

# Suspension and permanent exclusion policy

The Lion Works School



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### 1. Aims

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

Our school aims to:

- Ensure that the exclusions process is applied fairly and consistently
- Help staff, parents and pupils understand the exclusions process
- Ensure that pupils in school are safe and happy
- Prevent pupils from becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training)
- Ensure all suspensions and permanent exclusions are carried out lawfully

#### A note on off-rolling

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

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

We will not suspend or exclude pupils unlawfully by directing them off site, or not allowing pupils to attend school:

- Without following the statutory procedure or formally recording the event, e.g. sending them home to 'cool off'
- Due to poor academic performance
- Because they haven't met a specific condition, such as attending a reintegration meeting
- By exerting undue influence on a parent to encourage them to remove their child from the school

### 2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on statutory guidance from the Department for Education: [Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement](#). As the school is also an independent school we also closely adhere to the Independent School Standards 2014. This policy is compliant with part 6 clause 3A of the standards.

It is based on the following legislation, which outlines schools' powers to exclude pupils:

- Section 51a of the Education Act 2002, as amended by the Education Act 2011
- The School Discipline (Pupil 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 sets out parental responsibility for excluded pupils
- Section 579 of the [Education Act 1996](#), which defines 'school day'
- The [Education \(Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#), as amended by [The Education \(Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2014](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Children and Families Act 2014](#)

### 3. Definitions

Suspension – when a pupil is removed from the school for a fixed period. This was previously referred to as a 'fixed-term exclusion'.

Permanent exclusion – when a pupil is removed from the school permanently and taken off the school roll. This is sometimes referred to as an 'exclusion'.

Off-site direction – when a school requires a pupil to attend another education setting temporarily, to improve their behavior.

Parent – any person who has parental responsibility and any person who has care of the child.

Managed move – when a pupil is transferred to another school permanently. All parties, including parents and the admission authority for the new school, should consent before a managed move occurs.

## 4. Roles and responsibilities

### 4.1 The Proprietary Body and the Headteacher

#### Deciding whether to suspend or exclude

Only the headteacher (following review and consent from the Proprietary Body), or acting headteacher, can suspend or permanently exclude a pupil from school on disciplinary grounds. The decision can be made in respect of behaviour inside or outside of school. The headteacher will only use permanent exclusion as a last resort.

A decision to suspend or exclude a pupil will be taken only:

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

Before deciding whether to suspend or exclude a pupil, the headteacher will:

- Consider all the relevant facts and evidence on the balance of probabilities, including whether the incident(s) leading to the exclusion were provoked

- Allow the pupil to give their version of events
- Consider the relevance of the child's needs on the behaviour displayed
- Consider whether the pupil is especially vulnerable (e.g. the pupil has a social worker, or is a looked-after child (LAC))
- Consider whether all alternative solutions have been explored, such as off-site direction or managed moves

The headteacher will consider the views of the pupil, in light of their age and understanding, before deciding to suspend or exclude, unless it would not be appropriate to do so.

Pupils who need support to express their views will be allowed to have their views expressed through an advocate, such as a parent or social worker.

The headteacher will not reach their decision until they have heard from the pupil, and will inform the pupil of how their views were taken into account when making the decision.

### **Informing parents**

If a pupil is at risk of suspension or exclusion the headteacher will inform the parents as early as possible, in order to work together to consider what factors may be affecting the pupil's behaviour, and what further support can be put in place to improve the behaviour.

If the headteacher decides to suspend or exclude a pupil, the parents will be informed of the period of the suspension or exclusion and the reason(s) for it, without delay.

The parents will also be provided with the following information in writing, without delay:

- The reason(s) for the suspension or exclusion
- The length of the suspension or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent
- Information about parents' right to make representations about the suspension or permanent exclusion to the Proprietary Body and how the pupil may be involved in this
- How any representations should be made
- Where there is a legal requirement for the Proprietary Body to hold a meeting to consider the reinstatement of a pupil, and that parents (or the pupil if they are 18 years old) have a right to attend the meeting, be represented at the meeting (at their own expense) and to bring a friend

The headteacher will also notify parents without delay and by the end of the afternoon session on the first day their child is suspended or permanently excluded, that:

- For the first 5 school days of an exclusion (or until the start date of any alternative provision or the end of the suspension, where this is earlier), the parents are legally required to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours without a good reason. This will include specifying on which days this duty applies
- Parents may be given a fixed penalty notice or prosecuted if they fail to do this at the discretion and enforcement of the relevant local authority school attendance team

If alternative provision is being arranged, the following information will be included, if possible:

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

If the headteacher does not have all the information about the alternative provision arrangements by the end of the afternoon session on the first day of the suspension or permanent exclusion, they can provide the information at a later date, without delay and no later than 48 hours before the provision is due to start.

The only exception to this is where alternative provision is to be provided before the sixth day of a suspension or permanent exclusion, in which case the school reserves the right to provide the information with less than 48 hours' notice, with parents' consent.

### **Informing the Proprietary Body**

The headteacher will, without delay, notify the Proprietary Body of:

- Any permanent exclusion intention, including when a suspension is followed by a decision to permanently exclude a pupil
- Any suspension or permanent exclusion intention which would result in the pupil being suspended or permanently excluded for a total of more than 5 school days (or more than 10 lunchtimes) in a term
- Any suspension or permanent exclusion intention which would result in the pupil missing a National Curriculum test or public exam

The headteacher will notify the Proprietary Body of any other suspensions as and when they are given, of which they have not previously been notified, and the number of suspensions and exclusions which have been cancelled, including the circumstances and reasons for the cancellation.

### **Informing the local authority (LA)**

The headteacher will notify the LA of all suspensions and permanent exclusions without delay, regardless of the length of a suspension. This notification will go to the relevant SEND department, typically via the school's allocated SEND officer from the relevant authority.

The notification will include:

- The reason(s) for the suspension or permanent exclusion
- The length of a suspension or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent

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

If the decision has been made to permanently exclude then an emergency Review will be scheduled. The school Mitigation and adjustment procedures flowchart must be consulted and followed in this case.

### **Informing the pupil's social worker and/or virtual school head (VSH)**

If a:

- **Pupil with a social worker** is at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion, the headteacher will inform **the social worker** as early as possible
- **Pupil who is a looked-after child (LAC)** is at risk of suspension or exclusion, the headteacher will inform **the VSH** as early as possible

This is in order to work together to consider what factors may be affecting the pupil's behaviour, and what further support can be put in place to improve the behaviour.

If the headteacher decides to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil with a social worker / a pupil who is looked after, they will inform the pupil's social worker / the VSH, as appropriate, without delay, that:

- They have decided to suspend or permanently exclude the pupil
- The reason(s) for the decision
- The length of the suspension or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent
- The suspension or permanent exclusion affects the pupils ability to sit a National Curriculum test or public exam (where relevant)

The social worker / VSH will be invited to any review meeting with the Headteacher of Proprietary Body about the suspension or permanent exclusion. This is so they can provide advice on how the pupil's background and/or circumstances may have influenced the circumstances of their suspension or permanent exclusion. The social worker should also help ensure safeguarding needs and risks and the pupil's welfare are taken into account.

### **Cancelling suspensions and permanent exclusions**

The headteacher may cancel a suspension or permanent exclusion that has already begun. Where there is a cancellation:

- The parents and LA will be notified without delay
- Where relevant, any social worker and VSH will notified without delay
- Parents will be offered the opportunity to meet with the headteacher to discuss the cancellation
- The pupil will be allowed back in school

### **Providing education during the first 5 days of a suspension or permanent exclusion**

During the first 5 days of a suspension, if the pupil is not attending alternative (AP) provision, the headteacher will take steps to ensure that achievable and accessible work is set and marked for the pupil. Online pathways such as Google Classroom will be used for this. If the pupil has a special educational need or disability, the headteacher will make sure that reasonable adjustments are made to the provision where necessary.

If the pupil is looked after or if they have a social worker, the school will work with the LA to arrange AP from the first day following the suspension or permanent exclusion. Where this isn't possible, the school will take reasonable steps to set and mark work for the pupil, including the use of online pathways.

## **4.2 The Proprietary Body**

### **Considering suspensions and permanent exclusions**

The Proprietary Body has a duty to consider parents' representations about a suspension or permanent exclusion. It has a duty to consider the reinstatement of a suspended or permanently excluded pupil (see sections 5 and 6) in certain circumstances.

Within 14 days of receiving a request, the Proprietary Body will provide the secretary of state and the LA with information about any suspensions or exclusions within the last 12 months.

### **Monitoring and analysing suspensions and exclusions data**

The Proprietary Body will challenge and evaluate the data on the school's use of suspension, exclusion, off-site direction to alternative provision and managed moves.

The Proprietary Body, with the support of the School Board, will consider:

- How effectively and consistently the school's behaviour policy is being implemented
- The school register and absence codes
- Instances where pupils receive repeat suspensions
- Interventions in place to support pupils at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion
- Any variations in the rolling average of permanent exclusions, to understand why this is happening, and to make sure they are only used when necessary
- 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 suspended and permanently excluded pupils, and why this is taking place

- Whether the placements of pupils directed off-site into alternative provision are reviewed at sufficient intervals to assure that the education is achieving its objectives and that pupils are benefiting from it
- The cost implications of directing pupils off-site

## 5. Considering the reinstatement of a pupil

The Proprietary Body will consider and decide on the reinstatement of a suspended or permanently excluded pupil within 15 school days of receiving the notice of the suspension or exclusion if:

- The exclusion is permanent
- It is a suspension which would bring the pupil's total number of days out of school to more than 15 in a term; or
- It would result in a pupil missing a public exam or National Curriculum test

Where the pupil has been suspended, and the suspension does not bring the pupil's total number of days of suspension to more than 5 in a term, the Proprietary Body must consider any representations made by parents. The body may direct reinstatement.

Where the pupil has been suspended for more than 5 days, but less than 16 days, in a single term, and the parents make representations to the Proprietary Body, it will consider and decide on the reinstatement of a suspended pupil within 5 school days of receiving notice of the suspension.

The following parties will be invited to a meeting of the Proprietary Body and allowed to make representations or share information:

- Parents, or the pupil if they are 18 or over (and, where requested, a representative or friend)
- The pupil, if they are aged 17 or younger and it would be appropriate to their age and understanding (and, where requested, a representative or friend)
- The headteacher
- The pupil's social worker, if they have one
- The VSH, if the pupil is looked after
- A representative of the local authority

The Proprietary Body will try to arrange the meeting within the statutory time limits set out above and must try to have it at a time that suits all relevant parties. However, its decision will not be invalid simply on the grounds that it was not made within these time limits.

It can either:

- Decline to reinstate the pupil, or
- Direct the reinstatement of the pupil immediately, or on a particular date
- In reaching a decision, the Proprietary Body will consider:
  - Whether the decision to suspend or permanently exclude was lawful, reasonable, and procedurally fair
  - Whether the headteacher followed their legal duties
  - The welfare and safeguarding of the pupil and their peers
  - Any evidence that was presented to the Proprietary Body

They will decide whether or not a fact is true 'on the balance of probabilities'.

Minutes will be taken of the meeting, and a record kept of the evidence that was considered. The outcome will also be recorded on the pupil's educational record, and copies of relevant papers will be kept with this record.

The Proprietary Body will notify, in writing, the following stakeholders of its decision, along with reasons for its decision, without delay:

- The parents, or the pupil, if they are 18 or older
- The headteacher
- The pupil's social worker, if they have one
- The VSH, if the pupil is looked after
- The local authority
- The pupil's home authority, if it differs from the school's

Where an exclusion is permanent and the Proprietary Body has decided not to reinstate the pupil, the notification of decision will also include the following:

- The fact that it is a permanent exclusion
- Notice of parents' right to ask for the decision to be reviewed by an independent review panel
- The date by which an application for an independent review must be made (15 school days from the date on which notice in writing of the Bodies decision is given to parents)
- The name and address to which an application for a review and any written evidence should be submitted
- That any application should set out the grounds on which it is being made and that, where appropriate, it should include reference to how the pupil's special educational needs (SEN) are considered to be relevant to the permanent exclusion
- 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 permanent 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. Also that any 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

## 6. Independent review

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

Applications for an independent review must be made within 15 school days of notice being given to the parents by the Proprietary Body of its decision to not reinstate the pupil **or**, if after this time, within 15 school days of the final determination of a claim of discrimination under the Equality Act 2010 regarding the permanent exclusion.

Parents have the right to request the attendance of an SEN expert at the review panel. This expert will not form part of the panel. Clause 193 of the Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units specifies who can be considered an expert. This appointment is a sole matter of choice for the Proprietary Body.

A panel of 3 members will be constituted with representatives from each of the categories below. At all times during the review process there must be the required representation on the panel.

- Members of the school board
- Headteachers or individuals who have been a headteacher within the last 5 years

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

- Are Director of the Proprietary Body of the excluding school
- Are the headteacher of the excluding school, or have held this position in the last 5 years

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

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

Taking into account the pupil's age and understanding, the pupil or their parents will be made aware of their right to attend and participate in the review meeting and the pupil should be enabled to make representations on their own behalf, should they desire to.

Where a social worker is present, the panel must have regard to any representation made by the social worker of how the pupil's experiences, needs, safeguarding risks and/or welfare may be relevant to the pupil's permanent exclusion.

Where a VSH is present, the panel must have regard to any representation made by the social worker of how any of the child's background, education and safeguarding needs were considered by the headteacher in the lead up to the permanent exclusion, or are relevant to the pupil's permanent exclusion.

Following its review, the independent panel will make a representation that is 1 of the following:

- Uphold the Proprietary Body decision
- Recommend that the Proprietary Body reconsiders reinstatement

However the final decision always rests with the Proprietor, who may or may not accept the recommendations of the panel.

New evidence may be presented, though the school cannot introduce new reasons for the permanent exclusion or the decision not to reinstate. The panel must disregard any new reasons that are introduced.

In deciding whether the decision was flawed, and therefore whether to recommend to overturn or the decision not to reinstate, the panel must only take account of the evidence that was available to the Proprietary Body at the time of making its decision. This includes any evidence that the panel considers would, or should, have been available to the Proprietary Body and that it ought to have considered if it had been acting reasonably.

If evidence is presented that the panel considers it is unreasonable to expect the Proprietary Body to have been aware of at the time of its decision, the panel can take account of the evidence when deciding whether to recommend that the Proprietary Body reconsider reinstatement.

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

Once the panel has reached its decision, the panel will notify all parties in writing without delay.

This notification will include:

- The panel's decision and the reasons for it
- Any information that the panel has advised the Proprietary Body to place on the pupil's educational record

## 7. School registers

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

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

Where an application for an independent review has been made within 15 school days, the Proprietary Body will wait until that review has concluded before removing a pupil's name from the register.

While the pupil's name remains on the school's admission register, the pupil's attendance will still be recorded appropriately. Where alternative provision has been made for an excluded pupil and they attend it, code B (education off-site) or code D (dual registration) will be used on the attendance register.

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

## **Making a return to the LA**

Where a pupil's name is to be removed from the school admissions register because of a permanent exclusion, the school will make a return to the LA SEND department. The return will include:

- The pupil's full name
- The full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally resides
- At least 1 telephone number at which any parent with whom the pupil normally resides can be contacted in an emergency
- The grounds upon which their name is to be deleted from the admissions register (i.e., permanent exclusion)
- Details of the new school the pupil will attend, including the name of that school and the first date when the pupil attended or is due to attend there, if the parents have told the school the pupil is moving to another school
- Details of the pupil's new address, including the new address, the name of the parent(s) the pupil is going to live there with, and the date when the pupil is going to start living there, if the parents have informed the school that the pupil is moving house

This return must be made as soon as the grounds for removal is met and no later than the removal of the pupil's name.

## **8. Returning from a suspension**

### **8.1 Reintegration strategy**

Following suspension, the school will put in place a strategy to help the pupil reintegrate successfully into school life and full-time education.

Where necessary, the school will work with third-party organisations to identify whether the pupil has any unmet special educational and/or health needs.

The following measures may be implemented, as part of the strategy, to ensure a successful reintegration into school life:

- **Maintaining regular contact during the suspension or off-site direction and welcoming the pupil back to school**
- **Daily contact in school with a designated pastoral professional**
- **Mentoring by a trusted adult or a local mentoring charity**
- **Regular reviews with the pupil and parents to praise progress being made and raise and address any concerns at an early stage**
- **Informing the pupil, parents and staff of potential external support**

Part-time timetables will not be used as a tool to manage behaviour and, if used, will be put in place for the minimum time necessary.

The strategy will be regularly reviewed and adapted where necessary throughout the reintegration process in collaboration with the pupil, parents, and other relevant parties.

### **8.2 Reintegration meetings**

The school will explain the reintegration strategy to the pupil in a reintegration meeting before or on the pupil's return to school. During the meeting the school will communicate to the pupil that they are getting a fresh start and that they are a valued member of the school community.

The pupil, parents, a member of senior staff, and any other relevant staff will be invited to attend the meeting.

The meeting can proceed without the parents in the event that they cannot or do not attend.

The school expects all returning pupils and their parents to attend their reintegration meeting, but pupils who do not attend will not be prevented from returning to the classroom.

## **9. Monitoring arrangements**

The school will collect data on the following:

- Attendance, permanent exclusions and suspensions
- Use of pupil referral units, off-site directions and managed moves
- Anonymous surveys of staff, pupils, and other stakeholders on their perceptions and experiences

The data will be analysed every year.

The data will be analysed from a variety of perspectives including:

- At school level
- By age group
- By time of day/week/term
- By protected characteristic

The school will use the results of this analysis to make sure it is meeting its duties under the Equality Act 2010. If any patterns or disparities between groups of pupils are identified by this analysis, the school will review its policies in order to tackle it.

This policy will be reviewed by Proprietary Body every year. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Proprietary Body.

## **10. Links with other policies**

This exclusions policy is linked to our:

- Behaviour policy
- SEN policy and information report
- Mitigations and adjustments procedures

## Appendix 1: independent review panel training

The Proprietary Body must make sure that all members of an independent review panel and clerks have received training within the 2 years prior to the date of the review.

Training must have covered:

- The requirements of the primary legislation, regulations and statutory guidance governing suspensions and permanent exclusions on disciplinary grounds, which would include an understanding of how the principles applicable in an application for judicial review relate to the panel's decision making
- The need for the panel to observe procedural fairness and the rules of natural justice
- The role of the chair
- The duties of headteachers, Proprietary Bodies and the panel under the Equality Act 2010
- The effect of section 6 of the Human Rights Act 1998 (acts of public authorities unlawful if not compatible with certain human rights) and the need to act in a manner compatible with human rights protected by that Act