

Exclusions Policy

(Whole School)

Introduction

The current DfE guidance is followed in relation to exclusions. In this policy reference to 'exclusion' includes both **fixed term (suspension)** and **permanent** exclusions. Where the policy is referring to a specific type (i.e. fixed term (**suspension**) / or permanent) exclusion, the wording will make this clear. All correspondence with parents and carers; the Behaviour Committee; United Learning and the Local Authority will make clear the type of exclusion being issued.

The Exclusions Policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Behaviour, Equality, Looked After and Previously Looked After Children and SEND policies and codes. Principals, Local Governing Bodies, United Learning, independent review panel members and clerks, and SEND experts must by law have regard to this guidance when deciding whether to:

- Exclude a pupil.
- Uphold an exclusion.
- Direct reinstatement.
- Recommend or direct that the governing body considers the exclusion again.

Schools must have policies, procedures and staff training in place that will promote good behaviour. Behaviour policies must be widely publicised so that pupils, parents and all school staff are aware of the standards of behaviour expected and the range of sanctions.

Exclusion is recognised as an appropriate sanction; however, permanent exclusion should only be used as a last resort when a range of other strategies have been tried and exhausted. The school will work closely with the Local Authority to find alternative options to a permanent exclusion giving the LA the maximum time to consider other options to permanent exclusion. Most exclusions are the result of persistent breaches of the school's discipline policy. A permanent exclusion for a serious breach (e.g. a one-off or first offence) should only happen in the most serious of circumstances. Even in these circumstances, the school will work closely with the Local Authority, Virtual Headteacher and Statutory Assessment Team to avoid a permanent exclusion and look at all other possible options including manage-moves and/or appropriate alternative provision.

Maintained schools and academies have the **power to direct a pupil off-site for education** to improve his or her behaviour. A pupil can also transfer to another school/academy as part of a 'offsite direction'. The latter requires the consent of the parent/carer. The school must adhere to Local Authority guidance on offsite directions.

This policy provides an overview of the exclusion process. **It should be read alongside [current DfE Exclusion Guidance](#), which should be followed in all cases.** Advice and support about exclusion from school is available from United Learning Central Office.

Any decision of a school or academy in relation to exclusion must be made in line with the principles of the Human Rights Act – that it is **lawful, rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate**.

Any reference in this policy to parent(s) includes all those with parental responsibility.

Graduated Approach

The school has a graduated response in terms of dealing with unacceptable behaviour and promoting positive behaviour in an effort to reduce the need to issue suspensions and/or permanent exclusion from the school.

Tier 1: The school has three Charters, a binary behaviour programme and praise codes to effectively promote positive behaviour for learning and eradicate low-level disruption in lessons.

Tier 2: The school has a robust set of interventions to support identified groups of pupils. The list below is an overview and not exhaustive. Interventions are updated by the pastoral, SEND and Student Support teams.

- Case conference for groups and classes
- Behaviour and learning pen profiles
- Individual behaviour programmes
- Pastoral support programmes
- Counselling
- Mentoring

Tier 3: The school has an extensive package of individualised programmes for a small number of vulnerable children such as SEND, LAC and PLAC pupils. These measures include:

- Education Psychology
- Sensory support therapy
- Speech and Language therapy
- Neuro-linguistic therapy and programmes
- Art, play and Lego therapy and programmes
- In-house placements in the school's Inclusion Centre

Examples of specific supportive learning strategies	Examples of adjustments to the Behaviour Policy
Increased use of praise / One-page learning profiles	Pre-warning given to pupils with additional needs
Homework club for SEND and other VP groups	Keyworker support in the Reflection room for VP groups
Seating Plan adjustments for pupils with needs	Time out in the reflection room for VP groups
Short and repeated instructions	Shorter time spent in the reflection room
LSA support for SEND pupils	Access to a laptop in the reflection room
Chunked tasks (EG Do Now)	Restorative discussion with the teacher to take place as soon as possible

Exclusion from School

In some circumstances, schools have agreed to participate in what are known as Fair Access Panels (FAPs) which are local agreements between schools and local authorities that significantly reduce or eradicate the need to permanently exclude pupils. Where a school is part of such an arrangement, the sections of this policy that refer to permanent exclusion are effectively redundant but have been retained in case a particular FAP agreement ceases to operate. There are two types of exclusion:

1. Fixed-Term Suspension

This is a suspension for a **fixed number of days**. The pupil must remain at home up to the first 5 days (during which time the school should take reasonable steps to set and mark work for the pupil). For a fixed term suspension of more than 5 days, full time education provision commences from the sixth day and must be organised by the excluding school. A pupil may not be excluded for more than 45 days in a school year. A pupil is entitled to return to school once the period of suspension has ended.

A pupil may be suspended during **lunchtimes** for a **fixed number of days**. Each lunchtime suspension is equivalent to half a day's fixed term suspension. Arrangements will be made to provide a lunch if the pupil is entitled to free school meals.

Repeated use of fixed-term exclusion (suspension) for children with an EHCP (and potentially those on SEN Support – especially those undergoing statutory assessment and likely to get an EHCP) could be considered ineffective or failing to sufficiently meet a child's needs. There is an expectation that where this is occurring, schools ensure the SENCO is involved as part of a behaviour intervention and planning process to elicit different approaches to improving the child's behaviour. This may involve advice from colleagues and specialists, such as an educational psychologist, speech and language therapist etc.

Reintegration interviews are not mandatory but are good practice. The school will ensure that any pupil excluded for a fixed period of days meets with a member of the pastoral team and a senior leader and in some cases it may be appropriate for a therapeutic intervention such as cognitive behavior therapy; anger-management sessions; mentoring and/or counselling to be put in place to address specific concerns in relation to the exclusion or address any underlying patterns of behavior. Throughout the process the school will maintain regular contact with parents and carers.

A fixed term suspension must not be extended if such an interview cannot be arranged in time, or the parents do not attend. Pupils have a right to return to school as soon as the period of fixed term suspension ends.

2. Permanent Exclusion

This is where the Principal's intention is that the **pupil should not be allowed to return to the school**. The decision should only be taken if:

- a) The pupil has committed a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy.
- b) Allowing him/her to remain in the academy seriously harms the learning or welfare of the pupil or others in the school.

In most cases, this will be after a wide range of alternative strategies have been tried without success. However, there will be exceptional circumstances where, in the Principal's judgement, it might be appropriate to permanently exclude a child for a single serious breach (one-off or first offence). Examples of misconduct that might be considered as a serious breach are set out in Appendix 1.

Each case must be judged on the facts and the context taking into account:

- The degree of severity of the offence.
- The likelihood of reoccurrence.
- The student's previous behavioural record.
- Contributory factors (e.g. recent bereavement, mental health issues, bullying, special educational needs and disabilities, harassment).
- Support provided.
- Take into account the school behaviour policy, special educational needs policy and equality law obligations.

3. Unofficial Exclusions

Formal exclusion is the only legal method of removal if a pupil is sent home for disciplinary reasons (including lunch times). **“Informal or unofficial exclusions are unlawful”** regardless of whether they are done with the agreement of parents or carers.

The Decision to Exclude

1. General Advice

Only the Principal, (or, in their absence, the acting Principal or teacher in charge) can exclude a pupil. The Principal may consult others, but not anyone who may later have a role in reviewing the Principal’s decision.

Exclusion should not be imposed in the heat of the moment unless there is an immediate threat to the safety of others in the school or the pupil concerned.

The exclusion process falls into **three stages**:

1. Decision by the Principal to exclude.
2. Consideration of the Principal’s decision by the Local Governing Body (LGB), usually delegated to a Behaviour Committee.
3. In the case of a permanent exclusion, and only if requested by parents, consideration of the Principal’s decision by an Independent Review Panel.

The initial decision on whether to exclude is therefore for the Principal to take. Where practical, the Principal should ensure that a thorough investigation has been carried out and allow and encourage the pupil to present their case before taking the decision to exclude. Establishing the facts are to be decided on the **balance of probabilities**.

Whilst exclusion may still be an appropriate sanction, the Principal should take account of any contributing factors that are identified after an incident of poor behaviour has occurred. For example, SEND and P(LAC) needs, where it comes to light that a pupil has suffered a bereavement, has mental health issues or has been subject to bullying or provocation.

Early intervention to address underlying causes of disruptive behaviour should include an assessment of whether appropriate provision is in place to support any SEND or disability that a pupil may have. The Principal should also consider the use of a multi-agency assessment (Early Help) for pupils who demonstrate persistent disruptive behaviour. Such assessments may pick up unidentified special educational needs, but the scope of the assessment could go further, for example, by seeking to identify mental health or family problems or issues.

As part of considering each permanent exclusion, the **Principal must consult with the Regional Director** United Learning (or delegated executive) **before** the decision is reached and the case presented to the Behaviour Committee.

2. Fixed Term (Suspension) or Permanent Exclusion

In many cases investigation may not be immediately possible if, for example, the incident is complex and a number of witness statements are required.

In this case, the Principal may issue a fixed term suspension for a short period (a maximum of 5 school days is advised) to:

- Allow investigation to take place.
- Give opportunity for a reasoned decision.

In this case the letter informing of the fixed term suspension should clearly state that the reason for the fixed term suspension is **“to allow investigation into an incident which may result in permanent exclusion”**. The letter should not state that the fixed term suspension is, in itself, punishment for the incident under investigation. Once the investigation is complete, a further letter should be sent containing one of the following:

- Notification for the pupil to return to school.
- Notification of a permanent exclusion.

3. Pupils from Vulnerable Groups

The school will put in place reasonable adjustments for pupils with an EHCP and Looked After and Previously Looked After children to avoid exclusion, however this may not always be possible. These adjustments will be led and delivered by the SEND and Student Support teams to address patterns of challenging behaviour. Early intervention is the key to address such behaviour. Examples of this work will involve one-to-one programmes around effective and appropriate communication, social and emotional needs and behaviour delivered by key workers, learning mentors and external partners such as the Speech and Language Therapist.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Schools and governing bodies have a statutory duty to do their best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has SEND and to avoid excluding permanently any pupil with an EHCP. Where a pupil has an Education Health Care Plan and is at risk of permanent exclusion, schools should consider an early annual review or interim/emergency review working closely the Statutory Assessment Team at the local authority. The school will work closely with the Statutory Assessment Team to avoid permanent exclusion of LAC and PLAC pupils.

Equality Duty

The law places a general duty on academies and maintained schools, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard for the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.

Furthermore, such schools must advance equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different groups (for example different races, those with a disability and those without, age, gender) and foster good relations between all people.

The law also places several specific duties on schools, including duties to assess the impact of policies and to monitor the operation of those policies on pupils, parents and staff in the context of the public sector equality duty.

Disabled Pupils

Schools have a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 not to discriminate against disabled pupils by excluding them from school because of their disability. This applies to permanent and fixed term exclusions.

Race Relations

The need to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination, the advancement of equality of opportunity and good relations between people from different racial groups is set out in the public sector equality duty.

Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

Looked After and Previously Looked After Children are at risk of low attainment in school and suspension. Schools should be especially sensitive to exclusion issues where Looked After or Previously Looked After Children are concerned. Schools should try every practicable means to avoid exclusion working with the local authority LAC Education Team and Children’s Services. The school has a dedicated and skilled team of staff to meet the needs of LAC and PLAC pupils. The school will work closely with VSH to avoid permanent exclusion of LAC and PLAC pupils.

4. Behaviour Outside School

An academy has the right to make decisions about behaviour taking place on trips, outings, sporting fixtures, or travel/movement in the vicinity of the academy. Subject to the requirements of this policy, the Principal (or designated teacher in charge) may exclude students even if the circumstances giving rise to exclusion occur when the student is out of school, provided that behaviour is relevant to the maintenance of good behaviour in the school. The school's own policies should make clear how this operates in practice, in line with the DfE guidance.

5. Police Involvement and Parallel Criminal Proceedings

The process of exclusion from school and criminal proceedings can, and should, run parallel. However, in certain circumstances it may be appropriate for a decision to permanently exclude to be postponed if a police investigation has not been concluded. In such circumstances, an extended fixed term exclusion should be used. It is also critical that a school does not undermine the evidence gathering in a parallel police investigation; the school should consult with police and the Local Authority Exclusions Team before carrying out its own investigation.

Responsibilities of the Principal

The Principal should follow the procedures set out in the DfE Exclusion Guidance, which has been designed to ensure fairness and openness in the handling of exclusions. Following the guidance will reduce the chance of any successful legal challenge to the exclusion at a later stage.

The Principal can cancel any exclusion that has already begun (or one that has not yet begun), but this can only happen when the governing board has not yet met to consider whether the pupil should be reinstated. The Principal must explain in writing why the exclusion has been rescinded and must inform the parent, LGB, LA, VSH, pupil's social worker (in writing) the reasons for rescinding the exclusion and the offer of an appropriate provision. Parents must be given the opportunity to come into school to meet with the Principal and discuss the reasons why the exclusion has been rescinded

1. Informing Parents

Once a decision to exclude has been reached, the parent must be notified without delay, ideally by telephone, followed up with a letter preferably within one school day. It is important to ensure the reason/s for the exclusion are stated clearly in the letter, as further reasons cannot be introduced at a later date.

2. Informing Governors and the LA

Without delay, preferably within one school day, the Principal must inform the Local Governing Body (LGB) and the LA of:

- All permanent exclusions (if the pupil resides in another authority, the home LA should also be informed).
- Exclusions that would take the term's total for that pupil to more than five days.
- Exclusions that would result in the pupil missing a public examination or national curriculum test.

All other fixed term exclusions should be notified termly. Schools must keep a record of all exclusions for reporting to the DfE Census.

Pupils who have been permanently excluded should not be deleted from the school roll until the independent review panel process is completed, or the deadline for review is reached and no review has been applied for.

Where a fixed term exclusion results in a pupil missing an examination, although there is no right for the excluded pupil to take such an examination (or test) on school premises, the school should exercise its discretion to allow the pupil to enter the school premises for the sole purpose of taking the examination.

3. Education Provision for Excluded Pupils

The school's obligation to provide education continues while the pupil is on roll. In all cases of exclusion, work should be set from day one and marked.

Where a pupil is given a fixed term exclusion of six school days or longer, the school must arrange full time educational provision from and including the sixth day of exclusion.

During the initial period of up to five school days, the parents are solely responsible for the child and must ensure that he/she is not present in a public place during normal school hours without reasonable justification.

From the sixth day of a permanent exclusion, the home LA is statutorily responsible for ensuring that suitable full-time education is provided. Schools must ensure that the LA is notified on day one of any permanent exclusion.

4. Governing Body Meetings

If a meeting of the LGB Behaviour Committee is to be held, the Principal should prepare all supporting papers for the exclusion and pass them to the Clerk for circulation to all parties at least five days in advance of the meeting. The paperwork should include:

- The Principal's case for exclusion.
- A copy of the exclusion letter of notification to parent.
- Attendance records.
- Witness statements (signed where possible and dated).
- Excluded pupil statement.
- School discipline/behaviour policy, and other relevant policies.
- Details of any Pastoral Support Programme – or Individual Education Plan with clearly identified behaviour targets, where appropriate.
- Records of interventions.
- Details of any alternative or enhanced curriculum.

Role of the LGB (Local Governing Body)

The United Learning Trust Charity Board has delegated powers to the LGB to review exclusions and must consider any representations about an exclusion made by the parents of the excluded pupil. The LGB usually delegates some or all its functions in respect of exclusions to a committee consisting of at least three governors and such a committee may be called the Behaviour Committee.

The LGB's role is to review exclusions. The LGB can either uphold an exclusion, or direct reinstatement immediately or by a particular date. The LGB cannot extend a fixed term exclusion nor substitute it with a permanent exclusion.

The Behaviour Committee, which meets to consider any exclusion must be made up of at least three members, none of whom are employees of United Learning or have any connection with the pupil or incident that would affect their ability to act impartially. The Chair, who must be a member of the LGB, has the casting vote in all cases where an even number of members is considering the case.

The governors should appoint a Clerk to the Behaviour Committee to handle the administrative arrangements. The Clerk's responsibilities are described later.

The Behaviour Committee of the governing body has a duty to meet within 15 school days and consider the reinstatement of an excluded pupil 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.
- It would result in a pupil missing a public examination or national curriculum test.

(The Committee should make all efforts to hold the meeting before the exam/test, but if this is not possible the Chair of Governors can consider the exclusion independently and decide whether or not to reinstate the pupil. Where this happens, parents still have the right to make representations to the Local Governing Body).

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

In the case of one or more fixed term exclusions totalling 5 days or less in a school term, the Behaviour Committee must consider any written representations from the parent. They cannot direct reinstatement in this case. For the avoidance of doubt there is no obligation to meet with the parents regarding their representations.

In all exclusion cases, the Local Governing Body should comply with the statutory time limits but are not relieved of their obligation to carry out the relevant duty if they fail to do so. Accordingly, their decision will not be invalid simply on the grounds that it was made out of time.

1. Permanent exclusion - Prior to the Meeting

The Local Governing Body (Behaviour Committee) should invite the parent and Principal to the meeting, at a time and place convenient to all parties. The parent can be accompanied by a friend or legal representative at their request. A parent may also invite an LA representative to attend the meeting as an observer, but representations can only be made by the LA with the consent of the LGB/Behaviour Committee.

A parent may also request a remote hearing but where possible the hearing should be a face-to-face meeting. In **exceptional circumstances only** 'The meeting may be held via the use of remote access, provided the governing board or arranging authority are satisfied that all participants will be able to fully make representations and carry out their functions, each participant has access to the electronic means to allow them to hear and be heard and (where using a live video link) see and be seen, throughout the meeting; and the meeting is capable of being held fairly and transparently.' An example of an exceptional circumstance would be the outbreak of an infectious disease / illness prohibiting a face-to-face meeting.

The pupil is also entitled to attend the meeting, and should be encouraged to participate, taking into account their age and understanding.

Any written statements should be requested prior to the meeting. These should be circulated to all parties at least five school days in advance of the meeting, along with a list of those who will be present at the meeting.

Governors should read all the paperwork and prepare relevant questions to assist them in making a decision.

2. Permanent exclusion - Procedure for the Meeting

An agenda for Behaviour Committee meetings is set out later in this policy. The meeting should be conducted in line with guidance on natural justice:

- The principal and parents should all enter the room together, at the invitation of the Committee, at the beginning of the meeting.
- Parents must not receive any impression that the Principal and Committee have discussed the exclusion prior to all parties being invited into the meeting.
- All parties, except the Committee and the Clerk, should be asked to leave the room before the Committee discuss their views and make a decision.

Following this procedure ensures that all parties have an opportunity to present their views and ask questions. At the meeting, the Behaviour Committee should consider:

- Any representations made by the parent and the pupil.
- Whether the Principal has complied with the exclusion procedure and has had regard to the Secretary of State's Guidance on Exclusion.
- On the balance of probabilities, has the pupil done what they are accused of?
- Whether:
 - allowing him/her to remain in the academy seriously harms the learning or welfare of the student or others in the school
 - the behaviour is a serious breach of the school's Behaviour Policy
 - and finally, in most cases, that a wide range of possible strategies to improve a pupil's behaviour were tried and have failed. Strategies could include the use of managed-moves, placements in the school's inclusions base and Pastoral Support Programme or an alternative curriculum and provision.

Governors should have particular regard to:

- The needs of children with Special Educational Needs and those with disabilities (refer to the Equality Act 2010).
- The needs of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children.

3. Permanent exclusion - Local Governing Body's (Behaviour Committee's) Decision

A checklist for Behaviour Committees is recommended. This should be used when making the final decision for every permanent exclusion.

The Behaviour Committee must inform the parent, Principal and the LA of their decision, in writing without delay, preferably within one school day of the meeting, stating their reasons. Where the pupil resides in a different LA, they must also inform the pupil's 'home' LA.

A note of the Behaviour Committee's views on the exclusion should be placed on the pupil's school record with copies of relevant papers.

If the Behaviour Committee directs reinstatement, this should take place as soon as possible. No conditions can be attached to any direction to reinstate the pupil except that the Committee can direct reinstatement on a particular date.

Where the Behaviour Committee upholds a permanent exclusion, there are specific requirements for what information should be included in the letter to parents.

Role of the Clerk to the Behaviour Committee

1. Background

The Behaviour Committee may appoint a Clerk. The Clerk must not be a member of the Local Governing Body or the Principal.

The role of the Clerk is to handle the administrative arrangements for considering exclusions. The Clerk should not have taught the pupil or been involved in any of the incidents involved in the case and should not contribute to the meeting other than in an administrative capacity. Where possible the Clerk should be experienced in exclusion matters so that the meeting can progress smoothly.

2. Before the Meeting

When the Principal notifies the Clerk that s/he has excluded a pupil for more than five days, the Clerk should:

- Ensure that the Principal's letter of notification has been sent to all relevant parties and that any further information is being prepared.
- Set up a meeting of the LGB Behaviour Committee within the timescales (allowing two days for receipt of notification) and formally invite the parents and Principal to the meeting at a time and place convenient to all parties.
- Obtain written information/statements and circulate to all parties at least five days in advance of the meeting, along with a list of those who will be attending and a copy of the procedure for the meeting (this set out overleaf).

3. At the Meeting

The Clerk should:

- Ensure that the LGB Behaviour Committee has all the information it requires, and that it has appointed a Chair for the meeting.
- Invite all other parties into the meeting at the same time, when the LGB Behaviour Committee has indicated it is ready to begin.
- Prepare a written record of the meeting.
- Stay with the LGB Behaviour Committee to help them with reference to his/her notes of evidence and in wording their decision.
- Record the LGB Behaviour Committee's decision and reasons for it.

Procedure for the LGB Behaviour Committee

1. Before the Meeting

- Election of Chair for meeting (usually the Chair of the Behaviour Committee).
- Confirm arrangements for a Clerk to record the meeting (should not take any part in the proceedings).

2. During the Meeting - Agenda

Introductions

The Chair should:

- Explain the purpose of the meeting, which will be; to hear any representations the parents and the pupil may wish to make and for the committee to consider whether or not to uphold the exclusion.
- Circulate copies of this procedure.
- Go through the procedure for the meeting as outlined below.

A decision will be made whether or not to include the pupil. The involvement of the pupil in the meeting should be encouraged, unless there are strong reasons for this not to happen.

The Principal's Case for Exclusion

The Principal will be invited to explain what has happened to lead to his/her decision to exclude the pupil and summarise his/her reasons for it. He/she may ask other relevant colleagues to help explain what has happened.

Questions to the Principal from the Parents

The parents and/or friend will be given the opportunity to ask questions of the Principal and his/her colleagues.

Questions to the Principal from the Committee

The committee will be given the opportunity to ask questions of the Principal and his/her colleagues.

The Parents' Representations/Views

The parents, pupil and/or friend will be invited to present their views concerning the exclusion and any other related matters.

Questions to the Parents from the Principal

The Principal will be given the opportunity to ask questions of the parents, pupil and/or friend.

Questions to the Parents from the Committee

The Governors will be given the opportunity to ask questions of the parents, pupil and/or friend.

Any other related matters

Any other questions

Summary by the Principal of the case for exclusion

Summary by the parents of their representations/views

At the end of the Representations Stage of the Meeting

The Chair should explain that:

- There are two possible outcomes from this meeting:
 - that the governors direct the Principal to reinstate the pupil; or
 - that the governors uphold the Principal's decision to exclude the pupil
- The governors will be the only people involved in the decision making for this meeting.
- The governors' decision will be communicated to the parents, Principal and the Local Authority in writing without delay, preferably within one school day of the meeting and, if applicable, that the governors would be prepared to make their decision known verbally prior to this.
- Everyone but the committee members and the Clerk to the Behaviour Committee will now be asked to withdraw.

Making the Decision

- The Principal, the parent and the pupil may be invited back into the meeting to offer further information and/or clarification. All parties should be invited in together.
- The governors should complete a Checklist, in order to determine whether the Principal has complied with all of the necessary procedural requirements.
- Having completed the Checklist, the governors should then make their decision and record their reasons for their decision.
- The committee should ensure that the necessary arrangements are made to inform parents, the Principal and the Local Authority without delay, preferably within one school day.

3. After the Meeting

The Behaviour Committee should:

- Inform the parent, the Principal and the LA of the decision, in writing without delay, preferably within one school day of the meeting, stating the reasons for the decision. Where the pupil resides in a different LA, they must also inform the pupil's 'home' LA.
- A note of the LGB Behaviour Committee's views on the exclusion should be placed on the pupil's school record with copies of relevant papers.
- Where the LGB Behaviour Committee upholds a permanent exclusion, there are specific requirements for what information should be included in the letter to parents.

The Role of United Learning

The LA does not have a decision-making role in the exclusion process for any school. The Charity Board has delegated this responsibility to each LGB. As part of considering each permanent exclusion, however, the Principal must consult fully with the Regional Director United Learning (or delegated executive) before a decision is reached and the case presented to the Behaviour Committee.

It is the LGB's Behaviour Committee which has the duty to review the Principal's decision to exclude.

Education of Excluded Pupils

The LA is required to arrange full time educational provision for permanently excluded pupils from the sixth day of a permanent exclusion. Once a Principal has decided to permanently exclude a pupil, the LA will arrange to assess the pupil's needs and how to meet them (even though the exclusion might still be overturned by the school governors). The pupil's name will be deleted from the school roll only if:

- i. the pupil was permanently excluded; and
- ii. 15 school days have passed since the parents were notified of the Behaviour Committee's decision to uphold the permanent exclusion, or
- iii. the parents have stated in writing they will not be applying for an Independent Review Panel (IRP).

It will be the responsibility of the LA to offer an alternative school place.

Independent Review Panels (IRP)

Each LGB must take responsibility for setting up and training Independent Review Panels or make arrangements to use the service provided by the Local Authority or another independent service such as Clerks Associates. Note that the Independent Review Panel is only involved in reviewing permanent exclusions and only if requested by the parent/carers of the excluded pupil, and/or the pupil if over 18.

1. Notifying Parents

When a permanent exclusion is upheld by the Behaviour Committee, the Committee's decision letter to the parent must state the reasons for the decision, give the last day for lodging a review (within 15 school days) and explain that the grounds for the review should be set out in writing. If a parent does not request a review within the timescales the LGB **must** reject the application.

2. The Timing of the Hearing

An Independent Review Panel must meet to consider an exclusion no later than the 15th school day after the day on which the review was requested. However, if necessary, the panel may then decide to adjourn the hearing.

3. Composition of Independent Review Panels

Review Panels must consist of 3 or 5 members. One must be a lay member (can be an ex-governor), one must be a headteacher or was one within the last 5 years (two for panels of 5), and one must be a governor who has served for 12 consecutive months in the last 5 years (two for panels of 5).

Role of the Clerk to the Independent Review Panel

It is strongly advised that the Independent Review Panel has a Clerk. The Clerk, if appointed, provides an independent source of advice on procedures for all parties.

In advance of the Independent Review Panel, whoever is convening the panel must take reasonable steps to find out when the parent and others entitled to attend the hearing would be available in order to ensure that all parties are able to attend. They must also arrange a suitable venue for hearing the Independent Review Panel.

The following are entitled to make written representations, appear and make oral representations, and to be represented (including legally):

- The parent (or, if aged over 18, the pupil).
- The Principal.
- The Local Governing Body.

The LA is entitled to attend if requested to do so by the parent (or pupil if over 18) but only as an observer and may only make representations with the consent of the Academy. The LA is not entitled to legal representation.

The SEND Expert must attend if requested to do so by the parent (or pupil if over 18) but there is no right for this person to be legally represented.

The pupil is also entitled to attend the review, but if not attending then their views can be presented through a representative or by written statement.

The Clerk should circulate all written evidence to all parties at least 5 working days before the hearing, including information about the parties attending.

Request for a SEND Expert (see Section 9 DFE Exclusion Guidance)

If requested by the parents, the person convening the panel must appoint a SEND Expert to attend the Independent Review Panel.

Parents have a right to the above, regardless of whether their child has recognised or identified SEND.

The SEND Expert's role is to provide impartial advice to the Independent Review Panel on how special educational needs may be relevant to the exclusion. This includes whether school policies in relation to SEND were legally reasonable and procedurally fair, whether the school acted in a legal, reasonable and procedurally fair way with regards to identification of SEND and any contribution that this could have made to the circumstances of the pupil's exclusion.

The SEND Expert's role does not include making an assessment of the pupil's special educational needs.

Conduct and Role of the Independent Review Panel

It is for the Independent Review Panel to decide how to conduct the proceedings, which should be reasonably formal so that all parties can present their case effectively. The meeting should take a similar form to that of the LGB Behaviour Committee meeting.

The role of the panel is to review the LGB Behaviour Committee's decision not to reinstate a permanently excluded pupil. The panel must take account of the circumstances of the excluded pupil and all others in the school. The panel must apply the civil standard of proof (**the balance of probabilities**).

1. Reaching a Decision

Information on what the panel should consider when coming to their decision can be found in section 9 of the DfE Guidance on exclusions.

2. The Decision

An independent review panel can decide to:

- Uphold the exclusion decision.
- Recommend that the Local Governing Body/Behaviour Committee reconsiders their decision.
- Quash the decision and direct that the Local Governing Body/Behaviour Committee considers the exclusion again.

The panel's decision can be decided by a majority vote. The panel can request that a copy of the decision letter is placed on the pupil's record and the school must comply with this request.

The panel may only quash a decision and direct reconsideration where it considers that the exclusion was flawed when considered in the light of the principles applicable on an application for judicial review: illegality, irrationality and procedural impropriety.

3. Financial Penalties

Where a panel directs a Local Governing Body to reconsider an exclusion it has the power to order that a readjustment of the academy budget be made if the Local Governing Body does not offer to reinstate the pupil within 10 school days of receiving notification. The sum of this adjustment must be £4000, payable within 28 days, and will be in addition to other monies that follow permanently excluded pupils.

4. Reconvening a Behaviour Committee

If the Independent Review Panel directs or recommends that the Local Governing Body reconsider the exclusion, the Local Governing Body must meet to reconsider within **10 school days of notification**.

Where a Local Governing Body has reconsidered an exclusion decision it must inform the relevant person, the Principal and the LA of its reconsidered decision and the reasons for it without delay.

5. After the Independent Review Panel

The Independent Review Panel is independent. Its decision is binding on the parent, the LGB and the Principal. The panel cannot revisit its decision once made.

The panel must let all parties know its decision without delay. The decision letter should give the panel's reasons for its decision in sufficient detail for the parties to understand why the decision was made.

If the Independent Review Panel upholds the permanent exclusion, the Clerk should immediately report this to the LA. If the pupil is of compulsory school age, it is for the LA in whose area the pupil lives to make arrangements as quickly as possible for the pupil to continue in suitable full-time education. If the pupil lives outside the area of the LA, the Clerk should make sure that the home LA is also informed immediately of the position.

Where the exclusion is upheld the Clerk should also advise the parent to contact the appropriate person at the home LA about arrangements for their child's continuing education. The Principal should remove the pupil's name from the school roll the day after the conclusion of the Independent Review Panel.

6. Remedies after the Independent Review Panel

A parent can complain to the Secretary of State via the Education Funding Agency at the Department for Education.

7. Judicial Review

Decisions of both Local Governing Bodies and Independent Review Panels can be subject to judicial review.

8. Claims of Discrimination in Relation to Exclusion

Parents can also apply to the First-tier tribunal to hear cases of alleged disability discrimination, in addition to their current right to apply to a County Court to hear other cases of discrimination under the Equality Act 2010. The First-tier Tribunal will be able to direct reinstatement.

Policy Information and Review

Designated Lead Person/s	Ms S Galloway, Vice Principal (Ethos and Culture) and Mr M Kathrada, Assistant Principal (Behaviour)
Created/Reviewed	Annually
Date of last review and by whom	July 2024, Mr K Khalique, Vice Principal (PDBA)
Link Governor (if applicable)	Miss C Franck (interim)
Ratification by Local Governing Body	30/09/2024
Next Review Date	July 2025



Examples of Misconduct that May Lead to Permanent Exclusion

Permanent exclusions are extremely serious and should only be used in exceptional circumstances. Permanent exclusions should only be in response to persistent misconduct of a serious nature, where other sanctions have been attempted and not resulted in improved behaviour and conduct.

There are a few single incidents that may lead to a permanent exclusion.

These include (but are not restricted to) the following categories:

- A serious breach of safety requirements likely to endanger other people or yourself, or to cause damage to academy property.
- Unauthorised use of or supply of alcohol or drugs within the academy premises or whilst in the company of teachers, students or parents of students or during any extra-curricular activities organised by the academy at any time.
- Unauthorised removal of academy property.
- Stealing from the academy, employees of the academy, or from students and other serious and deliberate offences of dishonesty.
- Intentional damage to property.
- Abuse of the academy's computer system and of the internet and non-compliance with any policy issued by the academy addressing these matters specifically.
- Sexual misconduct, abuse or assault.
- Serious actual or threatened violence, physical assault or fighting against another student or member of staff or worker in the academy.
- Carrying an offensive weapon.
- Bullying and/or harassment including racial, sexual or homophobic harassment.
- Wilful defiance of the properly exercised authority of the academy and its staff.
- Bringing the academy into disrepute or acting in a manner deliberately to undermine the academy's principles or ethos to the detriment of students and staff.

DfE Reasons for Exclusion

The table below provides a full set of the descriptors of reasons for exclusions. This is to be used as a guide and is not intended to be used as a tick list for exclusions.

Exclusion Code	Pupil Exclusion Reason	Includes
OW	Use or threat of use of an offensive weapon or prohibited item	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carrying or bringing onto the school site an offensive weapon / prohibited item such as knives, sharp instruments and BB guns Carrying any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property Use of an offensive weapon
LG	Abuse against sexual orientation and gender identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Derogatory statements about sexual orientation (e.g. heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual) and gender identity (e.g. transgender) Homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic bullying LGBT+ graffiti LGBT+ taunting and harassment Swearing that can be attributed to LGBT+ characteristics
DS	Abuse relating to disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Derogatory statements or swearing about a disability Bullying related to disability Disability related graffiti, Disability related taunting and harassment
MT	Inappropriate use of social media or online technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing of inappropriate images (of adult or pupil) Cyber bullying or threatening behaviour online Organising or facilitating criminal behaviour using social media
PH	Wilful and repeated transgression of protective measures in place to protect public health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliberate breaching of protective measures such as (but not limited to): non-compliance with social distancing, causing distress such as through purposefully coughing very near to other pupils or adults, or any other deliberate breach of public health protective measures which the school has adopted.
PP	Physical assault against pupil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fighting Violent behaviour Wounding Obstruction and jostling
PA	Physical assault against adult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Violent behaviour Wounding Obstruction and jostling
VP	Verbal abuse / threatening behaviour against pupil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Threatened violence Aggressive behaviour Swearing Verbal intimidation
VA	Verbal abuse / threatening behaviour against adult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Threatened violence Aggressive behaviour Swearing Verbal intimidation

Exclusion Code	Pupil Exclusion Reason	Includes
BU	Bullying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Verbal, physical, cyber bullying or threatening behaviour online, racist bullying, sexual bullying, homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic bullying, bullying related to disability
RA	Racist abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Racist taunting and harassment ■ Derogatory racist statements ■ Swearing that can be attributed to racist characteristics ■ Racist bullying ■ Racist graffiti
SM	Sexual misconduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sexual abuse ■ Sexual assault ■ Sexual harassment ■ Lewd behaviour ■ Sexual bullying ■ Sexual graffiti
DA	Drug and alcohol related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Possession of illegal drugs ■ Inappropriate use of prescribed drugs ■ Drug dealing ■ Smoking ■ Alcohol abuse ■ Substance abuse
DM	Damage to property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Damage includes damage to school or personal property belonging to any member of the school community ■ Vandalism ■ Arson ■ Graffiti
TH	Theft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Stealing school property ■ Stealing personal property (pupil or adult) ■ Stealing from local shops on a school outing ■ Selling and dealing in stolen property
DB	Persistent or general disruptive behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Challenging behaviour ■ Disobedience ■ Persistent violation of school rules ■ Raising of fire alarms falsely

Governors Checklist

This should be used in the Behaviour Committee to ensure proper process has been followed and a completed checklist should be sent to the relevant Director at the end of the process.

Pupil Name:		Date of Meeting:
1	Telephone call to parent/visit from parent on (date): Letter of notification using model text sent on (date): Copied and sent to Behaviour Committee on (date):	
2	Date of Behaviour Committee Meeting: Within 15 school days from Principal/Headteacher's letter, for permanent and fixed term exclusions of more than 15 school days (or total more than 15 school days in a term), or it would result in the pupil missing a public examination or national curriculum test OR Within 50 school days from Principal/Headteacher's letter, for fixed term exclusions of less than 15 school days in a term) <i>if</i> the parents make representations. Yes/No	
3	All written statements/evidence circulated in advance of this meeting (at least 5 school days before) Yes/No	
4	Procedure for the meeting and confirmation circulated in advance of the meeting Yes/No	
5	All relevant information provided on pupil, including: SEN Status; Care status if looked after or active case for Social Care; whether disabled and, if so, reasonable adjustments made; academic progress Yes/No	
6	Where it is a permanent exclusion decision that it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meets the legal conditions in which permanent exclusion is appropriate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy; and ○ allowing him/her to remain in the academy would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school Yes/No	

<p>7</p>	<p>Evidence and use of procedures are satisfactory in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The investigation conducted • Firm evidence collected to support decision to exclude • Pupil has been given the opportunity to give his/her version of events • Provocation/harassment has been taken into account, if appropriate • The school's SEND, behaviour and equality policies were legal, reasonable and procedurally fair and the school adhered to these policies in practice • Where appropriate, a Pastoral Support Programme – or Individual Education Plan has been implemented fully. • There is evidence of all relevant interventions having been made for this specific pupil, including, where appropriate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ alternative or enhanced curriculum ○ mediation ○ education welfare involvement ○ family support ○ mentor support for the pupil • Specifically, equality requirements under the Equality Act 2010 have been considered (disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity) and any reasonable adjustments required have been made, whether as part of the pupil planning and interventions above or otherwise. • Parent has been given adequate time to make representations • All parties to the meeting know how this decision will be communicated • Satisfactory arrangements in place for pupil to continue their education during exclusion period <p>Yes/No</p> <p>If no, what concerns exist:</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>To be completed after the Behaviour Committee meeting</p> <p>Parent, Principal and Local Authority notified of decision on (date):</p> <p>Letter regarding decision sent out on (date):</p> <p>Signed (Clerk to the Behaviour Committee):</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>A copy of this checklist should be <u>sent to the relevant Director</u> at the conclusion of the process.</p>