

Suspension and Exclusion Arrangements

Effective December 2023
Review Due Autumn 2025

This sets out the arrangements for school suspensions and permanent exclusions and should be read in conjunction with our Behaviour Policy.

Grounds for Suspension or Permanent Exclusion

The decision to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil must be lawful, reasonable and fair. Schools have a statutory duty not to discriminate against pupils on the basis of protected characteristics, such as disability or race. School will give particular consideration to the fair treatment of pupils from groups who are vulnerable to suspension or permanent exclusion. Disruptive behaviour can be an indication of unmet needs.

Whilst a single, major incident may justify suspension or permanent exclusion, continued failure to respond to other sanctions may also arise. In such cases incidents causing concern and actions taken must be fully and accurately recorded by the Headteacher and staff concerned. If school has a concern about pupil behaviour, we will try and identify if there are any casual factors and intervene early in order to reduce the need for a subsequent suspension. This may lead to a multi-agency assessment that goes beyond pupil's educational need.

Every effort will be made to discuss behaviour problems with parents and to seek co-operation in resolving problems before suspension or permanent exclusion is considered for any child.

The Role of Trustees

- The Trust Board has the responsibility of setting down these general guidelines on standards of discipline and behaviour which reflect the school's ethos of positive behaviour and of reviewing their effectiveness.
- The Trust Board will follow the DFE's 2023 guidelines on exclusion. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>
- The trustees support the Headteacher in carrying out these guidelines.
- The Headteacher has the day-to-day authority to implement the school behaviour and discipline policies but trustees may give advice.

The Role of Parents

We hope to encourage parents to play a positive part in the resolution of any learning and behaviour difficulties. Every effort will be made to enable discussion to take place with the parent especially when exclusion is being contemplated.

Where, despite approaches and the involvement of outside agencies, the school is unable to persuade a parent to visit and discuss problems; the matter will be passed to the Trust Board.

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Suspensions and permanent exclusions

- Only the headteacher (or the acting Headteacher) has the power to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil from school. The Headteacher may suspend a pupil for one or more fixed periods for up to 45 days in any one school year. The Headteacher may also exclude a pupil permanently.
- If the Headteacher suspends a pupil they must inform the parents immediately, giving reasons for the suspension. If it is a permanent exclusion, the Headteacher must make it clear to the parents that they can, if they wish, appeal against the decision to the Trust Board. The school must inform the parents how to make an appeal.
- The Headteacher must inform the Trust Board and Local Authority of:
 - any permanent exclusions
 - any suspensions beyond five days in any one term
 - Suspensions or exclusions which would result in the pupil missing a national curriculum test
- The trust board itself cannot either exclude a pupil or extend the suspension period made by the Headteacher.
- The trust board has a discipline committee which is made up of between three and five members. This committee considers any suspension or exclusion appeals on behalf of the trustees.
- For a permanent exclusion, if the pupil lives outside the Local Authority in which the school is located, the Headteacher will also inform the pupil's 'home authority' of the exclusion and the reason(s) for it without delay.
- When an appeals panel meets to consider a permanent exclusion, they consider the circumstances in which the pupil was excluded, consider any representation by parents and consider whether the pupil should be reinstated.
- If a trust board appeal panel decides that a pupil should be reinstated and not permanently excluded, the Headteacher must comply with this ruling.
- On reintegrating pupils back into school, they will meet with the Head / Deputy at 8.45 am on the first day back at school, with parents/carers, where discussions will take place for management of future behaviour.
- School should set and mark work for pupils during days 1 – 5 of suspension and alternative provision must be arranged from the 6th day.
- You'll get a letter outlining the circumstances of the suspension or exclusion and telling you what to do if you disagree with it.
- If the suspension is for 5 days or fewer, you can still ask trustees to hear your views but they can't overturn the Headteacher's decision.