



West End Primary School

We work hard together to be excellent in all that we do. We are confident and compassionate, happy and have fun.

Suspensions and Exclusions Policy

Document Detail	
Policy written by:	Becky Linton
Approved by:	
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Vision

Our vision is to nurture every learner in a caring and supportive environment, to inspire discovery through curiosity and creativity, and to foster respect for ourselves, others, and the world we share. Good behaviour in schools is essential to ensure that all pupils benefit from the opportunities provided by education. Therefore, the government recognises that school exclusions, managed moves and off-site direction are essential behaviour management tools for headteachers and can be used to establish high standards of behaviour in schools and maintain the safety of school communities. (DfE Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance August 2024)

Introduction

At Bramley St Peter's C of E Primary School, we are committed to providing a safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environment where every child can thrive. Our behaviour expectations are designed to promote positive relationships, encourage responsibility, and ensure that teaching and learning take place without disruption. We are committed to creating an environment within our school that reflects the principles of the Christian faith in which each individual is valued equally and is aligned to our school vision and values, in particular the value of 'nurture'. There are occasions when it is necessary and appropriate to suspend students for a fixed period, or, in very rare cases, permanently exclude. In most cases permanent exclusion will be the last resort after a full range of measures have been tried to improve the student's behaviour and engender a sense of personal responsibility. Whenever suspensions or permanent exclusions are used, the DfE Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance August 2024 is followed. At Bramley St Peter's C of E Primary School, students identified as being at risk of suspension and permanent exclusion are provided with strategies to meet individual needs so that school leaders can support the pupil and their family as much as possible. Permanent exclusion is viewed as the strongest sanction possible and is available to the school only through the authority of the Headteacher, or Deputy Headteacher in their absence.

A decision to exclude a student from the school should be taken only if: a) There is a serious breach or persistent breaches of the Behaviour Policy and b) Where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others such as staff or pupils in the school.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the process for fixed term suspensions and permanent exclusions for the benefit of parents/carers, staff and students to ensure a consistent and fair process for all concerned.

Prevention of Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Managing serious or persistent problems

- School leaders accept that it is the behaviour that is the problem and not the child.
- The behaviour of children giving cause for concern will be assessed.
- Triggers or the build-up to an event/action will be established.
- Individual programmes will be planned to help modify inappropriate behaviour.
- The child may be referred to the Leeds SEMH Team, or other professionals, for staff to receive advice and guidance.
- Parents/carers will be invited into school to discuss their child's behaviour with their child's class teacher and the Behaviour Lead/Headteacher/Deputy Head. An individual Behaviour Support Plan will be drawn up which takes parents'/carers' views into consideration. Parents/carers will then be kept informed of their child's progress.

The aims of the Behaviour Policy are:

- To provide a clear, fair and consistent approach to behaviour based on nurturing principles and restorative practices.
- To foster, nurture and value strong and healthy relationships in recognition of the importance of this as a lifelong skill.
- To provide a safe, respectful, equitable and happy school ethos where learning opportunities are maximised.
- To establish a framework for staff, which focuses on maintaining clear boundaries, high expectations and focusing on positive recognition. To support good behaviour school staff ensure that the school rules are followed and these are regularly reinforced in class and Collective Worship to ensure that the children are clear about the levels of expectation of their behaviour and reviewed to ensure consistent use across the whole school.

Before redirection strategies are used, we need to ensure that all necessary adaptations are in place in the classroom so that every child has the chance to be successful. For more serious incidents, the consequence ladder may not be followed in sequence and children can be given the higher-level consequence as appropriate without the first steps taking place.

Suspension

A suspension means that a student is not allowed to come to the school for a fixed period of time. Students can also be suspended for lunchtime periods if behaviour at lunchtime is disruptive. A student may be suspended for one or more fixed periods (up to a maximum of 45 school days in an academic year). Suspension will not be used for minor incidents, poor academic performance or punctuality concerns, etc. The length of suspension is at the discretion of the Headteacher but will be for the shortest time deemed appropriate. Procedure after a decision to suspend a student has been made:

1. Parents/carers will be informed by telephone that a decision to suspend has been made. This will be followed by a letter of confirmation outlining the reasons for the decision.

2. School will assign work for the pupil to complete during the period of time not in school. This will be via Seesaw. The option to send paper copies will be given.
3. Any suspension that leads to a student totalling over 15 school days of suspension in a term must be referred to the Governors' Pupil Disciplinary Committee. This Committee must meet within 15 school days of receiving notice of the suspension. The Headteacher and parents/carers will be invited to make representations to the Committee. The Committee will consider whether the Headteacher's decision to suspend was lawful, reasonable, procedurally fair, and proportionate, and will make a decision on whether or not to reinstate the pupil i.e. whether or not to uphold the suspension which led to the student totalling over 15 school days of suspension in a term. The clerk will inform parents/carers in writing of the Governors' decision within 1 school day.
4. Students will have a reintegration meeting after a fixed-term suspension (normally with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher) where it is expected that parents/carers will attend with the pupil in question. The purpose of the meeting is to promote an improvement in behaviour, to emphasise the joint responsibility between school and parents/carers regarding the student and to explore measures to prevent further misbehaviour.
5. The school will keep a formal record of all fixed-term suspensions.

Pupil welfare during suspension

1. The parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that the pupil is not present in a public place e.g. parks, shopping centres at any time during school hours. (Leeds City Council may issue fines to parents/carers if this is breached.)
2. The school will set work, which will be set on Seesaw.
3. After day 5 of suspension the school will arrange for alternative temporary education – usually at a different local school, or via the Area Inclusion Partnership.
4. If a student is suspended at lunchtimes and is entitled to Free School Meals, then the school can make arrangements for a packed lunch to be provided if parents/carers wish.

Permanent Exclusion

Permanent exclusion is very rare as it is a very serious matter and is never a decision undertaken lightly. Only the Headteacher, or Deputy Headteacher in their absence, can permanently exclude a pupil. Situations leading to permanent exclusion After all other initiatives to improve behaviour have been exhausted permanent exclusion may result from serious on-going behaviour problems or the failure of an off-site direction. There will, however, be exceptional circumstances where, in the Headteacher's judgment, it is appropriate to permanently exclude a student for a first or 'one-off' offence. These may include: a) Serious actual or threatened violence against another student or a member

of staff. b) Sexual abuse or assault. c) Supplying or being in possession of drugs or illegal substances (including alcohol) on the premises or on the way to or from school in the community d) Students who have a dangerous weapon on the premises or on the way to or from school in the community.

These instances are not exhaustive, but indicate the severity of such offences and the fact that such behaviour can affect the discipline and well-being of the school community. The decision to permanently exclude a student is never taken lightly. The DfE Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance August 2024 also states on page 11 that ‘a pupil’s behaviour outside school can be considered grounds for a suspension or permanent exclusion.’ Procedure for decision making The standard of proof to be applied is the civil standard of proof i.e. on the balance of probabilities if it is more probable than not that the student did what they are alleged to have done, the Headteacher may permanently exclude the student. Permanent exclusion will not be imposed in the heat of the moment. In exceptional circumstances, usually where further evidence has come to light through an investigation, the Headteacher may issue a permanent exclusion to begin immediately after the end of a suspension.

Before deciding whether to exclude a student permanently the Headteacher will: a) Ensure that a thorough investigation has been carried out; b) Consider all the evidence available to support the allegations, taking account of the school’s behaviour and equal opportunities policies, and, where applicable, Race Relations legislation and Disability Discrimination legislation; c) Allow the student to give their version of events; d) Check whether the incident may have been provoked, for example by bullying or by racial or sexual harassment; e) If necessary, consult others, but not anyone who may later have a role in reviewing the Headteacher’s decision, for example a member of the Governing Board. The DfE Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance August 2024 is followed at Bramley St Peter’s C of E Primary School. The guidance states: 1. The Headteacher (or Deputy Headteacher in their absence) are able to cancel an exclusion before the Governing Board has met to consider whether the pupil should be reinstated. This practice is sometimes known as withdrawing or rescinding an exclusion. If this occurs, the parents, the governing board and the local authority, must be notified and, if relevant, the social worker and VSH. 2. 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.

Procedure after a decision to permanently exclude has been made: 1. Parents/carers will be informed without delay that a decision to permanently exclude has been made – either by telephone or in a meeting with the Headteacher. This will be followed by a letter of confirmation outlining the reasons for the decision and the Governors’ Pupil

Disciplinary Committee process (sent electronically or via the post). 2. The school will inform the parent/carer of the date of the Governors' Pupil Disciplinary Committee meeting at which governors will hear the school's case and the parents/carers/student's case. 3. Before the meeting, the school will send all the relevant material to the parents/carers and the Governors on the committee 5 school days in advance of the meeting. 4. The Governors will hear the case, at which parents/carers may be accompanied by a friend or representative. Governors will consider whether the Headteacher's decision to permanently exclude was lawful, reasonable, procedurally fair, and proportionate, and will make a decision on whether or not to reinstate the pupil i.e. whether or not to uphold the permanent exclusion. The clerk will inform parents/carers in writing of the Governors' decision within 1 school day. 5. Parents/carers do have a right of appeal to an Independent Review Panel in the event that Governors uphold the permanent exclusion. Information regarding this will be included in the letter sent to parents/carers. Parents/carers must make this request within 15 school days of receiving notification of the permanent exclusion, and the panel should meet to review the case within 15 school days of the parents'/carers' request. Parents/carers have a right to require the Local Authority to appoint a SEND expert to attend the review, regardless of whether the pupil has recognised special educational needs.

The panel may make one of three decisions: • uphold the Governing Board's decision not to reinstate; • recommend that the Governing Board reconsiders reinstatement; or • quash the Governing Board's decision and direct that the Governing Board reconsiders reinstatement. Pupil welfare following a permanent exclusion 1. The student may not come to the school or into the school grounds unless invited in. 2. The parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that the pupil is not present in a public place e.g. parks, shopping centres at any time during school hours. (Leeds City Council may issue fines to parents if this is breached.) 3. From day 6 onwards of permanent exclusion the Local Authority will arrange for alternative temporary education – usually via the Area Inclusion Partnership.