



COLNEY HEATH SCHOOL

**Policy name: Colney Heath
Suspensions and Exclusions
Policy and Procedure**

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1. Aims

Our school aims to ensure that:

- The suspension / exclusions process is applied fairly and consistently
- The suspension / exclusions process is understood by governors, staff, parents and pupils
- Pupils in school are safe and happy

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on statutory guidance from the Department for Education:

Guidance on the suspension and permanent exclusion of pupils from local-authority-maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units. September 2023

Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units (PRUs) in England.

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

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

In addition, the policy is based on:

- Part 7, chapter 2 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, which looks at parental responsibility for 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 3.

3. The decision to suspend / exclude

Only the headteacher, or acting headteacher, can suspend / exclude a pupil from school.

A decision to permanently exclude will only be taken as a last resort.

Our school is aware that off-rolling is unlawful.

Ofsted defines off-rolling as: "...the practice of removing a pupil from the school roll without a formal, permanent exclusion or by encouraging a parent to remove their child from the school roll, when the removal is primarily in the interests of the school rather than in the best interests of the pupil."

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

A decision to suspend / 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 / exclude a pupil, either permanently or for a fixed period, the headteacher will:

- Consider all the relevant facts and evidence, including whether the incident(s) leading to the suspension / exclusion were provoked
- Allow the pupil to give their version of events so that any pupil is enabled and encouraged to participate at all stages of the suspension or permanent exclusion process, considering their age and ability to understand.
- Consider if the pupil has special educational needs (SEND)
- Give due consideration to aggravating and mitigating circumstances

The headteacher 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. Where an exclusion is cancelled:

- the headteacher must notify the parents, the governing board, the LA and the pupil's social worker and VSH as applicable, without delay.
- the notification must also provide the reason for the cancellation;
- the governing board's duty to consider reinstatement ceases, and there is no requirement to hold a meeting to consider reinstatement;
- Parents should be offered the opportunity to meet the headteacher to discuss the circumstances that led to the exclusion.
- should be arranged without delay;
- The pupil must be allowed back into the school from which they were excluded 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

4. Definitions

A suspension results in a pupil being excluded for a total of no more than 5 school days.

An Exclusion results in the pupil being excluded permanently

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

5. Roles and responsibilities

The headteacher Informing parents (Using Hertfordshire templates)

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

- The reason(s) for the exclusion
- The length of a fixed-term exclusion or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent
- Information about parents' right to make representations about the suspension / exclusion to the governing board and how the pupil may be involved in this

- Where there is a legal requirement for the governing board to meet to consider the reinstatement of a pupil, and that parents have a right to attend a meeting, be represented at a meeting (at their own expense) and to bring a friend
- The headteacher will also notify parents by the end of the afternoon session on the day their child is suspended that for the first 5 school days of a suspension, or until the start date of any alternative provision where this is earlier, parents are legally required to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours without a good reason.
- Parents may be given a fixed penalty notice or prosecuted if they fail to do this. If alternative provision is being arranged, the following information will be included when notifying parents of a suspension / exclusion:
 - The start date for any provision of full-time education that has been arranged
 - The start and finish times of any such provision, including the times for morning and afternoon sessions, where relevant
 - The address at which the provision will take place
 - Any information required by the pupil to identify the person they should report to on the first day Where this information on alternative provision is not reasonably ascertainable by the end of the afternoon session, it may be provided in a subsequent notice, but it will be provided no later than 48 hours before the provision is due to start.

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

Informing the governing board and local authority

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

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

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

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

The governing board

Responsibilities regarding suspensions / exclusions is delegated to the discipline committee consisting of at least 3 governors drawn from the FGB

The discipline committee has a duty to consider the reinstatement of a suspended pupil (see section 6).

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

The discipline committee has a duty to consider the reinstatement of a suspended / excluded pupil (see section 6).

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

The LA

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

6. Considering the reinstatement of a pupil

The discipline committee will consider the reinstatement of a suspended / excluded pupil within 15 school days of receiving the notice of the suspension / exclusion if:

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

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

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

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

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

The discipline committee will notify, in writing, the headteacher, parents and the LA of its decision, along with reasons for its decision, without delay.

Where an exclusion is permanent the discipline committee decision will also include the following:

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

7. An independent review

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

Applications for an independent review must be made within 15 school days of notice being given to the parents by the discipline committee of its decision to not reinstate a pupil. Governing board reinstatement meetings and IRPs can now be held via the use of remote access (for example, live video link) for suspension and permanent exclusions if requested by the parents, provided certain criteria are satisfied. Meetings held via the use of remote access should not be a default option and face to face meetings should always be encouraged.

A panel of 3 or 5 members will be constituted with representatives from each of the categories below. Where a 5-member panel is constituted, 2 members will come from the school governors' category and 2 members will come from the headteacher category.

- A lay member to chair the panel who has not worked in any school in a paid capacity, disregarding any experience as a school governor or volunteer
- School governors who have served as a governor for at least 12 consecutive months in the last 5 years, provided they have not been teachers or headteachers during this time
- 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 a member of the LA, or governing board of the excluding school
 - Are the headteacher of the excluding school, or have held this position in the last 5 years
 - Are an employee of the LA, or the governing board, of the excluding school (unless they are employed as a headteacher at another school)
- Have, or at any time have had, any connection with the LA, school, governing board, parents or pupil, or the incident leading to the exclusion, which might reasonably be taken to raise doubts about their impartiality
- Have not had the required training within the last 2 years (see appendix 1 for what training must cover)

A clerk will be appointed to the panel.

The independent panel will decide one of the following:

- Uphold the governing board's decision
- Recommend that the governing board reconsiders reinstatement
- Quash the governing board's decision and direct that they reconsider reinstatement (only when the decision is judged to be flawed)

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

8. School registers

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

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

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

Where alternative provision has been made for a suspended or excluded pupil and they attend it, code B (education offsite) 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.

9. Returning from a fixed-term suspension

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

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

- Putting in place a pupil a Behaviour Management Plan (STEPS)
- Agreeing a behaviour contract
- Internal isolation

10. Monitoring arrangements

The Headteacher monitors the number of suspensions / exclusions every term and reports back to the governors, considering the level of pupil moves and the characteristics of pupils who have been permanently excluded to ensure the sanction is only used when necessary as a last resort. They also liaise with the local authority to ensure suitable full-time education for excluded pupils, this may include the use of Oak Academy or other online provision.

This policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher every 2 years.
At every review, the policy will be ratified by the governing board.

10. Links with other policies

This exclusions policy is linked to our

- Behaviour and Bullying policy
- SEN policy and information report

This policy will always follow advice and procedures provided by Hertfordshire County Council

[Exclusions - Hertfordshire Grid for Learning \(thegrid.org.uk\)](https://thegrid.org.uk)