

Suspension and Exclusion Policy



The policy will be reviewed annually as a minimum, unless lessons learnt or new legislation, national or local guidance suggests the need for an earlier date of review.

Policy review dates and changes

| Review date | By whom | Date ratified by governors/trustees | Date implemented |
|--------------------|------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| Oct 2024 | Catherine Byard | 22.11.24 | 27.11.24 |
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Rational

At Stonelow Junior School A decision to exclude a pupil, either for a fixed period or permanently, is seen as a last resort. The school is responsible for communicating to pupils, parents, and staff its expectations of standards of behaviour. A range of policies and procedures are in place to promote good behaviour, communication and appropriate conduct. No suspension will be initiated without first exhausting other measures (which can be seen below) or, in the case of a serious single incident, a suspension may be carried out by the Head Teacher or by a person delegated by the Head Teacher. Measures considered before suspension is considered:

- allocated time with FSW/teaching assistant
- assessment of social, emotional, and learning needs
- weekly meetings with parents and child.
- offer of an Early Help assessment.
- involvement of external agencies
- alternative curriculum options (e.g., Part time timetable-must be with parental agreement. Managed move- all schools in locality must be considered and with parental agreement. Child offered alternative provision within THE HIVE if capacity is there. Flexible timetable- Parents responsible for educating at home for part of the school week.)

Internal exclusion- preventative measure

This is an internal process within the school and is used when the objective is to remove the pupil from class, not from the school site, for disciplinary reasons. It may be a formal process within the school but is not a legal suspension, so suspensions legislation and guidance does not apply. There is no statutory maximum period for internal suspension but, if a school is regularly using internal suspensions, it should look at the pupil's learning and behaviour needs. The parent/s of the child will be notified on the day.

Suspensions

A suspension is one of the sanctions a school can give if a child does something that is against the school's behaviour and communication policy. This means that your child is not allowed on the school site for a precise period. This can be for as little as half a school day up to a maximum of 45 days in any one school year. A date will be set by the school for a return to the school. Whilst a pupil has a suspension, they should not return to the school premises, nor should they be in a public place during school hours. A suspension should be for the shortest time necessary; Ofsted evidence suggests that one to three days is usually enough to secure benefits without adverse educational consequences. However, a single serious incident or repeated suspensions will lead to a five-day suspension.

- Any pupil with a social worker or where a child is looked after: when the decision to suspend or exclude is made, the Head Teacher or by a person delegated by the Head Teacher, will notify the child's social worker and/or the virtual schools head teacher. All relevant protected characteristics will be held in due regard and will not be discriminated against.

Persistent or Cumulative Problems

Suspension for a period from half a day to five days for persistent or cumulative problems would be imposed only when the school had already offered and implemented a range of support and management strategies. These could include:

- discussion with the pupil
- discussions with parents
- checking on any possible provocation
- 1-1 provision with FSW and/or teaching assistant
- internal exclusion
- involvement of external agencies
- offer of an Early Help assessment.

Suspension will not be used for minor incidents (e.g., failure to do homework, lateness, poor academic performance, or breaches of uniform rules), except where these are persistent and defiant.

Single Incident Suspension may be used in response to a serious breach of school rules and policies or a disciplinary offence. In such cases the Head Teacher or by a person delegated by the Head Teacher, when establishing facts, will apply the civil standard of proof, i.e. 'on the balance of probability's' it is more likely than not that a fact is true, rather than the criminal standard of 'beyond reasonable doubt'. This means that the head teacher should accept that something has happened if it is more likely than it did not happen. The head teacher will always take account of their legal duty of care when sending a pupil home following an exclusion.

Permanent Exclusion

A permanent exclusion is a very serious decision, and the head teacher or by a person delegated by the Head Teacher will consult the Chair of schools Governing Body as soon as possible. It is used as a last resort, or it will be in response to a very serious one-off breach of school rules and policies, or a disciplinary offence such as:

- serious actual or threatened violence against another pupil or a member of staff
- possession or use of an illegal drug on school premises

- carrying or use of an offensive weapon or prohibited item
- persistent bullying
- persistent harassment in relation to protected characteristics
- persistent breaches of the schools Behaviour and communication policy.

This list is not exhaustive

Special educational needs and/or disabilities

The school must take account of any special educational needs when considering whether to exclude a pupil. We have a legal duty not to discriminate against SEND pupils by excluding them from school for behaviour related to their disability. The head teacher will ensure that reasonable steps have been taken by the school to respond to a pupil's SEND, so the pupil is not treated less favourably for reasons related to the SEND need. 'Reasonable steps' could include:

- differentiation in the school's behaviour policy
- developing strategies to modify the pupil's behaviour
- requesting external help for the pupil
- staff training.

Where reasonable adjustments to policies and practices have been made to accommodate a pupil's needs and to avoid the necessity for suspension as far as possible, suspension may be justified if there is a material and substantial reason for it. A specific incident affecting order and discipline in the school may be such a reason or if there are serious health and safety issues that put the school community at risk. Equally, the school must take account of any pupils identified as disadvantaged when considering whether to exclude a pupil. We have a moral duty not to discriminate against disadvantaged pupils by excluding them from school for behaviour related to their gap in learning. The Head Teacher will ensure that reasonable steps have been taken by the school to respond to a pupil's individual circumstances in relation to disadvantaged, so the pupil is not treated less favourably for reasons related to the disability. 'Reasonable steps' could include:

- differentiation in the school's behaviour policy
- developing strategies to modify the pupil's behaviour and support well-being including pastoral support
- requesting interventions and external help with the pupil
- staff training.

Tracking of data

Tracking of data through My Concern, the head Teacher will ensure there is analysis and tracking of suspensions to identify if there are any trends or trails. Where possible, the school will be proactive in preventative measures so that any identified context groups at higher risk are supported with greater measures to reduce the levels of suspension. This will be reported into the schools Governing Body.

Managed move

Supported Transfer In cases where the head teacher and parents agree that the progress of the pupil has been unsatisfactory and the pupil is unwilling or unable to profit from the educational opportunities offered, or if a parent has treated the school or members of its staff unreasonably, the head teacher will engage in the supported transfer process. This is not suspension and in such cases the head teacher will assist the parents in placing the pupil in another school. This is a permanent measure as a preventative measure to exclusion.

Removal of a pupil

Removal of a pupil from the school for other reasons the Head Teacher or by a person delegated by the Head Teacher may send a pupil home, after consultation with that pupil's parents and a health professional, as appropriate, if the pupil poses an immediate and serious risk to the health and safety of other pupils and staff, for example because of a diagnosed illness such as a notifiable disease. This is not a suspension and should be for the shortest possible time.

Suspension or permanent exclusion

If the Head Teacher or by a person delegated by the Head Teacher decides to exclude a pupil (suspension or permanent exclusion) they will:

- communicate with the Chair of the schools Governing Body (through direct call and/or head teacher report)
- Inform Local Authority
- ensure that there is sufficient recorded evidence to support the decision
- explain the decision to the pupil
- contact the parents, explain the decision, and ask that the child be collected
- send a letter to the parents confirming the reasons for the suspension, whether it is a permanent or suspension, the length of the suspension and any terms or conditions agreed for the pupil's return
- in cases of more than a day's suspension, ensure that appropriate work is set and that arrangements are in place for it to be marked
- plan how to address the pupil's needs on their return from suspension
- plan a meeting with parents and pupil on their return from suspension
- consider restorative justice. A suspension should not be enforced if doing so may put the safety of the pupil at risk. In cases where parents will not comply by, for example, refusing to collect the child, the child's welfare is the priority. In these cases, an immediate referral to Starting point, Children's Services will be made.

If the child has a social worker or is a looked after child the head teacher will contact the relevant agencies in the first instance.

The education of pupils if a suspension is needed for more than five days

The school must arrange suitable full-time education from the sixth day of an exclusion. The provision is commonly called alternative provision. Where the child has an EHCP, the local authority may need to review the plan, reassess the child's needs, in consultation with parents, with a view to identifying a new placement. Where a looked after child is excluded, the school should document the provision of immediate suitable education in the child's PEP.

The school should take reasonable steps to set and mark work for the child during the first 5 days of a suspension and school should set out the arrangements for this.

Any work set should be accessible and achievable by pupils outside of school. If the suspension is for more than 5 days, the school will work with the Attendance and Inclusion Team who will arrange alternative full-time education from day 6 (although it may start sooner)

The Head Teacher or by a person delegated by the Head Teacher should provide at least 48 hours' notice of the arrangements the school has made for this provision unless it starts before day 6; information should include the start date, start and finish times, where the provision will take place and who the child should report to. This information can be sent via letter or email.

Where a pupil has had a total of 15 days exclusion in one school term this can be alone or in conjunction with previous exclusions. If the parent has made representations the governing body must arrange a meeting to *consider* reinstatement within 15 school days of receiving notice of the suspension or permanent exclusion.

