



Lode Heath School

Name of Policy	Exclusion Policy
Lead	Mr N Hayfield
Governor Committee	BSII Committee
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1. Aims

Our school aims to ensure that:

- › The exclusion/suspensions process is applied fairly and consistently
- › The exclusion/suspensions process is understood by governors, staff, parents and students
- › Students in school are safe and happy
- › Students do not become NEET (not in education, employment or training)

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on statutory guidance from the Department for Education: Exclusion/suspension from maintained schools, academies and student referral units (PRUs) in England.

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

- › Section 52 of the Education Act 2002, as amended by the Education Act 2011
- › The School Discipline (Student Exclusion/suspensions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012

In addition, the policy is based on:

- › Part 7, chapter 2 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, which looks at parental responsibility for excluded students
- › Section 579 of the Education Act 1996, which defines 'school day'
- › The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Students) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended by The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Students) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014
- › School suspensions and permanent exclusions guidance. DfE, 2023

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. The decision to exclude/suspend

Only the Associate Headteacher, or in the absence of the Associate Headteacher, the Deputy Headteacher, can exclude/suspend a student from school. A permanent exclusion will 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 student from the school roll without a formal, permanent exclusion/suspension 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 student.”

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

A decision to exclude/suspend a student will be taken only:

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

Before deciding whether to exclude/suspend a student, either permanently or for a fixed period, the Associate Headteacher will:

- › Consider all the relevant facts and evidence, including whether the incident(s) leading to the exclusion/suspension were provoked
- › Give the student the opportunity to give their version of events
- › Consider if the student has special educational needs (SEN)

3.1 The balance of probabilities

If the Associate Headteacher is satisfied that on the balance of probabilities, the student did what he or she is alleged to have done, exclusion/suspension may be the outcome.

3.2 Individual consideration

In reaching a decision, the Associate Headteacher will always look at each case on its own merits. Therefore, a tariff system, fixing a standard penalty for a particular action, is both unfair and inappropriate.

3.3 Mitigation to meeting individual need

In reaching a decision, the Associate Headteacher will always look at each case on its own merits. Therefore, in some cases, a mitigation or reasonable adjustment may be valid and actioned – case by case basis

4. Definition

For the purposes of exclusions/suspensions, the 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

5.1 The Associate Headteacher

Informing parents

The Associate Headteacher will immediately provide the following information, in writing, to the parents of an excluded/suspended student:

- › The reason(s) for the exclusion/suspension
- › The length of a fixed-term exclusion/suspension or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent
- › Information about parents'/carers' right to make representations about the exclusion/suspension to the governing body and how the student may be involved in this
- › How any representations should be made
- › Where there is a legal requirement for the governing body to meet to consider the reinstatement of a student, and that parents/carers have a right to attend a meeting, be represented at a meeting (at their own expense) and to bring a friend

Note: In the case of a fixed-period suspension which does not bring the student's total number of days exclusion to more than five in a term, the governing board must consider any representations made by parents/ carers, but it cannot direct reinstatement and is not required to arrange a meeting with parents/ carers

The Associate Headteacher will also notify parents/ carers by the end of the afternoon session on the day their child is excluded that for the first 5 school days of an exclusion/suspension, or until the start date of any alternative provision where this is earlier, parents/carers are legally required to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours without a good reason. Parents/carers 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 an exclusion/suspension:

- › 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 student 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 an exclusion/suspension, in which case the information can be provided with less than 48 hours' notice with parents'/carers consent.

Informing the governing body and local authority

The Associate Headteacher will immediately notify the governing body and the local authority (LA) of:

- › A permanent exclusion/suspension, including when a fixed-period exclusion/suspension is followed by a decision to permanently exclude a student
- › Exclusions/suspensions which would result in the student being excluded for more than 5 school days (or more than 10 lunchtimes) in a term
- › Exclusions/suspensions which would result in the student missing a public examination

For a permanent exclusion, if the student lives outside the Local Authority in which the school is located, the Associate Headteacher will also immediately inform the student's 'home authority' of the exclusion/suspension and the reason(s) for it without delay.

For all other exclusion/suspensions, the Associate Headteacher will notify the governing body and Local Authority once a term.

5.2 The governing body

The governing body has a duty to consider the reinstatement of an excluded student (see section 6).

Within 14 days of receipt of a request, the governing body will provide the secretary of state and the Local Authority with information about any exclusion/suspensions in the last 12 months.

For a fixed-period exclusion/suspension of more than 5 school days, the Local Authority will arrange suitable full-time education for the student. This provision will begin no later than the sixth day of the exclusion/suspension.

Provision does not have to be arranged for students in the final year of compulsory education who do not have any further public examinations to sit.

5.3 The Local Authority

For permanent exclusion, the Local Authority is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education to begin no later than the sixth day of the exclusion/suspension.

6. Considering the reinstatement of a student

The governing body will consider the reinstatement of an excluded student within 15 school days of receiving the notice of the exclusion/suspension if:

- The exclusion is permanent
- It is a fixed-term exclusion/suspension which would bring the student's total number of school days of exclusion/suspension to more than 15 in a term or more than 45 days in a curriculum year.
- It would result in a student missing a public examination or national curriculum test

If requested to do so by parents/carers, the governing body will consider the reinstatement of an excluded student within 50 school days of receiving notice of the exclusion/suspension if the student would be excluded from school for more than 5 school days, but less than 15, in a single term.

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

The governing body can either:

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

In reaching a decision, the governing body will consider whether the exclusion/suspension was lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair and whether the Associate 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 exclude.

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

The governing body will notify, in writing, the Associate Headteacher, parents and the Local Authority of its decision, along with reasons for its decision, without delay.

Where an exclusion is permanent, the governing body's decision will also include the following:

- The fact that it is permanent
- Notice of parents'/carers 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 student's SEN are considered to be relevant to the exclusion/suspension
 - That, regardless of whether the excluded student has recognised SEN, parents/carers have a right to require the Local Authority to appoint an SEN expert to attend the review
 - Details of the role of the SEND expert and that there would be no cost to parents/carers for this appointment

- That parents/carers must make clear if they wish for an SEN expert to be appointed in any application for a review
 - That parents/carers may, at their own expense, appoint someone to make written and/or oral representations to the panel, and parents/carers may also bring a friend to the review
- › That if parents/carers believe that the exclusion/suspension 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 (IRP)

If parents/carers apply for an independent review, the Local Authority will arrange for an independent panel to review the decision of the governing body not to reinstate a permanently excluded student.

Applications for an independent review must be made within 15 school days of notice being given to the parents by the governing body of its decision to not reinstate a student.

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 Associate 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 Arden Multi Academy Trust, or governing body of the excluding school
- › Are the Associate Headteacher of the excluding school, or have held this position in the last 5 years
- › Are an employee of the Arden Multi Academy Trust, or the governing body, 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 Arden Multi Academy Trust, school, governing body, parents/carers or student, 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 body's decision
- › Recommend that the governing body reconsiders reinstatement
- › Quash the governing body'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 student's name will be removed from the school admissions register if:

- 15 school days have passed since the parents/carers were notified of the exclusion panel's decision to not reinstate the student and no application has been made for an independent review panel, or
- The parents/carers 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 body will wait until that review has concluded before removing a student's name from the register.

Where alternative provision has been made for an excluded student and they attend it, code B (education off-site) or code D (dual registration) will be used on the attendance register.

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

9. Returning from a fixed-term exclusion/suspension

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

The following measures may be implemented when a student returns from a fixed-term exclusion/suspension:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| ➤ Agreeing a behaviour contract | ➤ Pastoral monitoring |
| ➤ Putting a student 'on report' | ➤ Band changes |
| ➤ Refocus | ➤ Class changes |
| ➤ Loss of social time | ➤ Reduced timetable |
| ➤ Reintegration plan | ➤ Alternative provision |

10. Monitoring arrangements

The Deputy Headteacher for Behaviour, Safety and Welfare monitors the number of exclusion/suspensions every term and reports back to the Executive Headteacher of Arden Multi Academy Trust, the Associate Headteacher for Lode Heath School and the governing body. They also liaise with the local authority to ensure suitable full-time education for excluded students.

This policy will be reviewed by the Deputy Headteacher for Behaviour, Safety and Welfare every year. At every review, the policy will be approved the governing body.

11. Links with other policies

This exclusion/suspensions policy is linked to our

- Behaviour policy
- SEN policy and information report

Appendix 1: Independent review panel training

The Local Authority must ensure 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 exclusion/suspensions, 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 and the clerk of a review panel
- The duties of Associate Headteachers, governing body's 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