




Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions Policy

Smawthorne Henry Moore Academy
Accomplish Multi-Academy Trust



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1. Aims

Our school aims to ensure that:

- the Suspensions process is applied fairly and consistently;
- the Suspensions process is understood by governors, staff, parents and pupils; and
- pupils in school are safe and happy.

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on statutory guidance from the Department for Education: [Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units \(PRUs\) in England](#).

It is based on the following legislation, which outline schools’ powers to suspend pupils:

- Section 52 of the Education Act 2002, as amended by the Education Act 2011;
- The School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012; and
- Sections 64-68 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

In addition, the policy is based on:

- Part 7, chapter 2 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#), which looks at parental responsibility for suspended pupils;
- Section 579 of the [Education Act 1996](#), which defines ‘school day’;
- The [Education \(Provision of Full-Time Education for Suspended Pupils\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#), as amended by [The Education \(Provision of Full-Time Education for Suspended Pupils\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2014](#)

3. The decision to suspend

Only the headteacher, or acting headteacher, can suspend a pupil from school. If it is thought that the headteacher is compromised in the decision to suspend, in agreement with the governing body, the deputy headteacher will have the power to undertake the statutory guidance for excluding a pupil. The Local Authority will be informed if this is the case.

A permanent exclusion will be taken as a last resort.

Our school is aware that off-rolling is unlawful. Ofsted defines off-rolling as:

“...the practice of removing a pupil from the school roll without a formal, permanent exclusion or by encouraging a parent to remove their child from the school roll, when the removal is primarily in the interests of the school rather than in the best interests of the pupil.”

We are committed to following all statutory Suspensions procedures to ensure that every child receives an education in a safe and caring environment.

A decision to suspend a pupil will be taken only:

- in response to serious or persistent breaches of the school’s behaviour policy, **and**
- if allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others

Before deciding whether to suspend a pupil, either permanently or for a fixed period, the headteacher will:

- consider all the relevant facts and evidence, including whether the incident(s) leading to the exclusion were provoked;
- allow the pupil to give their version of events; and
- consider if the pupil has special educational needs (SEN).

4. Definition

For the purposes of Suspensions, a school day is defined as any day on which there is a school session. Therefore, INSET or staff training days do not count as a school day.

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 The headteacher

Informing parents

The headteacher will immediately provide the following information, in writing, to the parents of a suspended pupil:

- the reason(s) for the exclusion;
- the length of a fixed-term exclusion or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent;
- information about parents' right to make representations about the exclusion to the governing board and how the pupil may be involved in this;
- where there is a legal requirement for the governing board to meet to consider the reinstatement of a pupil, and that parents have a right to attend a meeting, be represented at a meeting (at their own expense) and to bring a friend.

The headteacher will also notify parents by the end of the afternoon session on the day their child is suspended that for the first 5 school days of an exclusion (or until the start date of any alternative provision where this is earlier), parents are legally required to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours without a good reason. Parents may be given a fixed penalty notice or prosecuted if they fail to do this.

If alternative provision is being arranged, the following information will be included when notifying parents of an exclusion:

- the start date for any provision of full-time education that has been arranged;
- the start and finish times of any such provision, including the times for morning and afternoon sessions, where relevant;
- the address at which the provision will take place;
- any information required by the pupil to identify the person they should report to on the first day.

Where this information on alternative provision is not reasonably ascertainable by the end of the afternoon session, it may be provided in a subsequent notice, but it will be provided no later than 48 hours before the provision is due to start. The only exception to this is where alternative provision is to be provided before the sixth day of an exclusion, in which case the information can be provided with less than 48 hours' notice with parents' consent.

Informing the governing board and local authority

The headteacher will immediately notify the governing board and the local authority (LA) of:

- a permanent exclusion, including when a fixed-period exclusion is made permanent;
- Suspensions which would result in the pupil being suspended for more than 5 school days (or more than 10 lunchtimes) in a term; and
- Suspensions which would result in the pupil missing a public examination.

For a permanent exclusion, if the pupil lives outside the LA in which the school is located, the headteacher will also immediately inform the pupil's 'home authority' of the exclusion and the reason(s) for it without delay.

For all other suspensions, the headteacher will notify the governing board and LA once a term.

5.2 The Governing Body

Responsibility regarding Suspensions is delegated to Mr R Forster, Chair of Governors, c/o, the school. The Governing Body has a duty to consider the reinstatement of a suspended pupil (see section 6).

Within 14 days of receipt of a request, the governing board will provide the secretary of state and the LA with information about any Suspensions in the last 12 months.

For a fixed-period exclusion of more than 5 school days, the governing body will arrange suitable full-time education for the pupil. This provision will begin no later than the sixth day of the exclusion.

5.3 The LA

For permanent Suspensions, the LA is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education to begin no later than the sixth day of the exclusion.

6. Considering the reinstatement of a pupil

The Governing Body (or any three members of the Governing Body) will consider the reinstatement of an suspended pupil within 15 school days of receiving the notice of the exclusion if:

- the exclusion is permanent;
- it is a fixed-term exclusion which would bring the pupil's total number of school days of exclusion to more than 15 in a term; or
- it would result in a pupil missing a public examination.

If requested to do so by parents, the Governing Body will consider the reinstatement of an suspended pupil within 50 school days of receiving notice of the exclusion if the pupil would be suspended from school for more than 5 school days, but less than 15, in a single term.

Where an exclusion would result in a pupil missing a public examination, the Governing Body (or a minimum of three governors) will consider the reinstatement of the pupil before the date of the examination. If this is not practicable, the chair of the governing board (or the vice-chair where the chair is unable to make this consideration) will consider the exclusion independently and decide whether or not to reinstate the pupil.

The Governors can either:

- decline to reinstate the pupil, or
- direct the reinstatement of the pupil immediately, or on a particular date.

In reaching a decision, the Governors will consider whether the exclusion was lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair and whether the headteacher followed their legal duties. They will decide whether or not a fact is true 'on the balance of probabilities', which differs from the criminal standard of 'beyond reasonable doubt', as well as any evidence that was presented in relation to the decision to suspend.

Minutes will be taken of the meeting, and a record of evidence considered kept. The outcome will also be recorded on the pupil's educational record.

The Governing Body (or the nominated clerk to the Governing Body) will notify, in writing, the headteacher, parents and the LA of its decision, along with reasons for its decision, without delay.

Where an exclusion is permanent, the Governing Body's decision will also include the following:

- the fact that it is permanent;
- notice of parents' right to ask for the decision to be reviewed by an independent review panel, and:
 - ~ the date by which an application for an independent review must be made;

- ~ the name and address to whom an application for a review should be submitted;
 - ~ that any application should set out the grounds on which it is being made and that, where appropriate, reference to how the pupil's SEN are considered to be relevant to the exclusion;
 - ~ that, regardless of whether the suspended pupil has recognised SEN, parents have a right to require the LA to appoint an SEN expert to attend the review;
 - ~ details of the role of the SEN expert and that there would be no cost to parents for this appointment;
 - ~ that parents must make clear if they wish for an SEN expert to be appointed in any application for a review; and
 - ~ that parents may, at their own expense, appoint someone to make written and/or oral representations to the panel, and parents may also bring a friend to the review.
- that if parents believe that the exclusion has occurred as a result of discrimination, they may make a claim under the Equality Act 2010 to the first-tier tribunal (special educational needs and disability), in the case of disability discrimination, or the county court, in the case of other forms of discrimination. A claim of discrimination made under these routes should be lodged within 6 months of the date on which the discrimination is alleged to have taken place.

7. An independent review

If parents apply for an independent review, the LA will arrange for an independent panel to review the decision of the governing board not to reinstate a permanently excluded pupil.

Applications for an independent review must be made within 15 school days of notice being given to the parents by the Governing Body of its decision to not reinstate a pupil.

The LA must constitute the panel with either three or five members (as decided by the local authority) representing each of the three categories below. A five member panel must be constituted with two members from each of the categories of school governors and headteachers plus a lay member to chair the panel who has not worked in any school in a paid capacity, disregarding any experience as a school governor or volunteer.

- Current or former school governors (including members of PRU management committees and directors of academy trusts) who have served as a governor for at least 12 consecutive months in the last five years, provided they have not been teachers or headteachers during that time.
- Headteachers or individuals who have been a headteacher within the last five years.

A person may not serve as a member of a review panel if they:

- are a member of the LA or governing body of the excluding school;
- are the headteacher of the excluding school, or have held this position in the last 5 years;
- are an employee of the LA or the governing body of the excluding school (unless they are employed as a headteacher at another school);
- have, or at any time have had, any connection with the LA, school, governing body, parents or pupil, or the incident leading to the exclusion, which might reasonably be taken to raise doubts about their impartiality;

- have not had the required training within the last 2 years (see appendix 1 for what training must cover)

A clerk will be appointed to the panel.

The independent panel will decide one of the following:

- uphold the governing board's decision;
- recommend that the governing body reconsiders reinstatement;
- quash the governing body's decision and direct that they reconsider reinstatement (only when the decision is judged to be flawed).

The panel's decision can be decided by a majority vote. In the case of a tied decision, the chair has the casting vote.

8. School registers

A pupil's name will be removed from the school admissions register if:

- 15 school days have passed since the parents were notified of the exclusion panel's decision to not reinstate the pupil and no application has been made for an independent review panel, or
- the parents have stated in writing that they will not be applying for an independent review panel.

Where an application for an independent review has been made, the governing board will wait until that review has concluded before removing a pupil's name from the register.

Where alternative provision has been made for a suspended pupil and they attend it, code B (education off-site) or code D (dual registration) will be used on the attendance register.

Where suspended pupils are not attending alternative provision, code E (absent) will be used.

9. Returning from a fixed-term suspension

Following a fixed-term exclusion, a re-integration meeting will be held involving the pupil, parents, a member of senior staff and other staff, where appropriate.

The following measures may be implemented when a pupil returns from a fixed-term exclusion:

- agreeing a behaviour contract;
- putting a pupil 'on report'; and
- internal isolation.

10. Monitoring arrangements

Suspensions are monitored and the number of suspensions will be reported back to the headteacher on a regular basis.

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed by the governing body annually (or in the event of any statutory changes) whichever is earlier.

12. Links with other policies

This Suspensions policy is linked to our:

- Behaviour Policy;
- SEN policy and information report.
- Anti-Bullying Policy.