



THE  
DIOCESE OF  
SHEFFIELD  
ACADEMIES  
TRUST

# EXCLUSIONS POLICY

September 2024

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## **Principles of the policy**

In developing a policy for Exclusions, the DSAT mission statement is important:

- To create and sustain challenging, stimulating, nurturing and exciting learning experiences where all children achieve well and are keen to learn.
- To deliver good and outstanding teaching and learning for all pupils every day.
- To offer an inclusive framework for education that opens for our children “life in all its fullness”.
- To empower leadership at all levels to drive improvements so that each school is aspirational and moves to its next level of performance.

The quest for inclusion within this mission means that our policy for Exclusions should be clear and consistently applied. Although there is not a one size fits all approach to exclusions and each case should be considered individually, it is important that attendance at any one of our academies should equate to fair and equitable treatment.

We recognise that some children may need more, or something different from our core offer as mainstream schools and we will strive to ensure that this is provided or made accessible wherever possible. We want all children attending DSAT schools to feel that they belong, regardless of their individual needs and school staff are committed to this endeavour.

DSAT spans three Local Authorities, each with its own guidance. All schools and LAs follow statutory guidance from the DfE upon which this policy is devised. Schools within DSAT will therefore follow this policy which outlines the Trust’s expectations but will also adhere to individual requirements as outlined by their Local Authority. This policy has been devised using materials from each of the LAs represented in the Trust and credit is therefore given to the relevant authorities.

Following the release of the DfE statutory guidance, exclusions formerly referred to as ‘fixed-term’ have become ‘suspensions’. Although still referred to as ‘fixed term exclusions’ in law, this policy will make reference to suspensions throughout.

This policy should be read alongside [Suspension and permanent exclusion guidance September 23](#) which Headteachers and Exclusion Panels must have regard to.

There are references in the DfE guidance to the school’s ‘Governing Body’. This policy is written in line with DSAT’s specific governance arrangements where a Local School Board is in operation but statutory responsibilities of governance sit with the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees have created an Exclusions Panel in place of a school’s Governing Board for consideration of all exclusions and appeals. A member of the school’s Local School Board will attend any panel hearing but they will be chaired by the Chair of the Exclusions Panel (ExP).

**Headteacher** in this document applies equally to Heads of School and Executive Headteachers, including anyone in an acting or interim capacity.

**Parent** in this document includes any person who has parental responsibility (which includes the Local Authority where it has a care order in respect of a child) and any person (for example foster

carer) with whom the student lives or has main care of the child. It is expected that those with parental responsibility will engage with the exclusions process. As DSAT is a Trust comprising of primary schools only, there will never be an excluded person over the age of 18 who will be able to make representation for themselves.

Only the Headteacher (including Heads of School, Executive Headteachers and anyone acting in an interim capacity) can exclude a child from the school. A permanent exclusion will only be taken as a last resort. Any decision to exclude must be lawful (with respect to the legislation related directly to suspensions/exclusions and the Academy's wider legal duties), rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate. Headteachers must formally record and specify the length of the suspension and notify the DSAT Head of Access to education and the Deputy CEO without delay.

### **Unlawful Exclusions/Suspensions**

- Informal or unofficial exclusions such as sending students home to cool off are unlawful, regardless of whether they occur with the agreement of parents/carers.
- If a student is sent home in response to a breach of discipline, even for a short period, this must be recorded as a suspension of 0.5 days or more as appropriate.
- The law does not allow for extending or converting a suspension into a permanent exclusion. A new decision to suspend or exclude to begin immediately after the first suspension ends, can be made in exceptional cases (usually where further evidence has come to light).

It is unlawful to exclude or increase the severity of and a suspension for a non-disciplinary reason, for example:

- Because a child has additional needs or disability that the school feels unable to cater for
- Time needed to arrange a multi-agency, review or planning meeting
- Failure of a parent/carers to meet specific conditions before the child is reinstated.

The use of a part-time timetable can also constitute an unlawful exclusion where the child is not allowed in school for lessons/sessions because of behaviour or special needs. A reduced timetable must be an agreement between the school and the parents/carers and should be issued for a short time only. The school should complete the appropriate paperwork (see appendices) which consists of checklists, risk assessments and time specific agreements which should be signed by the school and parents/carers. Part time timetable agreements should be reviewed regularly, ideally fortnightly, and should be recorded on the school's MIS system. Part time timetables arrangements should be reported to the Local School Board and minuted. All part time timetable arrangements should be reported to the DSAT Head of Access to Education for monitoring and accountability purposes.

### **Behaviour Outside the School**

The behaviour of children outside of school can be considered grounds for suspension or exclusion where it is reasonable and appropriate to do so. The individual schools will make reference to this in their own behaviour policies and will set out what they will do in response to all non-criminal poor behaviour and bullying, including cyber-bullying and on-line harms which occurs anywhere off the school premises.

### **Preventative Measures**

Schools should adopt a range of initial intervention strategies to help pupils manage their behaviour and to reduce the likelihood of suspension and exclusion. This is achieved by helping children understand the behavioural expectations and by providing support to pupils who struggle to meet these expectations.

Schools should be proactive in identifying children with potential behavioural needs as early as possible so that the appropriate support and intervention can be put in place. This may result in identification on SEND that a pupil may have.

Where a pupil has SEN, the 'graduated response' should be used to assess, plan, deliver and review the needs of the pupil and the impact of the support being provided. If the pupil has an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), early contact with the LA would be appropriate and an early annual review might be needed.

Where a school has serious concerns about a pupil's behaviour that impact on wider concerns that education, it should consider whether a multi-agency assessment such as an Early Help assessment is required or whether advice from the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) should be sought to determine if a Social Care Assessment may be required.

Headteachers should consider what extra support might be needed to identify and address the needs of students from groups identified nationally as being at greater risk of exclusion such as those from deprived backgrounds, Looked After Children and children from certain ethnic groups such as Gypsy/Roma, travellers or Black Caribbean.

A Headteacher checklist is provided as an appendix to this policy which outlines some of the preventative measures to be considered prior to suspension/exclusion.

## **SEND**

Headteachers must ensure that they meet their statutory duties under the SEN Code of Practice when making decisions about suspensions and exclusions. They should as far as possible avoid permanently excluding any child with an EHCP. When a school identifies issues with the behaviour of a child with an EHCP which places them at risk of exclusion, they should call an early annual review to consider the child's changing needs.

Where a child has SEN but does not have an EHCP, Headteachers and SENDCos should determine if there is a sufficient level of support in place for the child. If there has been appropriate support in place but the child is still exhibiting challenging behaviour, the school should ascertain if there is sufficient evidence of a graduated response to make a request for an EHCP assessment.

Headteachers must ensure that they have made reasonable adjustments for children with SEN or those with other disabilities before they resort to suspension or exclusion to ensure that they are not in breach of the Equality Act. Action would be considered a breach of the Equality Act if;

discrimination has arisen because of a disability

AND

There has been a failure to make reasonable adjustments

Schools are placed under the 'reasonable adjustment duty' and must take steps that are reasonable to avoid disadvantage. When considering exclusion, headteachers must be sure they believe that they have done this.

In these circumstances, reasonable means making changes to:

- Provision – timetables, support, resources etc
- Physical adjustments to the buildings such as providing access to quiet spaces where possible (not including unfunded changes to building that would require planning and significant work/funding)
- Auxiliary aids and services – referrals, use of ear defenders, the use of additional adults, the use of a laptop etc.

Headteachers should engage proactively with the parents/carers to support the behaviour of pupils with additional needs. As an Academy Trust, DSAT are mindful of the increased safeguarding risks that children with SEND may face and these will be considered in each situation.

### **Alternative Provision (AP) and Direction off site**

Schools must avoid the use of suspension and exclusion if at all possible. Alternatives to permanent exclusion should be explored and this may include the use of Alternative Provision where a child is dual registered (coded as B in the register) and attends another setting for an agreed period of time. Depending on the needs and circumstances of the individual child, off site direction to an AP setting or other maintained school can be on a full-time basis or a combination of part time support.

Through their general management powers as outlined in the DfE statutory guidance on exclusions (pg. 20), headteachers have the power to direct a student to an alternative provision to improve their behaviour. The DfE guidance on Alternative Provision should be followed and any direction off site must be kept under review and be for a determined period of time. Only AP that has been assessed and checked by DSAT should be used as this provision must be registered with Ofsted to ensure the school is meeting its statutory and safeguarding duties.

The length of time a pupil spends in an AP or other setting must be kept under review so that an appropriate reintegration strategy can be planned for. Review meetings should help to determine the effectiveness and appropriateness of the placement. The Headteacher should ensure that parents/carers are invited to the review meeting and that it is at a time that is suitable for all. Outcomes of these reviews should be recorded in writing and retained by the school.

At the end of the placement following the review, there should be a reintegration strategy that is devised to ensure the transition back to the home school is as positive as possible. The views of the parents, AP provider, the LA (if the child has an EHCP) should be considered in determining the best course of action at the end of the placement. The length of time a child spends at another school or AP setting depends on the needs of the child.

### **Managed Moves**

A Managed Move is defined as a formal agreement between two schools, a child and their parents. It allows a student at risk of permanent exclusion to transfer to another school. The move requires the agreement of the child's parents, the headteacher of the child's school, the head teacher of the proposed school, and the LA (if the school being transferred to is a community or voluntary maintained school).

A Managed Move is never an early or first response when a student is failing at school because of behaviour. Rather, it should be considered as part of a measured response to supporting their emotional, social and behavioural needs. It is likely to be a strategy

considered in the later stages of a support plan where there is little or no evidence of success. A Managed Move can often be a fresh start for a student and must be undertaken alongside a high level of support for the student.

Where a pupil has an EHC plan, the relevant statutory duties on the new school and local authority will apply. If the current school is contemplating a managed move, it should contact the authority prior to the managed move. If the local authority, both schools and parents are in agreement that there should be a managed move, the local authority will need to follow the statutory procedures for amending a plan.

If a parent believes that they are being pressured into a managed move or is unhappy with a managed move, they can take up the issue through the Trust's formal complaints procedure.

### **Behaviour Policies**

Each school within DSAT has their own Behaviour Policy which is shared on the school's website. The government supports headteachers in using suspension and exclusion as a sanction when warranted, however the decision to permanently exclude should only be taken:

- in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of behaviour policy
- or
- where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school  
(Paras 11-12)

School behaviour policies and principles should therefore be clearly articulated and well understood by all.

Exclusions must **not** be used for:

- poor academic performance
- lateness or truancy
- one-off breaches of school uniform or rules on appearance
- behaviour of students' parents.

### **Mitigating Circumstances**

Headteachers should take account of any contributing factors that are identified after an incident of poor behaviour has occurred (e.g., where it comes to light that a student has suffered bereavement, has mental health issues or has been subject to bullying).

### **Safeguarding Children**

Headteachers must take account of their legal duty of care when sending a student home following the exclusion or suspension. The headteacher should also give particular consideration to the fair treatment of students from groups who are vulnerable to exclusion. Headteachers should ensure that:

- They are meeting their legal duty of care towards children. Parents/carers must be formally notified of the exclusion/suspension and the child must not be placed at risk by, for example, being sent home without adequate supervision. Best practice

is that parents/carers must be spoken to directly and then come to school to collect the child or agree with the headteacher that another adult will come as their representative

- Child protection issues are taken into account e.g., bearing in mind the child's age and vulnerability.

Headteachers should consider whether any child may be at risk of harm whilst not in school and subsequently make the appropriate referrals to children's social care. Where headteachers believe that suspending a child places them at risk of harm, they should consider whether any other possible alternatives such as internal exclusion are more appropriate.

### **Internal exclusion/suspension**

Academies can still use internal exclusions/suspension. These should be time limited and not used excessively for the same child. Such exclusions are served on the school site and are not treated as a suspension from the Academy. Internal exclusion may be more appropriate in cases where a student is a Child in Care (CiC) who is subject to a Child Protection Plan, or for whom the DSL/headteacher believes formal suspension might pose a safeguarding risk.

All internal exclusions should be recorded on the school MIS system to allow for monitoring and reporting to the Trustees and Local School Boards.

### **CiC / LAC / Previously LAC and children with social workers**

Children in Care / Looked After Children are a group of students who are vulnerable to suspension or exclusion.

The Local Authority (LA) Virtual School Head should be contacted as soon as it becomes likely that there is going to be a suspension or a permanent exclusion. LA protocol should be followed when CiC/LAC pupils are excluded. Exclusion of a child in care is not an equal punishment as that of a child living with their family; the consequence can often be loss of their home, not just their education. Everything possible should be done by all partners to ensure that LAC are never permanently excluded and that suspensions are avoided.

Where a child has a social worker, and they are at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion, the headteacher should inform their social worker.

Where previously looked-after children face the risk of being suspended or permanently excluded, the academy should engage with the child's parents and the academy's Designated Teacher. The academy may also seek the advice of the Virtual School Head on strategies to support the pupil.

### **Gathering Evidence**

When establishing the facts in relation to an exclusion 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.

Evidence could consist of witness statements, photographs, screen shots from social network sites, physical evidence or behaviour incident records. In the case of exclusions for persistent



disruptive behaviour, headteachers should also provide evidence that preventative measures have been used. Headteachers should give children who are able to, the opportunity to present their views before taking the decision to suspend or permanently exclude.

### **Witness Statements**

All witness statements should be attributed, signed and dated, unless the Academy has good reason to wish to protect the anonymity of the witness, in which case, the statement should at least be dated and labelled in a way that allows it to be distinguished from other statements.

The following advice is taken from Witness Statements Preparation Guide, European Human Rights Advocacy Centre, 2008.

*If an adult is writing down the statement of a young person, or asking a student to write their own statement, they must avoid using leading questions. Useful questions might include:*

- *When did the incident take place?*
- *Where was the witness at the time and what was he or she doing?*
- *Who was the witness with and what did the witness see?*
- *What did each person say or do?*

Statements should be factual and in the words of the witness: 'I did this...', and 'I saw...'. Statements could also include photos, maps, sketches or diagrams. It should be explained to the witness or their Parents (depending on the age of the child) that their statement may be used at an Exclusion Panel.

The child or parents' consent does not need to be obtained for a statement (since the lawful basis for processing is legal obligation, not consent). Any reference to other pupils should be anonymised and, if it would identify a student, redacted. The Exclusion Panel should not see the full names either if these are being anonymised. Best practice is for other children to references as Child A, Child B etc. throughout. It is not necessary to redact the excluded pupil's name from documents. All panel members should have the same information and if this is redacted or anonymised then that is how it is presented to all.

### **Police involvement and parallel criminal proceedings**

Headteachers need not postpone taking a decision about an exclusion solely because a police investigation is underway and/or any criminal proceedings may be brought. In such circumstances, headteachers will need to take a decision on the evidence available to them at the time. It may be advisable, where the evidence is not clear-cut or is still coming to light, to first suspend the pupil.

### **Suspensions**

When Headteachers suspend a pupil, they must, without delay, notify parents, DSAT and the local authority. Legislative changes mean that if a pupil has a social worker, or if a pupil is looked- after, the headteacher must now, also without delay after their decision, notify the social worker and/or Virtual School Head, as applicable.

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.

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 fixed-period exclusion 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.

Suspensions should be for the shortest time necessary. Ofsted inspection evidence suggests 1-3 days are often long enough. A longer period of suspension may have adverse educational consequences. A lunch-time suspension should be recorded as 0.5 days. Schools should take reasonable steps to set and mark work for children during the first five days of a suspension. Work that is provided should be accessible and achievable by students outside of the Academy.

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that an Exclusions Panel is convened to consider the suspension:

- Within 15 school days - *when the latest suspension, in conjunction with previous suspensions, will take the student’s total number of days out of the academy above 15 for the term*
- As soon as possible, and prior to the date of the examination or test – *when the suspension will result in the student missing a public exam or national curriculum test*
- Within 50 school days – *when the latest suspension takes the student’s total number of school days out of the academy above five but less than sixteen for the term, and the parents have made representations that their child should be reinstated, or the suspension reviewed.*

In any of these circumstances the headteacher must also ensure that the paperwork is sent out to all parties at least five school days prior to the panel meeting.

### **Cancelling exclusions**

The headteacher may cancel an exclusion that has already begun, but this should only be done where it has not yet been reviewed by the Exclusions Panel. Where an exclusion is cancelled, then:

- Parents, DSAT, and the LA should be notified without delay and, if relevant, the social worker and Virtual School Head and the reason for the cancellation should be made clear. The Exclusions Panel meeting ceases to be required;
- Parents should be offered the opportunity to meet with the headteacher to discuss the circumstances that led to the exclusion being cancelled;
- The pupil should be allowed back into school without delay. Any days spent out of school as a result of any exclusion, prior to the cancellation will count towards the maximum of 45 school days permitted in any school year.

### **Permanent Exclusions**

A decision to exclude a student permanently should only be taken:

- by the headteacher (or Head of School/Acting/Interim)

- in response to serious **or** persistent breaches of the Academy's behaviour policy; **and**
- where allowing the student to remain in the Academy would seriously harm the education **or** welfare of the students or others in the Academy

While current DfE statutory guidance provides no examples of what a serious breach of the Academy's behaviour policy might be, Headteachers might reasonably consider permanent exclusion in the following cases:

- serious actual or threatened violence against another student or member of staff
- sexual abuse or assault
- supplying an illegal drug
- carrying an offensive weapon

When headteachers permanently exclude a pupil, they must, without delay, notify parents, the local authority and the "home" authority if the student lives outside the LA area in which the academy is located. Legislative changes mean that if a pupil has a social worker, or if a pupil is looked-after, the Headteacher must now, also without delay after their decision, notify the social worker and/or Virtual School Head, as applicable.

Headteachers can take advice from the DSAT Head of Access to Education regarding permanent exclusions.

## **Procedures following a suspension or permanent exclusion**

### **Informing parents**

The headteacher must immediately notify parents of the period of a suspension and the reasons for it, their legal responsibilities during the first five days of their child's exclusion and follow up in writing with:

- the reasons for the exclusion;
- the period of a suspension or, the fact that it is permanent;
- parents' right to make representations about the exclusion to the Exclusion Panel and how the student may be involved in this;
- how any representations should be made to the Exclusion Panel, depending on the length of the suspension
- where the Exclusion Panel is legally required to consider the exclusion, that parents have a right to attend a meeting, be represented at this meeting (at their own expense) and to bring a friend.

The headteacher must inform parents of the days on which they must ensure that the child is not present in a public place at any time during school hours, for the first 5 days of any suspension/exclusion and that a Penalty Notice can be issued if they fail to ensure this.

From the sixth day of a suspension, schools are required to arrange alternative full-time education for the child.

*'Where a child receives consecutive suspensions, these are regarded as a cumulative period of suspension for the purposes of this duty. This means that if a child has more than five consecutive school days of suspension, then education must be arranged for the sixth school*

*day of suspension, regardless of whether this is as a result of one decision to suspend the pupil for the full period or multiple decisions to suspend the pupil for several periods in a row.'*

(DfE guidance Part six, paragraph 87)

Local Authorities are required to arrange full-time education from the sixth day of a permanent exclusion.

If alternative provision is being arranged by the school, then the following information must be included in the letter to parents: the address, contact name to whom the student should report; start and finish date and times of any such full-time education, including the times for morning and afternoon sessions where relevant (where it can reasonably be found out within the timescale).

Parents must be informed where a further suspension or permanent exclusion has been issued and the same information provided (see appendix for sample letters).

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the necessary paperwork relating to any suspension or exclusion is prepared as soon as possible and in any event that it is ready to be sent to the exclusion panel five school days prior to the hearing.

### **Exclusions Panel**

The decision as to whether to reinstate a suspended or excluded student rests with the Exclusion Panel. Within DSAT schools, the Exclusion Panel consists of three people:

- The Chair of the Trust Exclusion Panel - an Executive Headteacher
- A senior leader from another DSAT school (or from another school outside DSAT if appropriate)
- A Local School Board Member.

### **Parent/carers rights to make representations to the Exclusions Panel**

**A. If the total number of days suspension in any one term are below five** parents/carers have the right to make representations to the Exclusions Panel who will consider these, but the Exclusions Panel does **not** have the authority to overturn the suspension.

**B. If the total number of days suspension in any one term is above 5 but below 15** parents/carers have the right to request a Exclusions Panel Hearing. This meeting will be held within 50 days of receiving the suspension notice.

**C. If the total number of days suspension in any one term are above 15** the Exclusions Panel **must** convene a statutory meeting to consider reinstatement. A representative of the local authority may attend.

All suspension letters will clearly state the number of days the child has been suspended for in each term to ensure that a panel hearing is convened when required.

## **Preparing in advance of Exclusion Panel meetings**

Panel members should:

- not discuss the suspension or permanent exclusion with any party outside the meeting;
- ask for any written evidence in advance of the meeting, including witness statements and other relevant information held by the school such as those relating to a pupil's SEN and the pupil's academy record;
- where possible, circulate any written evidence and information, including a list of those who will be present, to all parties at least five school days in advance of the meeting;
- allow parents and the pupil to be accompanied by a friend or representative (where a pupil under 18 is to be invited as a witness, the Exclusions Panel should first seek parental consent);
- invite the pupil's social worker, if they have one, and if the pupil is LAC, the Virtual School Head (VSH) to attend;
- comply with their duty to make reasonable adjustments for people who use the academy and consider what reasonable adjustments should be made to support the attendance and contribution of parties at the meeting (for example where a parent or pupil has a disability with mobility or communication that has an impact upon their ability to attend the meeting or to make representations); and
- identify the steps they will take to enable and encourage the suspended or permanently excluded pupil to attend the meeting and speak on their behalf (such as providing accessible information or allowing them to bring a friend), taking into account the pupil's age and understanding; or how the suspended or permanently excluded pupil may feed in their views by other means if attending the meeting is not possible.

## **Considering reinstatement of a student**

The Exclusions Panel has a duty to consider the reinstatement of an excluded student within 15 school days of receiving the notice of the exclusion if:

- The exclusion is permanent
- It is a suspension which would bring the student's total number of school days of suspension to more than 15 in a term
- It would result in a student missing a public examination

The requirements are different for suspensions where a pupil would be suspended for more than five but less than 15 school days in the term. In this case, if the parents make representations, the Exclusions Panel must consider within 50 school days of receiving the notice of exclusion whether the suspended pupil should be reinstated. In the absence of any representations from the parents, the Exclusions Panel is not required to meet and cannot direct the reinstatement of the pupil

Where an exclusion would result in a student missing a public examination, the Exclusions Panel will consider the reinstatement of the student before the date of the examination. If this is not practicable, the Chairperson of the Exclusions Panel will consider the suspension alone and decide whether or not to reinstate the student for the public examination.

**The Exclusions Panel can decide to:**

- Decline to reinstate the student, or
- Direct the reinstatement of the student immediately, or on a particular date

In reaching a decision, the Exclusions Panel will consider whether the exclusion or suspension was lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair and whether the headteacher followed their legal duties and any evidence that was presented to the Panel in relation to the decision to exclude.

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'.

The Exclusions Panel must consider the interests and circumstances of the excluded pupil, including the circumstances in which the pupil was excluded, and have regard to the interests of other pupils and people working at the school.

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

The Chair of the Exclusions Panel will notify, in writing, the headteacher, parents and the LA (including the LA in which the student resides, if different to the LA in which the Academy is located) of its decision, along with reasons for its decision, without delay.

Where an exclusion is permanent, the Exclusions Panel'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 (IRP), and:
  1. The date by which an application for an independent review must be made
  2. The name and address to whom an application for a review (and any written evidence) should be submitted
  3. That any application should set out the grounds on which it is being made and that, where appropriate, reference to how the student's SEN are considered to be relevant to the exclusion
  4. That, regardless of whether the excluded student has recognised SEN, parents have a right to require DSAT to appoint an SEN expert to attend the IRP
  5. Details of the role of the SEN expert and that there would be no cost to parents for this appointment
  6. That parents must make clear if they wish for an SEN expert to be appointed in any application for a review
  7. 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 unlawful 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

The following parties must be invited to a meeting of the Exclusion panel and be allowed to

make representations or share information:

- parents (and, where requested, a representative or friend).
- the headteacher
- the child's social worker if the pupil has one; and
- the Virtual School Headteacher if the child is LAC.

### **The Independent Review (IRP)**

If parents apply for an independent review, the Academy will arrange for an independent panel to review the decision of the Exclusion Panel not to reinstate a permanently excluded student.

Applications for an IRP of a decision to not reinstate a student by the Exclusion Panel must be made within 15 school days of notice being given to the parents of the Exclusion Panel's decision. If an IRP is not requested but a Tribunal claim is made for disability discrimination, the parents have an additional 15 school days from the date of the Tribunal's decision.

The IRP must meet within 15 school days of the notice from parents requesting an IRP be arranged.

A panel of three or five members will be constituted in accordance with the regulations and Exclusions Statutory Guidance.

The IRP will decide one of the following, to:

- Uphold the Exclusions Panel's decision;
- Recommend that the Exclusions Panel reconsider reinstatement; or
- Quash the Exclusion Panel's decision and direct that the student be reinstated (only when the decision is judged to be flawed on the basis that it is irrational, illegal or that there were significant procedural improprieties in the Exclusions Panel meeting)

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

The IRP should be attended by a representative of the Exclusion Panel. The need for a representative of the Exclusions Panel is because the headteacher cannot present evidence on behalf of the Panel. The decision-making function of the Exclusions Panel must have taken place without the headteacher being present as otherwise this would be a breach of the exclusions procedure. Therefore, it is necessary for an Exclusions Panel representative to be present to outline how and why the Exclusions Panel's decision was made.

Parents must be advised of the right to require DSAT to appoint an SEN expert to advise the IRP, regardless of whether the permanently excluded student has recognised SEN.

### **School Registers**

A child's name may be removed from the register if:

- 15 school days have passed since the parents were notified of the Exclusion Panel's decision to not reinstate the student and no application has been made for an IRP, or
- The parents have stated in writing that they will not be applying for an IRP

Where an application for an IRP has been made, the schools will wait until that review (and, if relevant, any reconsideration) has concluded before removing a student's name from the register.

Where alternative provision has been made for an excluded student and they attend it, code B (education off-site, if the provision is an approved educational activity that does not involve the pupil being registered at any other school) or code D (dual registration) will be used on the attendance register. Where excluded students are not attending alternative provision, code E (excluded) will be used.

### **Monitoring arrangements**

The monitoring of exclusions is undertaken more regularly, at least each half term, by the DSAT Head of Access to Education, through the use of the Trust's integrated MIS.

**It is vital that headteachers ensure all records of suspension or permanent exclusions are entered onto Arbor (MIS) within 24 hours of the exclusion.**

### **Challenge and support from the Trust**

Through the school improvement work of the Deputy CEO and minutes from the Local School Board meetings, Trustees will be made aware of all suspensions and exclusions. The Deputy CEO will consider:

- instances where pupils receive repeat suspensions
- interventions in place to support pupils at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion
- rolling average of permanent exclusions to ensure they are used very as a last resort
- timing of moves and permanent exclusions, and whether there are any patterns including any indications which may highlight where policies or support are not working
- the characteristics of children who are suspended or permanently excluded, removed from roll, or educated off site, such as the proportion who have SEND, whether they are supported by social care and have needed social workers, and their ethnic background. This should include considering whether any groups are permanently excluded or moving out of school at a higher rate than others, discussing why this is and whether any changes to practice are required to address disparities
- whether the placements of pupils directed off site into AP are reviewed at sufficient intervals to provide assurance the education is achieving its objectives and that the pupils are benefiting from it.

### **Statutory requirements**

The DfE exclusion statutory guidance, "Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement", September 2023.

Statutory guidance means that Academies should follow this guidance, unless there is good reason not to in a particular case. It is based on the following legislation, which outline schools' powers to exclude students:



- Section 51A of the [Education Act 2002](#),
- [The School Discipline \(Student exclusions and Reviews\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#)

In addition, the policy is based on:

- Part 7, chapter 2 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#), which looks at parental responsibility for excluded students
- Section 579 of the [Education Act 1996](#), which defines 'school day'
- The [Education \(Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Students\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#), as amended by [The Education \(Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Students\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2014](#)
- SEND Code of Practice January 2015
- The Education Act 1996

This policy will be reviewed annually.

## Appendices - Head teacher checklist for suspension

Exclusion Guidance – Head Teacher’s Checklist	Yes	No
On the balance of probabilities, has the pupil committed the alleged offence?		
Has there been a serious breach (one off) or breaches of the school behaviour policy?		
Does allowing the pupil to remain in school seriously harm their education or health, safety and welfare, or that of others such as staff or other pupils in the school?		
Is this a ‘last resort’ decision following a wide range of strategies implemented from DfE’s ‘Behaviour in Schools’ guidance that have been deemed unsuccessful?		
Is suspension/exclusion the most appropriate response?		
Is the length of suspension/exclusion considered appropriate and proportionate considering the level and nature of the incident?		
Is this suspension for the shortest possible time?		
Has there been involvement from external services, Educational Psychologist, school support staff, and other agencies/services with a relevant, personalised support programme developed and implemented?		
Has advice from services been implemented using an assess, plan, do, review approach?		
Have alternatives to suspension/exclusion been considered? (e.g., restorative approaches, mediation, internal exclusion, alternative provision, managed move and/or an off-site direction)		
<p>Factors to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has the suspension/exclusion been considered ‘in the heat of the moment’?</li> <li>• Has a thorough investigation been carried out?</li> <li>• Has the evidence been reviewed with full consideration being given towards policies and discrimination?</li> <li>• Has the pupil’s version of events been heard - encouraged / considered / recorded?</li> <li>• Are there any mitigating circumstances or is any provocation evident (bullying, harassment etc)?</li> <li>• Is the child looked after by the LA?</li> <li>• Does the child have an EHC plan?</li> <li>• Does the pupil have a social worker? Have they been communicated to and involved in planning?</li> </ul>		
<b>Special Considerations</b>		
<p>Have issues of SEN or disability been considered and reasonable adjustments been made?</p> <p>See Equality Act 2010</p>		

Is this pupil a young carer?		
Is this pupil a Looked after Child?		
In the case of a looked after child, have you contacted the appropriate Designated Teacher (statutory role) in your school, the pupil's social worker and the Virtual School Head to discuss?		
Is the Virtual School Team involved in supporting this pupil?		
Has the governor for looked after children been informed/involved?		
Is this pupil subject to a Child in Need Plan or a Child Protection Plan?		
Where pupil has a social worker, have they been notified and invited to be involved in decisions made?		
Is there an Early Help Assessment and Support Plan in place?		
Have regular Team around the Family (TAF) meetings taken place to review the plan?		
If necessary, have you referred to Social Care? (MASH)		

**Headteacher Checklist – Permanent Exclusion**

Investigation & Evidence Gathering		
1	Has sufficient evidence been gathered?	
2	Do you have witness statements from any victims (if relevant)? Are they signed and dated? Other children referenced as 'Child A, Child B' etc. throughout?	
3	Do you have witness statements from any staff and students who witnessed the incident (if relevant)? Are they signed and dated?	
4	If you have not taken statements from all witnesses, do you have a rationale for that?	
5	Do you have a statement from the excluded pupil? Is it signed and dated?	
6	If not, was the excluded pupil given sufficient opportunity to give a statement and do you have evidence of this? For example, emails requesting a statement, asking the parents to submit one on the pupil's behalf, giving clear timeframe to do so.	
7	Do the statements corroborate?	
8	If not, have you decided which version you believe on the balance of probabilities and why?	
9	Did the academy follow its behaviour policy and any other relevant policies (if relevant)?	
10	Were correct academy procedures followed when dealing with the incident/behaviour? For example, de-escalation techniques, physical restraint.	
11	Do you believe that the pupil was clear about the academy expectations as set out in the behaviour policy and the potential outcomes?	
12	Do you have a record of strategies and sanctions the academy tried before the exclusion, including internal support and outside agency support? For example, tutor group change, lesson/timetable changes, regular check ins with a member of staff, restorative justice, anger management sessions, counselling, alternative provision, internal suspension, fixed period suspension managed moves.	
13	Have the parents been involved in (and kept informed about) these strategies and sanctions? Collect any records of meetings or contact with parents.	

14	Do you think the academy exhausted all support strategies and interventions for the pupil?	
15	Does the pupil have any identified SEND? a. If yes, does the pupil have an EHCP in place and has appropriate provision been put in place? b. In no, might the pupil have SEND that to date have not been recognised? If so, have any steps been taken to assess?	
16	Have you complied with statutory duties in relation to SEN when administering the exclusion process (if relevant)?	
17	Are there any extenuating circumstances that might reasonably mitigate exclusion for the pupil? For example, family situation, mental health concerns, bereavement, bullying.	
18	Have you included any extenuating circumstances in your considerations?	
19	If you discounted any extenuating circumstances, do you have a rationale for this?	
Making the decision		
20	Do you believe, based on the balance of probabilities, that the pupil has done what is alleged?	
21	Was there a serious breach or persistent breaches of the academy's behaviour policy?	
22	Will allowing the pupil to remain in the academy seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the academy?	
23	Do you have a rationale for your answers to questions 20 to 22?	
24	Will this exclusion result in the pupil missing a public exam or National Curriculum test?	
25	Do you consider that the decision to exclude this pupil is lawful, rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate? This judgement will be based on your responses to all the previous questions.	

Checks		
26	Have you (or a colleague) checked the exclusion paperwork for accuracy before issuing?	
Informing parties about the exclusion		
27	Inform the parents immediately, ideally initially in person or by telephone	
28	Send letter to parents	
29	<b>Exclusion resulting in the pupil missing a public exam or National Curriculum test</b> - notify chair, clerk and LA immediately. Clerk will arrange a panel to review the decision.	
30	Notify chair, clerk and LA immediately. Clerk will arrange a panel to review the decision.	
Paperwork for panel (if panel hearing required)		
31	Are statements signed and dated?	
32	Are photographs or other evidence labelled and dated?	
33	Are names anonymous, identifying letters to protect the identity of all other individuals?	
34	Do you have witness statements from any victims (if relevant)? Are they signed and dated?	

## **Suspension letters – up to 5, 6-15, More than 15**

SUSPENSIONS OF 5 DAYS OR LESS (including lunchtime suspensions) AND WHERE A PUBLIC EXAMINATION WOULD NOT BE MISSED

Dear [Parent/Carer]

[Pupil's Name, Date of Birth and Year Group]

I regret to inform you of my decision to suspend [Pupil's Name] for a period of [x day(s)]. While this suspension is in force, I would inform you that you are responsible for ensuring [Pupil's Name] does not come on to school premises unless invited by me. Should [Pupil's Name] come onto school premises I would view this as a serious breach of the legal process.

(Delete paragraph as necessary – if the pupil is due to have an assessment) **However, as you are aware [Pupil Name] is due to have an assessment** (specify type of assessment). **The assessment will go ahead on [specify date, time, place, staff contact and instructions for arrival]**

**The suspension [begins/began] at [time] on [date] and ends at [time] on [date]. [Pupil's Name] should return to school on [date & time].**

**The reason for my decision is** (give a description of the incident, including **date and time of incident**, ensuring that the **specific reason for suspension** is understood).

(Delete as necessary) **Due to the serious nature of the incident, I will continue to investigate and gather information during the suspension period to ensure the matter has been dealt with appropriately. Please note that should additional evidence/information come to light during the investigation, which I was not in possession of at the time of making the decision to suspend [Pupil's Name], I will be taking this new evidence/information into account. This may result in the permanent exclusion of [Pupil's Name]**

(Delete as necessary - if other incidents contribute to this decision) **In making this decision, I am taking other incidents of previous misbehaviour into account.**

**School will set work for [Pupil's Name] to be completed during the suspension period** (detail the **arrangements** for this). **You are responsible for ensuring that the completed work is returned to school promptly for marking.**

(Delete paragraph as necessary - if the pupil is eligible for FSM) **As [Pupil Name] is entitled to free school meals you can request a packed lunch from school by contacting [Staff Name and contact]. Although the school is obliged to provide a meal it is your responsibility to request and collect it.**

(Delete paragraph as necessary- if pupil has an allocated social worker). **As [Pupil Name] has an allocated social worker, I have also informed them of this suspension.**

(Delete paragraph as necessary - if pupil is a Looked after Child) **As [Pupil Name] is a Looked after Child, I have also informed the virtual school of this suspension.**

(Delete paragraph as necessary - if pupil is NOT compulsory school age) **During a suspension, parents are legally required to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification; parents may be given a fixed penalty notice or prosecuted if they fail to comply.**

It is therefore your legal responsibility to ensure [Pupil's Name] is supervised appropriately during this suspension.

(The next paragraph may be used if the head teacher chooses to hold a reintegration meeting. There is no legal requirement to hold a reintegration meeting, however, all schools should have a reintegration strategy in place following a period of suspension).

You and [Pupil's Name] are requested to attend a reintegration meeting with \*me [\*alternatively, specify the name of another staff member] at [place] on [date] at [time]. If that is not convenient, please contact the school before your child is due to return to arrange a suitable alternative date and time. The purpose of the reintegration meeting is to discuss how best your child's return to school can be supported. Failure to attend a reintegration meeting could be a factor considered by a magistrates' court, for instance in circumstances such as non-school attendance.

Should you wish to discuss this matter with the Local Authority please contact [Enter details of the LA Exclusions Contact] Alternatively you may wish to contact the [Coram Children's Legal Centre](#) Advice line on 0300 3305485, or at [www.childrenslegalcentre.com](http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com)

(Delete paragraph as necessary – SEN register) As [Pupil's Name] [is on the SEN register/has an Education, Health and Care Plan], you can also obtain impartial information, advice and support about matters relating to special educational needs and disabilities including education, health and social care issues from [Enter contact details of LA SENDIASS].

#### Your rights to make representations to the Exclusions Panel

- A. If the total number of days suspension in any one term are below five you have the right to make representations to the Exclusions Panel who will consider these, but the Exclusions Panel does **not** have the authority to overturn the suspension.
- B. If the total number of days suspension in any one term is above 5 but below 15 you have the right to request an Exclusions Panel Hearing. This meeting will be held within 50 days of you receiving the suspension notice.
- C. If the total number of days suspension in any one term are above 15 the Exclusions Panel **must** convene a statutory meeting to consider reinstatement. A representative of the local authority may attend.

Number of days [Pupil's Name] has been suspended this (delete as necessary) Autumn/Spring/Summer term [year] is [?] days.

If you wish to make representations, please contact [Name and contact details of Clerk to the Local School Board]

You have the right to see your child's school record however, due to confidentiality restrictions, you must submit in writing a request to obtain copies of this file. There may be a charge for photocopying.

You should also be aware that if you think the suspension relates to a disability your child has, and you think disability discrimination has occurred, you have the right to appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal. The address to which appeals should be sent is:



HM Courts & Tribunals Service  
First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability)  
1st Floor, Darlington Magistrates Court  
Parkgate  
Darlington  
DL1 1RU  
Telephone: 01325 289350 Fax: 0870 7394017  
By Email: [sendistqueries@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:sendistqueries@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk)  
Website: <https://www.gov.uk/courts-tribunals/first-tier-tribunal-special-educational-needs-and-disability>

**Making a claim would not affect your right to make representations to the Exclusions Panel.**

**Other sources of support that can be accessed:**

ACE education **runs a limited advice line service** on 0300 0115 142 on Monday to Wednesday from 10 am to 1 pm during term time. **Information can be found on the website:** <http://www.ace-ed.org.uk/>.

The National Autistic Society **Schools Exclusion Service (England)** can be contacted on 0808 800 4002 or through: <http://www.autism.org.uk/services/helplines/school-exclusions.aspx>

Independent Parental Special Education Advice <http://www.ipsea.org.uk/>

The Department for Education statutory guidance on exclusions **can be found at** <https://www.gov.uk/topic/schools-colleges-childrens-services/school-behaviour-attendance>.

Yours Sincerely

[Name]

Head Teacher/HoS

**Copies:** Chair of the Local School Board  
Clerk to the Local School Board  
Head of DSAT Access to Education  
Local Authority Exclusion Team  
[Insert as required: Pupil's social worker, Education Health and Care Assessment Team, Virtual School etc.]  
Pupil's file

SUSPENSION OF ABOVE 5 DAYS (including lunchtime suspensions) AND WHERE A PUBLIC EXAMINATION WOULD NOT BE MISSED

Dear [Parent/Carer]

[Pupil's Name, Date of Birth and Year Group]

I regret to inform you of my decision to suspend [Pupil's Name] for a period of [xx day(s)]. While this suspension is in force, I would inform you that you are responsible for ensuring [Pupil's Name] does not come on to school premises unless invited by me. Should this occur, I would view this as a serious breach of the legal process.

(Delete paragraph as necessary – if the pupil is due to have an assessment) However, as you are aware [Pupil Name] is due to have an assessment (specify type of assessment). The assessment will go ahead on [specify date, time, place, staff contact and instructions for arrival]

The suspension [begins/began] at [time] on [date] and ends at [time] on [date]. [Pupil's Name] should return to school on [date & time].

The reason for my decision is (give a description of the incident, including date and time of incident, ensuring that the specific reason for suspension is understood).

(Delete as necessary) Due to the serious nature of the incident, I will continue to investigate and gather information during the suspension period to ensure the matter has been dealt with appropriately. Please note that should additional evidence/information come to light during the investigation, which I was not in possession of at the time of making the decision to suspend [Pupil's Name], I will be taking this new evidence/information into account. This may result in the permanent exclusion of [Pupil's Name]

(Delete as necessary - if other incidents contribute to this decision) In making this decision, I am taking other incidents of previous misbehaviour into account.

School will set work for [Pupil's Name] to be completed during the first [\*x day(s)] of this suspension (\*specify the number as appropriate) [detail the arrangements for this]. You are responsible for ensuring that the completed work is returned to school promptly for marking.

(Delete paragraph as necessary - if the pupil is eligible for FSM) As [Pupil Name] is entitled to free school meals you can request a packed lunch from school by contacting [Staff Name and contact]. Although the school is obliged to provide a meal it is your responsibility to request and collect it.

(Delete paragraph as necessary- if pupil has an allocated social worker). As [Pupil Name] has an allocated social worker, I have also informed them of this suspension.

(Delete paragraph as necessary - if pupil is a Looked after Child) As [Pupil Name] is a Looked after Child, I have also informed the virtual school of this suspension.

(Delete paragraph if pupil is NOT compulsory school age) During suspension parents are legally required to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification; parents may be given a fixed penalty notice or prosecuted if they fail to comply. It is therefore your legal responsibility to ensure [Pupil's Name] is supervised appropriately during this suspension.

(Delete paragraph if pupil is NOT compulsory school age) **From the 6<sup>th</sup> (or earlier if appropriate) school day of this suspension [specify date] until the expiry of the suspension [specify date] we will provide suitable full-time education. On [date] [Pupil's Name] should attend at [name and address of the alternative provider if not the home school] at [start time] and report to [staff member's name].**

[If applicable specify [transport arrangements/responsibilities] from home to the alternative provider]

(If arrangements, for suitable full-time education are not available at time of writing the suspension letter, inform parent/carer that they will be notified by a further letter).

(The next paragraph may be used if the head teacher chooses to hold a reintegration meeting. There is no legal requirement to hold a reintegration meeting, however, all schools should have a reintegration strategy in place following a period of suspension).

**You and [Pupil's Name] are requested to attend a reintegration meeting with \*me [\*alternatively, specify the name of another staff member] at [place] on [date] at [time]. If that is not convenient, please contact the school before your child is due to return to arrange a suitable alternative date and time. The purpose of the reintegration meeting is to discuss how best your child's return to school can be supported. Failure to attend a reintegration meeting could be a factor considered by a magistrates' court, for instance in circumstances such as non-school attendance.**

**Should you wish to discuss this matter with the Local Authority please contact [Enter details of LA Exclusions contact]. Alternatively, you may wish to contact the [Coram Children's Legal Centre](#) Advice line on 0300 3305485, or at [www.childrenslegalcentre.com](http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com)**

(Delete paragraph as necessary – SEN register) **As [Pupil's Name] [is on the SEN register/has an Education, Health and Care Plan], you can also obtain impartial information, advice and support about matters relating to special educational needs and disabilities including education, health and social care issues from [Enter contact details of LA SENDIASS].**

### **Your rights to make representations to the Exclusions Panel**

- A. If the total number of days suspension in any one term are below five** you have the right to make representations to the Exclusions Panel who will consider these, but the Exclusions Panel does **not** have the authority to overturn the suspension.
- B. If the total number of days suspension in any one term is above 5 but below 15** you have the right to request an Exclusions Panel Hearing. This meeting will be held within 50 days of you receiving the suspension notice.
- C. If the total number of days suspension in any one term are above 15** the Exclusions Panel **must** convene a statutory meeting to consider reinstatement. A representative of the local authority may attend.

**Number of days [Pupil's Name] has been suspended this (delete as necessary) Autumn/Spring/Summer term [year] is [?] days.**

If you wish to make representations, please contact [[Name and contact details of Clerk to Local School Board](#)]

**You have the right to see your child's school record however, due to confidentiality restrictions, you must submit in writing a request to obtain copies of this file. There may be a charge for photocopying.**

**You should also be aware that if you think the suspension relates to a disability your child has, and you think disability discrimination has occurred, you have the right to appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal. The address to which appeals should be sent is:**

HM Courts & Tribunals Service  
 First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability)  
 1st Floor, Darlington Magistrates Court  
 Parkgate  
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 Telephone: 01325 289350 Fax: 0870 7394017  
 By Email: [sendistqueries@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:sendistqueries@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk)  
 Website: <https://www.gov.uk/courts-tribunals/first-tier-tribunal-special-educational-needs-and-disability>

**Making a claim would not affect your right to make representations to the Exclusions Panel.**

**Other sources of support that can be accessed:**

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Independent Parental Special Education Advice <http://www.ipsea.org.uk/>

The Department for Education statutory guidance on exclusions **can be found at** <https://www.gov.uk/topic/schools-colleges-childrens-services/school-behaviour-attendance>.

**Yours Sincerely**

[Name]

**Head Teacher/HoS**

**Copies:** Chair of the Local School Board  
 Clerk to the Local School Board  
 DSAT Head of Educational Access  
 Local Authority Exclusion Team  
 [Insert as required: Pupil's social worker, Education Health and Care Assessment Team, Virtual School etc.]  
 Pupil's file

## A SUSPENSION THAT HAS RESULTED IN MORE THAN 15 SCHOOL DAYS SUSPENSION IN ONE TERM

Dear [Parent/Carer]

[Pupil's Name, Date of Birth and Year Group]

I regret to inform you of my decision to suspend [Pupil's Name] for a period of [xx day(s)]. While this suspension is in force, I would inform you that you are responsible for ensuring that [Pupil's Name] does not come on to school premises unless invited by me. Should this occur, I would view this as a serious breach of the legal process.

(Delete paragraph as necessary – if the pupil is due to have an assessment) **However, as you are aware [Pupil Name] is due to have an assessment** (specify type of assessment). **The assessment will go ahead on [specify date, time, place, staff contact and instructions for arrival].**

**The suspension [begins/began] at [time] on [date] and ends at [time] on [date]. [Pupil's Name] should return to school on [date & time].**

**The reason for my decision is** (give a description of the incident, including **date and time of incident**, ensuring that the **specific reason for suspension** is understood).

(Delete as necessary) **Due to the serious nature of the incident, I will continue to investigate and gather information during the suspension period to ensure the matter has been dealt with appropriately. Please note that should additional evidence/information come to light during the investigation, which I was not in possession of at the time of making the decision to suspend [Pupil's Name], I will be taking this new evidence/information into account. This may result in the permanent exclusion of [Pupil's Name]**

(Delete as necessary - if other incidents contribute to this decision) **In making this decision, I am taking other incidents of previous misbehaviour into account.**

**School will set work for [Pupil's Name] to be completed during the first [X days] of this suspension** (detail the **arrangements** for this). **You are responsible for ensuring that the completed work is returned to school promptly for marking.**

(Delete paragraph as necessary - if the pupil is eligible for FSM) **As [Pupil Name] is entitled to free school meals you can request a packed lunch from school by contacting [Staff Name and contact]. Although the school is obliged to provide a meal it is your responsibility to request and collect it.**

(Delete paragraph as necessary- if pupil has an allocated social worker). **As [Pupil Name] has an allocated social worker, I have also informed them of this suspension.**

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(Delete paragraph if pupil is NOT compulsory school age) **During a suspension, parents are legally required to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification; parents may be given a fixed penalty notice or prosecuted if they fail to comply. It is therefore your legal responsibility to ensure [Pupil's Name] is supervised appropriately during this suspension.**

(Delete paragraph as necessary or if pupil is NOT compulsory school age) **From the 6<sup>th</sup> school day of this suspension [specify date] until the expiry of the suspension [specify date] school will provide suitable**

**full-time education. On [date] [Pupil's Name] should attend at [name and address of the alternative provider if not the home school] at [start time] and report to [staff member's name].**

[If applicable — specify [transport arrangements/responsibilities](#) from home to the alternative provider]

(If arrangements, for suitable full-time education are not available at time of writing the suspension letter, inform parent/carer that they will be notified by a further letter).

[The next paragraph may be used if the head teacher chooses to hold a reintegration meeting. There is no legal requirement to hold a reintegration meeting, however, schools should have a reintegration strategy in place following a period of suspension.]

**You and [Pupil's Name] are requested to attend a reintegration meeting with \*me [\*alternatively, specify the name of another staff member] at [place] on [date] at [time]. If that is not convenient, please contact the school before your child is due to return to arrange a suitable alternative date and time. The purpose of the reintegration meeting is to discuss how best your child's return to school can be supported. Failure to attend a reintegration meeting may be a factor considered by a magistrates' court, for instance in circumstances such as non-school attendance.**

**As this suspension brings the total number of suspension days this term to over 15, the Exclusions Panel must meet to consider the [suspension\[s\]](#). The latest date on which the Exclusions Panel can meet is [date] (no later than 15 school days from the date the Exclusions Panel is notified).**

**At the review meeting you may make representations to the Exclusions Panel.**

**You will, whether you choose to make representations or not, be notified by the Clerk to the Local School Board of the time, date and location of the meeting. Please inform [[contact name and details](#)] if you wish to be accompanied by a friend or representative. Also advise them if you have a disability or additional need which may affect your ability to attend or take part in a meeting at the school, reasonable adjustments will then be made. In addition, please advise if you require an interpreter to be present.**

**Should you wish to discuss this matter with the Local Authority please contact [[Enter contact details of LA Exclusions team](#)]. Alternatively, you may wish to contact the [Coram Children's Legal Centre](#) Advice line on 0300 3305485, or at [www.childrenslegalcentre.com](http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com)**

(Delete paragraph as necessary – SEN register) **As [Pupil's Name] [[is on the SEN register/has an Education, Health and Care Plan](#)], you can also obtain impartial information, advice and support about matters relating to special educational needs and disabilities including education, health and social care issues from [[Insert contact details of LA SENDIASS](#)].**

#### **Your rights to make representations to the Exclusions Panel.**

- A. If the total number of days suspension in any one term are below five you have the right to make representations to the Exclusions Panel who will consider these, but the Exclusions Panel does **not** have the authority to overturn the suspension.**
- B. If the total number of days suspension in any one term is above 5 but below 15 you have the right to request an Exclusions Panel Hearing. This meeting will be held within 50 days of you receiving the suspension notice.**

- C. **If the total number of days suspension in any one term are above 15** the Exclusions Panel **must** convene a statutory meeting to consider reinstatement. A representative of the local authority may attend.

**Number of days [Pupil's Name] has been suspended this (delete as necessary) Autumn/Spring/Summer term [year] is [?] days.**

If you wish to make representations, please contact [[Name and contact details of Clerk to Local School Board](#)]

**You have the right to see your child's school record however, due to confidentiality restrictions, you must submit in writing a request to obtain copies of this file. There may be a charge for photocopying.**

**You should also be aware that if you think the suspension relates to a disability your child has, and you think disability discrimination has occurred, you have the right to appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal. The address to which appeals should be sent is:**

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 First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability)  
 1st Floor, Darlington Magistrates Court  
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 Darlington  
 DL1 1RU  
 Telephone: 01325 289350 Fax: 0870 7394017  
 By Email: [sendistqueries@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:sendistqueries@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk)  
 Website: <https://www.gov.uk/courts-tribunals/first-tier-tribunal-special-educational-needs-and-disability>

**Making a claim would not affect your right to make representations to the Exclusions Panel.**

**Other sources of support that can be accessed:**

ACE education **runs a limited advice line service** on 0300 0115 142 on Monday to Wednesday from 10 am to 1 pm during term time. **Information can be found on the website:** <http://www.ace-ed.org.uk/>.

The National Autistic Society **Schools Exclusion Service (England) can be contacted** on 0808 800 4002 or through: <http://www.autism.org.uk/services/helplines/school-exclusions.aspx>

Independent Parental Special Education Advice <http://www.ipsea.org.uk/>

The Department for Education statutory guidance on exclusions **can be found at** <https://www.gov.uk/topic/schools-colleges-childrens-services/school-behaviour-attendance>.

**Yours Sincerely**

[Name]

**Head Teacher/HoS**

**Copies:** Chair of the Local School Board  
 Clerk to the Local School Board  
 DSAT Head of Educational Access  
 Local Authority Exclusion Team  
 [Insert as required: Pupil's social worker, Education Health and Care Assessment Team,  
 Virtual School etc.]  
 Pupil's file

## **PERMANENT EXCLUSION**

Dear [Parent/Carer]

[Pupil's Name, Date of Birth and Year Group]

I regret to inform you of my decision to exclude [Pupil's Name] permanently from attendance at this school with effect from [time and date]. This means that [Pupil's Name] will not be allowed in this school unless [he/she] is reinstated by the Exclusions Panel.

While this exclusion is in force, I would inform you that you are responsible for ensuring [Pupil's Name] does not come on to school premises unless invited by me. Should [Pupil's Name] come onto school premises I would view this as a serious breach of the legal process.

Alternative arrangements for [Pupil's Name] education to continue will be made.

The reason for my decision is (give a clear and informative description of the incident, including date/time of incident, ensuring that the specific reason for exclusion is understood and that all relevant circumstances are made known).

(Delete as necessary) Due to the serious nature of the incident, I will continue to investigate and gather information. If evidence/information comes to my attention that I was not in possession of at the time of making the decision to permanently exclude [Pupil's Name] you will be notified.

(Delete as necessary) In making this decision, I am taking other incidents of previous misbehaviour into account. (Provide brief details of any relevant previous warnings, suspensions, or other sanctions/strategies used in an attempt to avoid exclusion).

Further details will be forwarded to you shortly in form EP1 (evidence pack to review the permanent exclusion).

School will set work for [Pupil's Name] during the first [\*specify the number as appropriate] school days of this exclusion (detail the arrangements for this). You are responsible for ensuring that the work is completed and returned to school promptly for marking.

(Delete as necessary - if the pupil is eligible for FSM) As [Pupil's Name] is entitled to free school meals please contact [Staff Name and details] to discuss how this can be facilitated.

(Delete as necessary) From the 6<sup>th</sup> school day of this exclusion [specify date] the Local Authority will provide suitable education. A representative from the Local Authority will contact you directly with details of these arrangements.

(Delete as necessary Where the pupil lives in a Local Authority other than the excluding school's) As you are resident outside [Name LA] I have also today informed [Name of Officer] at [Local Authority] of your



child's exclusion and they will be in touch with you about the arrangements for [Pupil's Name] education from the 6<sup>th</sup> school day of this exclusion.

(Delete as necessary – if the pupil is NOT compulsory school age) During an exclusion, parents are legally required to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, or for the purposes of education as arranged by the school. Parents may be given a fixed penalty notice or prosecuted if they fail to comply.

You have the right to see your child's school record however, due to confidentiality restrictions, you must submit a request, to school in writing to obtain copies of this file. There may be a charge for photocopying.

As this is a permanent exclusion the Exclusions Panel must meet to consider it no later than [specify date] (no later than 15 school days from the date the exclusion began)

At the review meeting you may make representations to the Exclusion Panel.

You will, whether you choose to make representations or not, be notified by the Clerk to the Local School Board of the time, date and location of the meeting. Please inform [contact name and contact details] of any disabilities or additional needs that may affect your ability to attend or take part in a meeting at the school, reasonable adjustments will then be made. In addition, please advise if you require an interpreter and if you wish to be accompanied by a friend or representative.

The Exclusions Panel has the power to reinstate your child immediately or from a specified date, or alternatively it has the power to confirm the exclusion. If this is the case, you have a right to request a review by an Independent Review Panel.

Should you wish to discuss this matter with the Local Authority please contact [Insert LA contact details]. Alternatively, you may wish to contact the [Coram Children's Legal Centre](#) Advice line on 0300 3305485, or at [www.childrenslegalcentre.com](http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com)

(Delete paragraph as necessary – SEN register) As [Pupil's Name] [is on the SEN register/has an Education, Health and Care Plan], you can also obtain impartial information, advice and support about matters relating to special educational needs and disabilities including education, health and social care issues from [Insert LA SENDIASS contact details]

You have the right to see your child's school record however, due to confidentiality restrictions, you must submit in writing a request to obtain copies of this file. There may be a charge for photocopying.

You should also be aware that if you think this permanent exclusion relates to a disability your child has, and you think disability discrimination has occurred, you have the right to make a claim under the Equality Act 2010 to the Special Educational Needs and Disability First Tier Tribunal. The address to which appeals should be sent is:

HM Courts & Tribunals Service  
 First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability)  
 1st Floor, Darlington Magistrates Court  
 Parkgate  
 Darlington  
 DL1 1RU  
 Telephone: 01325 289350 Fax: 0870 7394017  
 By Email: [sendistqueries@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:sendistqueries@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk)

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/courts-tribunals/first-tier-tribunal-special-educational-needs-and-disability>

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**Yours Sincerely**

[Name]

**Head Teacher/HoS**

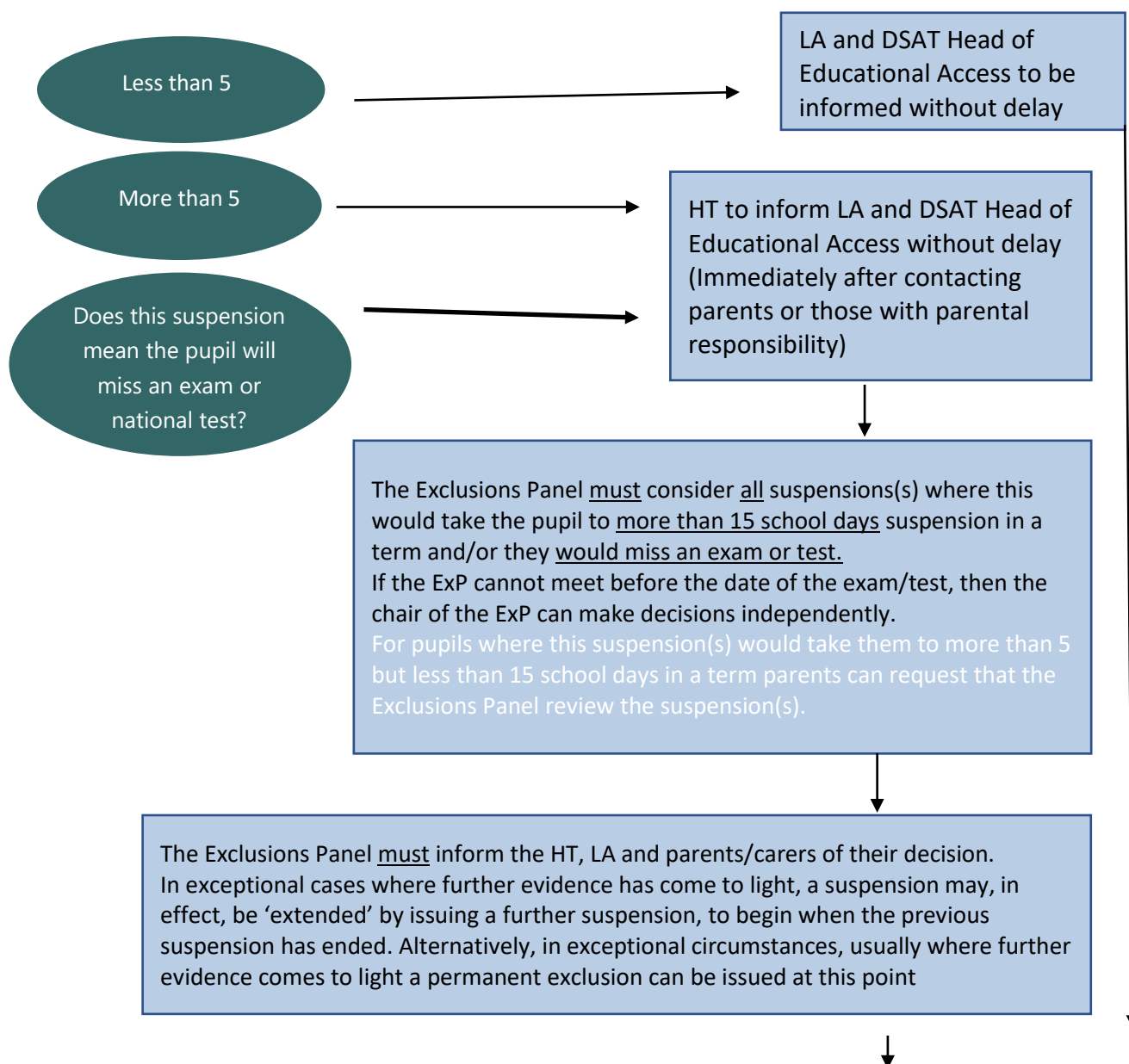
**Copies:** Chair of the Local School Board  
Clerk to the Local School Board  
DSAT Head of Access to Education  
Local Authority Exclusion Team  
[Insert as required: Pupil's Social Worker Education Health and Care Assessment Team,  
Virtual School etc.]  
Pupil's file

## Flow charts suspensions

### SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL DSAT GUIDANCE

Head Teacher (HT) to inform parents immediately of the reason and the length of the suspension  
The information must be sent to parents in writing on day 1 of the suspension

#### LENGTH OF SUSPENSION



Note: A reintegration strategy should be implemented following a period of suspension from school, with the exception of a permanent exclusion being issued.  
School may choose to hold a reintegration meeting to facilitate planning, this is always considered to be best practice.

If considered appropriate for the pupil to attend a reintegration meeting consideration should be made towards how this can be best managed to enable a fresh start.

## Flowchart exclusions

### PERMANENT EXCLUSION (PX) GUIDANCE

**Head Teacher (HT) to inform parents immediately of the reason for exclusion**  
**The written notification must be sent to parents on day 1 of the exclusion**

HT to inform local authority (LA) Local School Board (LSB) and DSAT Head of Educational Access without delay

The LSB must hold a Disciplinary Hearing which is delegated to the Exclusions Panel (ExP) to consider the reinstatement of all PX pupils  
 The meeting must take place within 15 school days of the LSB receiving notification of the PX

HT to send EP1(evidence pack) to LA (Exclusion Team), ExP, parents, social worker, virtual school, and other parties at least 5 school days in advance of the planned Exclusions Panel Hearing.

The following people must be invited to the Exclusions Panel Disciplinary Hearing:

- Parent/carer or those with parental responsibility
- Social Worker if the pupil has one allocated
- Virtual School Head if the pupil is a Looked After Child.
- Headteacher or representative who took the decision to permanently exclude
- LA representative - maintained school/PRU. **Note:** If a school is an academy, an LA rep will attend the meeting, unless informed otherwise. Parents can also request an LA representative to attend as an observer without the consent of the ExP

Letter sent by the clerk to LSB to parents and LA Exclusions Team (and the LA where the pupil resides if a different authority) and any other relevant parties, informing of the outcome from the Exclusions Panel Hearing, outlining the reasons for their decision

Parents do not request an independent review

15 school days after receiving notice from the LSB, the HT can remove the pupil from roll. This can be done before, if the parents state in writing

Parents request an independent review (IR) of the decision

The IR Panel (IRP) must meet within 15 school days of receiving the request. Parents can ask, in their request, for a SEN expert to attend the IR, even if the child has no identified SEN

**IRP to inform all parties of their decision**

The IRP can decide on the following:

- To uphold the GB's decision
- Recommend that the GB reconsider their decision
- Quash the decision and direct the GB to reconsider

**If IRP uphold, the HT can remove pupil from roll from the date the IR outcome is received**

**If IRP recommends ExP reconsider. If reinstatement is declined HT can then remove pupil from roll**

**If IRP Directs the ExP to reconsider. If a decision is made not to reinstate the pupil within 10 school days, the LA must deduct the relevant funds from the school's budget - plus an additional financial adjustment of £4000**

### **What could be in Exclusion panel packs (if appropriate)**

- Attendance sheet (current academic year)
- Suspension letters plus evidence relating to them
- Behaviour log/chronology including:
  - ✓ description of incidents of poor behaviour
  - ✓ sanctions/actions taken and by whom
  - ✓ support strategies
- Evidence of incidents including:
  - ✓ witness accounts from adults and students
  - ✓ the account of the excluded student If appropriate:
    - ✓ summary of incidents
    - ✓ photographic evidence
    - ✓ accident/incident reports
- Examples of parental involvement e.g., letters, logged telephone calls, minuted meetings.
- Most recent academic report
- Additional evidence of support strategies:
  - ✓ AP consultation sheets/placement report
  - ✓ Reports from outside agencies
  - ✓ Educational psychologist's report
  - ✓ Social care and health
  - ✓ CAMHS referral
  - ✓ Behaviour contracts
  - ✓ Mentoring progress reports
- For students on the SEND register:
  - ✓ EHCP (if relevant)
  - ✓ Latest individual support plan and review (if applicable)

**Agenda for exclusion panel****TABLE OF CONTENTS****EXAMPLE**

<b>DOCUMENT TITLE</b>	<b>PAGE NUMBER</b>
<b>Cover sheet-overview of the student during their time at the school</b>	
<b>Incidents, serious incidents related to breaches of school policy – a chronology</b>	
<b>Incident Details [this is usually the incident directly leading to the PEX]</b>	
<b>PEX documentation including letter to parent advising of the PEX</b>	
<b>Interventions / support put in place</b>	
<b>Support plans with review dates/targets</b>	
<b>Communication with parent/guardian, letters home etc.</b>	
<b>Minutes of formal behaviour meetings</b>	
<b>Safeguarding information</b>	

## HT Letter for over turning decision

RESCIND LETTER TO BE SENT IF THE HEAD TEACHER MAKES THE DECISION TO WITHDRAW A PERMANENT EXCLUSION BEFORE IT HAS BEEN REVIEWED BY THE EXCLUSIONS PANEL

Dear **[Parent/Carer]**

Rescinding of Permanent Exclusion of **[Pupil's Name, Date of Birth and Year Group]**

As you are aware, I made the decision to permanently exclude **[Pupil's Name]** with effect from **[date of exclusion]**. My decision was subject to a review by the Exclusions Panel who make the overall decision on whether pupils are reinstated back into school following permanent exclusion.

Whilst I considered permanent exclusion to be an appropriate response at the time of my original decision, an alternative has now been agreed. Therefore, in light of your cooperation, and as the Exclusions Panel has not yet met to review the permanent exclusion, I am able to rescind my decision.

I therefore confirm rescission of the permanent exclusion with effect from **[date]** (which should be the date of the letter; or the date that the alternative plan can be implemented or the date that the pupil is to be readmitted)

You and **[Pupil's Name]** will be invited to a meeting in order to develop a reintegration plan.

Whilst a Exclusions Panel Hearing will no longer need to take place to consider the re-instatement of **[Pupil's Name]**, you are still entitled, if you wish, to make representations about the exclusion. If you wish to discuss my decision further, a meeting can be arranged. Please submit any request in writing to school for my attention.

Yours sincerely

**[Name]**

Head Teacher/HoS

Copies: Chair of the Local School Board  
 Clerk to the Local School Board  
 DSAT Head of Educational Access  
**[Insert as required: Pupil's social worker, Virtual School, Education, Health and Care Assessment Team etc.]**  
 Local Authority Exclusion Team  
 Pupil's file

***Additional template letters are available by request from DSAT Head of Educational Access.***





