional cases, usually where further evidence has come to light, a further suspension may be issued to begin immediately after the first period ends; or a permanent exclusion may be issued to begin immediately after the end of the suspension.

A suspension can also be for parts of the school day. For example, if a pupil's behaviour at lunchtime is disruptive, they may be suspended from the school premises for the duration of the lunchtime period. The legal requirements relating to the suspension, such as the headteacher's duty to notify parents, apply in all cases.

A permanent exclusion involves the child being removed from the school roll. However, the head teacher must not remove a pupil's name from the school Admissions Register until the outcome of the Independent Review Panel (if this route is followed by parents). The decision to exclude a pupil permanently should only be taken:

- in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy; and
- where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others such as staff or pupils in the school.

Suspension or Permanent Exclusion

This is used as a last resort or for a very serious breach of School rules/ criminal act

Suspension can be within school or external to school and usually for no more than 5 school days

Permanent exclusion is very rarely used

Pupils with disabilities and Special Educational Needs (SEN) including those with Education, Health and Care plans (EHC plans)

The Equality Act 2010 requires schools to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. This duty can, in principle, apply both to the suspensions and permanent exclusions process and to the disciplinary sanctions imposed. Under the Children and Families Act 2014, governing boards of relevant settings must use their 'best endeavours' to ensure the appropriate special educational provision is made for pupils with SEN, which will include any support in relation to behaviour management that they need because of their SEN.

School leaders will engage proactively with parents in supporting the behaviour of pupils with additional needs.

Where concerns about the behaviour arise, or risk of suspension and permanent exclusion, of a pupil with SEN, a disability or an EHC plan leaders will, in partnership with others (including where relevant, the local authority), consider what additional support or alternative placement may be required. This should involve assessing the suitability of provision for a pupil's SEN or disability.

Where a pupil has an EHC plan, leaders will contact the local authority about any behavioural concerns at an early stage and consider requesting an early annual review

Pupils who have a social worker, including looked-after children, and previously looked-after children

For the majority of children who have a social worker, this is due to known safeguarding risks at home or in the community: over half are in need due to abuse or neglect. For children with a social worker, education is an important protective factor, providing a safe space for children to receive support, be visible to professionals and realise their potential. When children are not in school, they miss the protection and opportunities it can provide, and become more vulnerable to harm.

Leaders balance this important reality with the need to ensure calm and safe environments for all pupils and staff, so will devise strategies that take both of these aspects into account.

Where a pupil has a social worker, e.g. because they are the subject of a Child in Need Plan or a Child Protection Plan, and they are at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion, the headteacher will inform their social worker, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the pupil's parents/carers to involve them all as early as possible in relevant conversations.

Where a looked-after child (LAC) is likely to be subject to a suspension or permanent exclusion, the Designated Teacher (DT) contacts the local authority's VSH as soon as possible. The VSH, working with the DT and others, should consider what additional assessment and support need to be put in place to help the school address the factors affecting the child's behaviour and reduce the need for suspension or permanent exclusion.

All looked-after children have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) which is part of the child's care plan. This is reviewed every term and any concerns about the pupil's behaviour should be recorded, as well as how the pupil is being supported to improve

their behaviour and reduce the likelihood of exclusion. Monitoring of PEPs can be an effective way for VSHs to check on this.

Where previously looked-after children face the risk of being suspended or permanently excluded, the school will engage with the child's parents/carers and the school's DT. The school may also seek the advice of the VSH on strategies to support the pupil.

Procedure:

Informing parents about the Exclusion:

The head teacher will follow the procedures set out in the guidance as a matter of good practice. These procedures are designed to ensure fairness and openness in the handling of exclusions..

Whenever the head teacher excludes a pupil, the parents/ carers will be notified immediately, ideally by telephone followed up by a letter within one school day.

Letters of notification of exclusion must state:

- For a fixed period exclusion, the precise period of the exclusion
- For a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is a permanent exclusion
- The reason for the exclusion
- The parents/ guardian's rights to make representation about the exclusion to the head teacher and chair of governors
- The person whom the parents/ carers should contact if they wish to make such representations.

The school secretary will provide the appropriate contact details for parents/ carers on request.

Letters should include the following information:

- The latest day in which the SMT and the proprietary body must meet to consider the circumstances in which the pupil was excluded (except where the exclusion is for a total of not more than five school days in any one term and would not result in the pupil missing a public examination).
- In the case of a fixed period exclusion, the date and time when the pupil should return to school and how this will be managed.
- If the exclusion is permanent, the date it takes effect and any relevant previous history.
- For fixed term exclusion the arrangements made for enabling the pupil to continue working, including the setting and marking of work. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that work sent home is completed and returned to school.

ALL EXCLUSION CASES SHOULD BE TREATED IN THE STRICTEST CONFIDENCE.

Informing the governing body and the placing LEA

Within one school day the head teacher will inform the governing body and the placing LEA of: -

- Permanent exclusions
- Exclusions, which would result in the pupil being excluded for more than five school days in one term.

- Exclusions, which would result in the pupil missing a public examination.

Fixed period exclusions totalling five or fewer school days in any one term must be reported to the governing body in the termly report.

Exclusion reports should include: -

- The child /young person's name
- The length of the exclusion
- The reason for the exclusion
- The child /young person's age, gender and ethnicity
- Whether the pupil has a statement of special educational needs
- Whether the pupil is in Local Authority care.