

Exclusion Policy

Our policy on school suspensions and permanent exclusions is based on statutory guidance. As outlined in our Behaviour For Learning policy, we have a wide range of strategies and support mechanisms in place to try to avoid suspensions and permanent exclusion. However, they are sometimes a necessary part of behaviour management within a school. Below are some of the key principles of the Headteachers powers to use exclusions, but please refer to the full guidance by visiting:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>

- Only the headteacher of a school can suspend or permanently exclude a pupil on disciplinary grounds. A pupil may be suspended for one or more fixed periods (up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year), or permanently excluded.
- A pupil's behaviour outside school can be considered grounds for a suspension or permanent exclusion.
- When establishing the facts in relation to a suspension or permanent exclusion decision the headteacher must apply the civil standard of proof, i.e., 'on the balance of probabilities' it is more likely than not that a fact is true, rather than the criminal standard of 'beyond reasonable doubt'.
- Headteachers should also take the pupil's views into account.

Suspension

A suspension, where a pupil is temporarily removed from the school, is an essential behaviour management tool that should be set out within a school's behaviour policy (please see the Behaviour For Learning Policy).

- A pupil may be suspended for one or more fixed periods (up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year). A suspension does not have to be for a continuous period.
- A suspension may be used to provide a clear signal of what is unacceptable behaviour as part of the school's behaviour policy and show a pupil that their current behaviour is putting them at risk of permanent exclusion.
- 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. Lunchtime

suspensions are counted as half a school day in determining whether a governing board meeting is triggered.

- 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 suspension

Permanent exclusion

A permanent exclusion is when a pupil is no longer allowed to attend a school (unless the pupil is reinstated). 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.

For any permanent exclusion, headteachers should take reasonable steps to ensure that work is set and marked for pupils during the first five school days where the pupil will not be attending alternative provision. Any appropriate referrals to support services or notifying key workers (such as a pupil's social worker) should also be considered.

Reviewed by Governors in October 2024.

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