



Shoreham Academy

The best in everyone™

Part of United Learning

Title	Exclusions Policy
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Last Revised	July 2025
Next Review Date	July 2026

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Introduction

The current DFE guidance to be followed in relation to exclusion from school was published in [September 2022](#) and relates to all exclusions which occur from 1 September 2022. In this policy reference to 'exclusion' includes both fixed term and permanent exclusions. Where the policy is referring to a specific type (i.e. fixed term or permanent) of exclusion, the wording will make this clear.

Principals, Local Governing Boards, United Learning, independent review panel members and clerks, and SEN experts must by law have regard to this guidance when deciding:

- whether to exclude a pupil;
- whether to uphold an exclusion;
- whether to direct reinstatement;
- whether to recommend or direct that the governing body considers the exclusion again.

Schools must have policies, procedures and staff training in place that will promote good behaviour. Behaviour policies must be widely publicised so that pupils, parents and all school staff are aware of the standards of behaviour expected and the range of sanctions.

Exclusion is recognised as an appropriate sanction, however permanent exclusion should only be used as a last resort when a range of other strategies have been tried and exhausted. Most exclusions are the result of persistent breaches of the school's discipline/behaviour policy. A permanent exclusion for a serious breach (e.g. a one-off or first offence) should only happen in the most serious of circumstances.

Maintained schools and academies have the power to direct a pupil off-site for education to improve his or her behaviour. A pupil can also transfer to another school/academy as part of a 'managed move'. The latter requires the consent of the parent/carer.

This policy provides an overview of the exclusion process. It should be read alongside current DFE Exclusion Guidance, which should be followed in all cases. Advice and support with regard to exclusion from school is available from central office.

Any decision of a school or academy in relation to exclusion must be made in line with the principles of the Human Rights Act – that it is lawful, rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate.

Any reference in this policy to parent(s) includes all those with parental responsibility.

Exclusion from school

In some circumstances, schools have agreed to participate in what are known as Fair Access Panels (FAPs) which are local agreements between schools and local authorities that significantly reduce or eradicate the need to permanently exclude pupils. Where a school is part of such an arrangement, the sections of this policy that refer to permanent exclusion are effectively redundant, but have been retained in case a particular FAP agreement ceases to operate.

There are two types of exclusion:

1. Suspension (Formerly Fixed term exclusion)

This is an exclusion for a **fixed number of days**. The pupil must remain at home up to the first 5 days (during which time the school should take reasonable steps to set and mark work for the pupil). For a suspension of more than 5 days, full time education provision commences from the 6th day and must be organised by the excluding school. A pupil may not be suspended for more than 45 days in a school year. A pupil is entitled to return to school once the period of suspension has ended.

2. Permanent Exclusion

This is where the Principal's intention is that the pupil should not be allowed to return to the school. The decision should only be taken if:

- (a) the pupil has committed a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy; and
- (b) allowing the pupil to remain in the academy seriously harms the learning or welfare of the pupil or others in the school.

In most cases, this will be after a wide range of alternative strategies have been tried without success. However, there will be exceptional circumstances where, in the Principal's judgement, it might be appropriate to permanently exclude a child for a single serious breach (one-off or first offence). Examples of misconduct that might be considered as a serious breach are set out in Appendix 1.

3. Unofficial suspension

Formal suspension is the only legal method of removal if a pupil is sent home for disciplinary reasons (including non-structured times). ***"Informal or unofficial suspensions are unlawful"*** regardless of whether they are done with the agreement of parents or carers.

The decision to exclude

1. General Advice

Only the Principal, (or, in their absence, the acting Principal or teacher in charge) can exclude a pupil. The Principal may consult others, but not anyone who may later have a role in reviewing the Principal's decision.

Exclusion should not be imposed in the heat of the moment, unless there is an immediate threat to the safety of others in the school or the pupil concerned.

The exclusion process falls into **three stages**:

1. Decision by the Principal to exclude.
2. Consideration of the Principal's decision by the Local Governing Board (LGB), usually delegated to a Behaviour Committee.
3. [In the case of a permanent exclusion, and only if requested by parents], consideration of the Principal's decision by an Independent Review Panel.

The initial decision on whether to exclude is therefore for a Principal to take. Where practical, Principals should ensure that a thorough investigation has been carried out and allow and encourage pupils to present their case before taking the decision to exclude. Establishing facts are to be decided on the balance of probabilities.

Whilst exclusion may still be an appropriate sanction, Principals should take account of any contributing factors that are identified after an incident of poor behaviour has occurred. For example, where it comes to light that a pupil has suffered bereavement has mental health issues or has been subject to bullying or provocation.

Early intervention to address underlying causes of disruptive behaviour should include an assessment of whether appropriate provision is in place to support any SEN or disability that a pupil may have. Principals should also consider the use of a multi-agency assessment (including CAF) for pupils who demonstrate persistent disruptive behaviour. Such assessments may pick up unidentified special educational needs but the scope of the assessment could go further, for example, by seeking to identify mental health or family problems.

As part of considering each permanent exclusion, the **Principal must consult with the Managing Director** United Learning (or delegated executive) **before** the decision is reached and the case presented to the Behaviour Committee.

2. Suspension or Permanent

In many cases investigation may not be immediately possible if, for example, the incident is complex and a number of witness statements are required.

In this case, a Principal may issue a suspension for a short period (a maximum of 5 school days is advised):

- to allow investigation to take place;

- to give opportunity for a reasoned decision.

In this case the letter informing of the suspension should clearly state the reason for the suspension is **“to allow investigation into an incident which may result in permanent exclusion”**. The letter should not state that the suspension is, in itself, punishment for the incident under investigation. Once the investigation is complete, a further letter should be sent containing one of the following;

- notification for the pupil to return to school;
- notification of a permanent exclusion.

In exceptional cases, usually where further evidence, not available at the time of the investigation, has come to light a suspension may be extended or converted to a permanent exclusion. Similarly, a Principal may choose to withdraw a Permanent exclusion in the light of new evidence.

3. Pupils from vulnerable groups, Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Schools and governing boards have a statutory duty to do their best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has SEN and to avoid excluding permanently any pupil with a statement of SEN. Where a pupil has a statement of SEN and is at risk of exclusion, schools should consider an early annual review or interim/emergency review.

Equality Duty

The law places a general duty on academies and maintained schools, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.

Furthermore such schools must advance equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different groups (for example different races, those with a disability and those without, age, gender) and foster good relations between all people.

The law also places a number of specific duties on schools, including duties to assess the impact of policies and to monitor the operation of those policies on pupils, parents and staff in the context of the public sector equality duty.

Disabled Pupils

Schools have a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 not to discriminate against disabled pupils by excluding them from school because of their disability. This applies to permanent and suspensions.

Race Relations

The need to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination, the advancement of equality of opportunity and good relations between people from different racial groups is set out in the public sector equality duty.

Looked After Children

Looked After Children are at risk of low attainment in school and exclusion. Schools should be especially sensitive to exclusion issues where Looked After Children are concerned. Schools should try every practicable means to avoid exclusion.

4. Behaviour outside School

An academy has the right to make decisions about behaviour taking place on trips, outings, sporting fixtures, or travel/movement in the vicinity of the academy. Subject to the requirements of this policy, the Principal (or designated teacher in charge) may exclude students even if the circumstances giving rise to exclusion occur when the student is out of school. Schools' own policies should make clear how this operates in practice, in line with the DfE guidance. If there is an incident outside of school then the Academy are, on occasion, guided by police investigations.

5. Police Involvement and Parallel Criminal Proceedings

The process of exclusion from school and criminal proceedings can and should run parallel. However, in certain circumstances it may be appropriate for a decision to permanently exclude to be postponed if a police investigation has not been concluded. In such circumstances, an extended suspension should be used.

Responsibilities of the Principal

Principals should follow the procedures set out in the DfE Exclusion Guidance, which has been designed to ensure fairness and openness in the handling of exclusions. Following the guidance will reduce the chance of any successful legal challenge to the exclusion at a later stage.

1. Informing parents

Once a decision to exclude has been reached, the parent must be notified without delay, ideally by telephone, followed up with a letter preferably within one school day. There are specific requirements for what should be stated in the letter. Copies of model letters can be found in the appendices of this policy.

It is important to ensure the reason/s for the exclusion are stated clearly in the letter, as further reasons cannot be introduced at a later date.

2. Informing Governors and the LA

Without delay, preferably within one school day, the Principal must inform the governing board and

LA of:

- all permanent exclusions (if the pupil resides in another authority, the home LA should also be informed).
- exclusions that would take the term's total for that pupil to more than five days.
- exclusions that would result in the pupil missing a public examination or national curriculum test.

All other suspensions should be notified termly. Schools must keep a record of all exclusions for reporting to the DFE Census.

Pupils who have been permanently excluded should not be deleted from the school roll until the independent review panel process is completed, or the deadline for review is reached and no review has been applied for.

Where a suspension results in a pupil missing an examination, although there is no right for the excluded pupil to take such an examination (or test) on school premises, the school should exercise its discretion to allow the pupil to enter the school premises for the sole purpose of taking the examination.

3. Education provision for excluded pupils

The school's obligation to provide education continues while the pupil is on roll. In all cases of exclusion work should be set from day one and marked.

Where a pupil is given a suspension of six school days or longer, the school must arrange full-time educational provision from and including the sixth day of suspension. This should be day 1 where possible for pupils with SEN and looked after children.

During the initial period of up to five school days, the parents are solely responsible for the child and must ensure that their child is not present in a public place during normal school hours without reasonable justification.

From the sixth day of a permanent exclusion, the home LA is statutorily responsible for ensuring that suitable full-time education is provided. Schools must ensure that the LA is notified on day one of any permanent exclusion.

4. Governing board meetings

If a meeting of the LGB Behaviour Committee is to be held, the Principal should prepare all supporting papers for the exclusion and pass them to the Clerk for circulation at least 5 days in advance of the meeting. The paperwork should include:

- The principal's case for exclusion.
- A copy of the exclusion letter of notification to parent.
- Attendance records.

- Details of any Pastoral Support Program – or Individual Education Plan with clearly identified behaviour targets, where appropriate.
- Records of interventions.
- Details of any alternative or enhanced curriculum.

5. Reintegration interviews

Reintegration interviews are not mandatory but are good practice.

A suspension must not be extended if such an interview cannot be arranged in time or the parents do not attend. Pupils have a right to return to school as soon as the period of suspension ends.

Role of the LGB (Local Governing Board)

The United Learning Trust Charity Board has delegated powers to the LGB to review exclusions and must consider any representations about an exclusion made by the parents of the excluded pupil. The LGB usually delegates some or all of its functions in respect of exclusions to a committee consisting of at least three governors and such a committee may be called the Behaviour Committee.

The LGB's role is to review exclusions. The LGB can either uphold an exclusion, or direct reinstatement immediately or by a particular date. The LGB cannot extend a fixed term exclusion nor substitute it with a permanent exclusion.

The Behaviour Committee, which meets to consider any exclusion must be made up of at least three members who do not have any connection with the pupil or incident that would affect their ability to act impartially. The Chair, who must be a member of the LGB, has the casting vote in all cases where an even number of members is considering the case.

The governors should appoint a Clerk to the Behaviour Committee to handle the administrative arrangements. The Clerk's responsibilities are described later.

The Behaviour Committee of the governing body has a duty to meet within 15 school days and consider the reinstatement of an excluded pupil if:

- the exclusion is permanent;
- it is a suspension which would bring the pupil's total number of school days of exclusion to more than 15 in a term; or
- it would result in a pupil missing a public examination or national curriculum test
(The Committee should make all efforts to hold the meeting before the exam/test, but if this is not possible the Chair of Governors can consider the exclusion independently and decide whether or not to reinstate the pupil. Where this happens, parents still have the right to make representations to the governing body).

Where a pupil is excluded from school for a suspension of more than 5 but not more than 15 school days in a single term, and if requested to do so by the parents, the Behaviour Committee must meet and consider the reinstatement of an excluded pupil within 50 school days of receiving notice of the exclusion.

In the case of one or more suspensions totaling 5 days or less in a school term, the Behaviour Committee must consider any written representations from the parent. They cannot direct reinstatement in this case. For the avoidance of doubt there is no obligation to meet with the parents regarding their representations.

In all exclusion cases, the governing board should comply with the statutory time limits, but are not relieved of their obligation to carry out the relevant duty if they fail to do so. Accordingly, their decision will not be invalid simply on the grounds that it was made out of time.

1. Prior to the meeting

The governing board should invite the parent and principal to the meeting, at a time and place convenient to all parties. The parent can be accompanied by a friend or legal representative at their request. A parent may also invite an LA representative to attend the meeting as an observer but representations can only be made by the LA with the consent of the LGB.

The pupil is also entitled to attend the meeting, and should be encouraged to participate, taking into account their age and understanding.

Governors should read all the paperwork and prepare relevant questions to assist them in making a decision.

2. Procedure for the meeting

An agenda for Behaviour Committee meetings is set out later in this policy. The meeting should be conducted in line with guidance on natural justice:

- the principal and parents should all enter the room together, at the invitation of the Committee, at the beginning of the meeting;
- parents must not receive any impression that the Principal and Committee have discussed the exclusion prior to all parties being invited into the meeting;
- all parties, except the Committee and the clerk, should be asked to leave the room before the Committee discuss their views and make a decision.

Following this procedure ensures that all parties have an opportunity to present their views and ask questions. At the meeting, the Behaviour Committee should consider;

- any representations made by the parent and the pupil;

- whether the principal has complied with the exclusion procedure and has had regard to the Secretary of State’s Guidance on Exclusion;
- on the balance of probabilities, has the pupil done what they are accused of; • whether:
 - allowing the pupil to remain in the academy seriously harms the learning or welfare of the student or others in the school;
 - the behaviour is a serious breach of the school behaviour policy. ○ and finally, in most cases, that a wide range of possible strategies to improve a pupil’s behaviour were tried and have failed. Strategies could include the use of a Pastoral Support Program or an alternative curriculum in the case of a pupil in KS4. Governors should have particular regard to:
- the needs of children with Special Educational Needs and those with disabilities (refer to the Equality Act 2010);
- the needs of Looked After Children.

3. Governing Board’s Decision

A checklist for Behaviour Committees is available in the appendices. This should be used when making the final decision for every permanent exclusion.

The Behaviour Committee must inform the parent, principal and the LA of their decision, in writing without delay, preferably within one school day of the meeting, stating their reasons. Where the pupil resides in a different LA, they must also inform the pupil’s ‘home’ LA.

A note of the Behaviour Committee’s views on the exclusion should be placed on the pupil’s school record with copies of relevant papers.

If the Behaviour Committee directs reinstatement, this should take place as soon as possible. No conditions can be attached to any direction to reinstate the pupil save that the Committee can direct reinstatement on a particular date.

Where the Behaviour Committee upholds a permanent exclusion, there are specific requirements for what information should be included in the letter to parents. Model letters are contained in the Appendices.

Role of the Clerk to the Behaviour Committee

1. Background

The Behaviour Committee may appoint a Clerk. The Clerk must not be a member of the governing board or the Principal.

The role of the Clerk is to handle the administrative arrangements for considering exclusions. The Clerk should not have taught the pupil or been involved in any of the incidents involved in the case, and should not contribute to the meeting other than in an administrative capacity. Where possible the Clerk should be experienced in exclusion matters so that the meeting can progress smoothly.

2. Before the Meeting

When the Principal notifies the Clerk that s/he has excluded a pupil for more than five days, the Clerk should:

- ensure that the Principal's letter of notification has been sent to all relevant parties and that any further information is being prepared;
- set up a meeting of the Behaviour Committee within the timescales (allowing two days for receipt of notification) and formally invite the parents and Principal to the meeting at a time and place convenient to all parties;
- obtain written information/statements and circulate to all parties at least five days in advance of the meeting, along with a list of those who will be attending and a copy of the procedure for the meeting (this set out overleaf).

3. At the meeting

The Clerk should:

- ensure that the Behaviour Committee has all of the information it requires, and that it has appointed a Chair for the meeting;
- invite all other parties in to the meeting at the same time, when the Behaviour Committee has indicated it is ready to begin;
- prepare a written record of the meeting;
- stay with the Behaviour Committee to help them with reference to his/her notes of evidence and in wording their decision; • record the Behaviour Committee's decision and reasons for it.

Procedure for the Behaviour Committee

1. Before the Meeting

- Election of Chair for meeting (usually the Chair of the Behaviour Committee).
- Confirm arrangements for a clerk to record the meeting (should not take any part in the proceedings).

2. During the Meeting - Agenda

Introductions The

Chair should:

- explain the purpose of the meeting, which will be: to hear any representations the parents and the pupil may wish to make; and for the committee to consider whether or not to uphold the exclusion;
- circulate copies of this procedure and;
- go through the procedure for the meeting as outlined below.

A decision will be made whether or not to include the pupil. The involvement of the pupil in the meeting should be encouraged, unless there are strong reasons for this not to happen.

The Principal's Case for Exclusion

The Principal will be invited to explain what has happened to lead to his/her decision to exclude the pupil and summarise his/her reasons for it. He/she may ask other relevant colleagues to help explain what has happened.

Questions to the Principal from the Parents

The parents and/or friend will be given the opportunity to ask questions of the principal and his/her colleagues.

Questions to the Principal from the Committee

The committee will be given the opportunity to ask questions of the principal and his/her colleagues.

The Parents' Representations/Views

The parents, pupil and/or friend will be invited to present their views concerning the exclusion and any other related matters.

Questions to the Parents from the Principal

The principal will be given the opportunity to ask questions of the parents, pupil and/or friend.

Questions to the Parents from the Committee

The governors will be given the opportunity to ask questions of the parents, pupil and/or friend.

Any other related matters

Any other questions

Summary by the Principal of the case for exclusion

Summary by the parents of their representations/views

At the end of the Representations Stage of the Meeting

The Chair should explain:

- That there are two possible outcomes from this meeting:
 - that the governors direct the Principal to reinstate the pupil; or
 - that the governors uphold the Principal's decision to exclude the pupil;
- That the governors will be the only people involved in the decision making for this meeting.
- That the governors' decision will be communicated to the parents, Principal and the Local Authority in writing without delay, preferably within one school day of the meeting and, if applicable, that the governors would be prepared to make their decision known verbally prior to this.
- That everyone but the committee members and the clerk to the committee will now be asked to withdraw.

Making the Decision

- The Principal, the parent and the pupil may be invited back into the meeting to offer further information and/or clarification. All parties should be invited in together.
- The governors should complete the Checklist (see appendix 7), in order to determine whether the Principal has complied with all of the necessary procedural requirements.
- Having completed the Checklist, the governors should then make their decision and record their reasons for their decision.
- The committee should ensure that the necessary arrangements are made to inform parents, the Principal and the Local Authority without delay, preferably within one school day.

3. After the Meeting

The Behaviour Committee should;

- inform the parent, the Principal and the LA of the decision, in writing without delay, preferably within one school day of the meeting, stating the reasons for the decision. Where the pupil resides in a different LA, they must also inform the pupil's 'home' LA.
- a note of the governing body's views on the exclusion should be placed on the pupil's school record with copies of relevant papers.
- where the Behaviour Committee upholds a permanent exclusion, there are specific requirements for what information should be included in the letter to parents. Model letters are contained in the appendices.

The role of United Learning

The LA does not have a decision-making role in the exclusion process for any school. The Charity Board has delegated this responsibility to each LGB. As part of considering each permanent exclusion, however, the Principal must consult fully with the Managing Director United Learning (or delegated executive) before a decision is reached and the case presented to the Behaviour Committee.

It is the Behaviour Committee which has the duty to review the Principal's decision to exclude.

Education of excluded pupils

The LA is required to arrange full time educational provision for permanently excluded pupils from the 6th day of a permanent exclusion. Once a Principal has decided to permanently exclude a pupil, the LA will arrange to assess the pupil's needs and how to meet them (even though the exclusion might still be overturned by the school governors). The pupil's name will be deleted from the school roll only if:

- (i) the pupil was permanently excluded; and
- (ii) 15 school days have passed since the parents were notified of the Behaviour Committee's decision to uphold the permanent exclusion; or
- (iii) the parents have stated in writing they will not be applying for an independent review panel.

It will be the responsibility of the LA to offer an alternative school place.

Independent Review Panels

Each LGB must take responsibility for setting up and training Independent Review Panels or make arrangements to use the service provided by the Local Authority (LA). Note that the Independent Review Panel is only involved in reviewing permanent exclusions and only if requested by the parent/carer of the excluded pupil, and/or the pupil if over 18

1. Notifying parents

When a permanent exclusion is upheld by the Behaviour Committee, the Committee's decision letter to the parent must state the reasons for the decision, give the last day for lodging a review (within 15 school days) and explain that the grounds for the review should be set out in writing. If a parent does not request a review within the timescales the LGB must reject the application.

2. The timing of the hearing

An independent review panel must meet to consider an exclusion no later than the 15th school day after the day on which the review was requested. However, if necessary, the panel may then decide to adjourn the hearing.

3. Composition of independent review panels

Review Panels must consist of 3 or 5 members. One must be a lay member (can be an ex-governor), one must be a headteacher or was one within the last 5 years (two for panels of 5), and one must be a governor who has served for 12 consecutive months in the last 5 years (two for panels of 5).

Role of the Clerk to the Independent Review Panel

It is strongly advised that the Independent Review Panel has a Clerk. The Clerk, if appointed, provides an independent source of advice on procedures for all parties.

In advance of the independent review panel, whoever is convening the panel must take reasonable steps to find out when the parent and others entitled to attend the hearing would be available in order to ensure that all parties are able to attend. They must also arrange a suitable venue for hearing the independent review panel.

The following are entitled to make written representations, appear and make oral representations, and to be represented (including legally):

- the parent (or, if aged over 18, the pupil);
- the principal;
- the governing body;

The LA is entitled to attend if requested to do so by the parent (or pupil if over 18) but only as an observer and may only make representations with the consent of the Academy. The LA is not entitled to legal representation.

The SEN Expert must attend if requested to do so by the parent (or pupil if over 18) but there is no right for this person to be legally represented

The pupil is also entitled to attend the review, but if not attending then their views can be presented through a representative or by written statement.

The clerk should circulate all written evidence to all parties at least 5 working days before the hearing, including information about the parties attending.

Request for a SEN Expert (see Part 10 of the DFE Exclusion Guidance)

If requested by the parents, the person convening the panel must appoint a SEN Expert to attend the independent review panel.

Parents have a right to the above, regardless of whether their child has recognised or identified SEN.

The SEN Expert's role is to provide impartial advice to the independent review panel on how special educational needs may be relevant to the exclusion. Including whether school policies in relation to SEN were legally reasonable and procedurally fair, whether the school acted in a legal, reasonable and procedurally fair way with regards to identification of SEN and any contribution that this could have made to the circumstances of the pupils exclusion.

The SEN Expert's role does not include making an assessment of the pupil's special educational needs.

Conduct and role of the independent review panel

It is for the independent review panel to decide how to conduct the proceedings, which should be reasonably formal so that all parties can present their case effectively. The meeting should take a similar form to that of the Behaviour Committee meeting.

The role of the panel is to review the Behaviour Committee's decision not to reinstate a permanently excluded pupil. The panel must take account of the circumstances of the excluded pupil and all others in the school. The panel must apply the civil standard of proof (the balance of probabilities).

1. Reaching a decision

Information on what the panel should consider when coming to their decision can be found in part 7 of the DFE Guidance on exclusions.

2. The decision

An independent review panel can decide to:

- uphold the exclusion decision;
- recommend that the governing board reconsiders their decision; or
- quash the decision and direct that the governing board considers the exclusion again.

The panel's decision can be decided by a majority vote. The panel can request that a copy of the decision letter is placed on the pupil's record and the school must comply with this request.

The panel may only quash a decision and direct reconsideration where it considers that the exclusion was flawed when considered in the light of the principles applicable on an application for judicial review; illegality, irrationality and procedural impropriety.

3. Financial Penalties

Where a panel directs a governing board to reconsider an exclusion it has the power to order that a readjustment of the academy budget be made if the governing board does not offer to reinstate the pupil within 10 school days of receiving notification. The sum of this adjustment may be £4000, payable within 28 days, and will be in addition to other monies that follow permanently excluded pupils.

4. Reconvening a Behaviour Committee

If the independent review panel directs or recommends that the governing body reconsider the exclusion, the governing body must meet to reconsider within 10 school days of notification.

Where a governing body has reconsidered an exclusion decision it must inform the relevant person, the Principal and the LA of its reconsidered decision and the reasons for it without delay.

5. After the independent review panel

The independent review panel is independent. Its decision is binding on the parent, the LGB and the Principal. The panel cannot revisit its decision once made.

The panel must let all parties know its decision without delay. The decision letter should give the panel's reasons for its decision in sufficient detail for the parties to understand why the decision was made.

If the independent review panel upholds the permanent exclusion, the Clerk should immediately report this to the LA. If the pupil is of compulsory school age, it is for the LA in whose area the pupil lives to make arrangements as quickly as possible for the pupil to continue in suitable full-time education. If the pupil lives outside the area of the LA, the Clerk should make sure that the home LA is also informed immediately of the position.

Where the exclusion is upheld the Clerk should also advise the parent to contact the appropriate person at the home LA about arrangements for their child's continuing education. The Principal should remove the pupil's name from the school roll the day after the conclusion of the independent review panel.

6. Remedies after the independent review panel

A parent can complain to the Secretary of State via the Education Funding Agency at the Department for Education.

7. Judicial review

Decisions of both governing bodies and independent review panels can be subject to judicial review.

8. Claims of Discrimination in relation to exclusion

Parents can also apply to the First-tier tribunal to hear cases of alleged disability discrimination, in addition to their current right to apply to a County Court to hear other cases of discrimination under the Equality Act 2010. The First-tier Tribunal will be able to direct reinstatement.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Examples of Misconduct that May Lead to Permanent Exclusion

A note of examples of misconduct is set out below. This list is intended to show examples only and is not intended to be exhaustive.

- a serious breach of safety requirements likely to endanger other people or yourself, or to cause damage to academy property;
- unauthorised use of or supply of alcohol or drugs within the academy premises or whilst in the company of teachers, students or parents of students or during any extra-curricular activities organised by the academy at any time;
- unauthorised removal of academy property;
- stealing from the academy, employees of the academy, or from students and other serious and deliberate offences of dishonesty;
- intentional damage to property;
- abuse of the academy's computer system and of the internet and non-compliance with any policy issued by the academy addressing these matters specifically;
- sexual misconduct, abuse or assault;
- serious actual or threatened violence, physical assault or fighting against another student or member of staff or worker in the academy;
- carrying an offensive weapon;
- bullying and/or harassment including racial, sexual or homophobic harassment;
- wilful defiance of the properly exercised authority of the academy and its staff;
- bringing the academy into disrepute or acting in a manner deliberately to undermine the academy's principles or ethos to the detriment of students and staff.

Model Letter One (5 Days or Less in one Term)

Dear

I am writing to inform you of my decision to suspend xxx for a fixed period. I realise that this suspension may well be upsetting for you and your family, but this decision has not been taken lightly. Please see the details of the suspension below:

Number of days suspended:

Date suspension starts:

Circumstances category:

Summary of circumstances:

Decision to suspended category:

Previous logged disciplinary measures 2024-25:

You and xxxx are requested to attend a reintegration onat with Xxxxxx's
suspension expires on and we expect them to return on.....

(name) needs to log in to the United Learning Curriculum and complete 5 hours of work. The United Learning Curriculum can be found on their firefly page. This must be handed in during the reintegration meeting.

Please see the reverse of this letter which outlines information about both Parental responsibilities and the review/appeals process.

Yours sincerely,

Principal

Information sheet pertaining to fixed term suspensions

- You have a duty to ensure that your child is not present in a public place in school hours during this suspension (including the school site) unless there is reasonable justification for this. I must advise you that you may receive a penalty notice from the local authority if your child is present in a public place during school hours on the specified dates of this suspension. If so, it will be for you to show reasonable justification.
- You should also be aware that if you think the suspension relates to a disability your child has, and you think disability discrimination has occurred, you have the right to appeal and/or make a claim to the First Tier Tribunal, or a 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.

Making a claim would not affect your right to make representations to the governing board.

<https://www.gov.uk/courts-tribunals/first-tier-tribunal-special-educational-needs-and-disability>

- You have the right to make representations about this decision to the governing board. Your child also has the right to be involved in this process. If you wish to make representations please contact the Principal as soon as possible. Whilst the governing board has no power to direct reinstatement, they must consider any representations you make and may place a copy of their findings on your child's school record.

You may also find the following sources useful for free and impartial information:

- A copy of the statutory guidance on exclusions from the Department for Education is available via www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion-guide-for-parents
- Coram's Child Law Advice service can be accessed through their website <https://childlawadvice.org.uk/information-pages/school-exclusion/> or contacted on 0300 330 5485 from Monday to Friday, 8am–6pm
- Independent Provider of Special Education Advice (known as IPSEA) www.ipsea.org.uk is a registered charity. It offers free and independent information, advice and support to help get the right education for children and young people with all kinds of special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities.
- West Sussex SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIAS) <https://westsussexsendias.org/> Tel 03302 228555.
- West Sussex Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS) 033022 22111 (Ethnic Minority) 033022 22155 (Traveller)
- A copy of the statutory guidance on suspension and permanent exclusion from the Department for Education is available at www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion

You may wish to contact the Fair Access team, West Sussex County Council, Tel: 033022 25001 who can provide advice.

Model Letter Two (5.5 Days or more up to 15 Days in a Term)

Dear

I am writing to inform you of my decision to suspend for a fixed period. I realise that this suspension may well be upsetting for you and your family, but this decision has not been taken lightly. Please see the details of the suspension below:

Number of days suspended:
Date suspension starts:
Circumstances category:
Summary of circumstances:
Decision to suspended category:

Previous logged disciplinary measures 2024-25:

As xxxx has been suspended for more than 5 days this term, you have the right to request a meeting of the school's governing board to whom you may make representations. The governing board must meet if you request it to do so. The latest date, by which the governing board must meet, if you request a meeting, is (no later than 50th school day after the date the governors are informed of the suspension).

If you wish to make representations to the governing board and wish to be accompanied by a friend and/or representative, please contact mandy.colburn@shoreham-academy.org as soon as possible.

You and xxx are requested to attend a reintegration on. The time will be confirmed by telephone by a member of the senior team.

xxxxx's suspension expires on and we expect her to return on, subject to a successful meeting.

Work for your child is on Firefly. Please see the reverse of this letter which outlines information about both Parental responsibilities and the review/appeals process.

Yours sincerely,

Principal

Information sheet pertaining to fixed term suspensions

- You have a duty to ensure that your child is not present in a public place in school hours during this suspension (including the school site) unless there is reasonable justification for this. I must advise you that you may receive a penalty notice from the local authority if your child is present in a public place during school hours on the specified dates of this suspension. If so, it will be for you to show reasonable justification.
- You should also be aware that if you think the suspension relates to a disability your child has, and you think disability discrimination has occurred, you have the right to appeal and/or make a claim to the First Tier Tribunal, or a 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.

Making a claim would not affect your right to make representations to the governing board.

<https://www.gov.uk/courts-tribunals/first-tier-tribunal-special-educational-needs-and-disability>

- You have the right to make representations about this decision to the governing board. Your child also has the right to be involved in this process. If you wish to make representations please contact the Principal as soon as possible. Whilst the governing board has no power to direct reinstatement, they must consider any representations you make and may place a copy of their findings on your child's school record.

You may also find the following sources useful for free and impartial information:

- A copy of the statutory guidance on exclusions from the Department for Education is available via www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion-guide-for-parents
- Coram's Child Law Advice service can be accessed through their website <https://childlawadvice.org.uk/information-pages/school-exclusion/> or contacted on 0300 330 5485 from Monday to Friday, 8am–6pm
- Independent Provider of Special Education Advice (known as IPSEA) www.ipsea.org.uk is a registered charity. It offers free and independent information, advice and support to help get the right education for children and young people with all kinds of special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities.
- West Sussex SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIAS) <https://westsussexsendias.org/> Tel 03302 228555.
- West Sussex Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS) 033022 22111 (Ethnic Minority) 033022 22155 (Traveller)
- A copy of the statutory guidance on suspension and permanent exclusion from the Department for Education is available at www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion

You may wish to contact the Fair Access team, West Sussex County Council, Tel: 033022 25001 who can provide advice.

Model Letter Three (15 Days or more in a Term)

Dear

I am writing to inform you of my decision to suspend for a fixed period. I realise that this suspension may well be upsetting for you and your family, but this decision has not been taken lightly. Please see the details of the suspension below:

Number of days suspended:
Date suspension starts:
Circumstances category:
Summary of circumstances:
Decision to suspended category:

Previous logged disciplinary measures 2024-25:

As the length of the suspension is more than 15 school days **OR** as the length of this suspension would bring **[pupil's name]** total number of school days of suspension to more than 15 in one term, the governing board must meet to consider the reinstatement of **[pupil's name]**. At the meeting you may make representations to the governing board if you wish. The latest date on which the governing board can meet is **[date here – no later than 15 school days from the date the governing board is notified]**. If you wish to make representations to the governing board and wish to be accompanied by a friend or representative, please contact **[name of contact]** on/at **[contact details – address, phone number, email]**, as soon as possible. You will, whether you choose to make representations or not, be notified by the clerk to the governing board of the time, date and location of the meeting. **[Pupil's name]** also has the right be involved in this process.

You have the right to request to hold the meeting via the use of remote access. The Governing Board must be satisfied that the meeting is capable of being held fairly and transparently via remote access. Should you wish to request the meeting via remote access please contact **[name of contact]** as above.

You and xxxx are requested to attend a reintegration on. The time will be confirmed by telephone by a member of the senior team.

xxxxx's suspension expires on and we expect her to return on, subject to a successful meeting.

Work for your child is on Firefly. Please see the reverse of this letter which outlines information about both Parental responsibilities and the review/appeals process.

Yours sincerely,

Principal

Information sheet pertaining to fixed term suspensions

- You should be aware that if you think the suspension relates to a disability your child has, and you think disability discrimination has occurred, you have the right to appeal and/or make a claim to the First Tier Tribunal, or a 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.

Making a claim would not affect your right to make representations to the governing board.

<https://www.gov.uk/courts-tribunals/first-tier-tribunal-special-educational-needs-and-disability>

- You have the right to make representations about this decision to the governing board. Your child also has the right to be involved in this process. If you wish to make representations please contact the Principal as soon as possible. Whilst the governing board has no power to direct reinstatement, they must consider any representations you make and may place a copy of their findings on your child's school record.

You may also find the following sources useful for free and impartial information:

- A copy of the statutory guidance on exclusions from the Department for Education is available via www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion-guide-for-parents
- Coram's Child Law Advice service can be accessed through their website <https://childlawadvice.org.uk/information-pages/school-exclusion/> or contacted on 0300 330 5485 from Monday to Friday, 8am–6pm
- Independent Provider of Special Education Advice (known as IPSEA) www.ipsea.org.uk is a registered charity. It offers free and independent information, advice and support to help get the right education for children and young people with all kinds of special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities.
- West Sussex SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIAS) <https://westsussexsendias.org/> Tel 03302 228555.
- West Sussex Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS) 033022 22111 (Ethnic Minority) 033022 22155 (Traveller)
- A copy of the statutory guidance on suspension and permanent exclusion from the Department for Education is available at www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion

You may wish to contact the Fair Access team, West Sussex County Council, Tel: 033022 25001 who can provide advice.

Model Letter Four (From the Principal Notifying Parent of a Permanent Exclusion)

Dear

RE: [pupil's name and D of B]

I regret to inform you of my decision to permanently exclude **[pupil's name]** with effect from **[date]**. This means that **[pupil's name]** will not be allowed in this school unless **he/she** is reinstated by the governing board.

I realise that this exclusion may well be upsetting for you and your family, but the decision to permanently exclude **[pupil's name]** has not been taken lightly. **[Pupil's name]** has been excluded because **[reasons for exclusion –provide sufficient, full and exacting detail on incident(s) that led to the decision to exclude including any other relevant previous history]**.

[For pupils of compulsory school age]

You have a duty to ensure that your child is not present in a public place in school hours during the first 5 school days of this exclusion, i.e. on **[specify the precise dates]**, unless there is reasonable justification. You could be prosecuted or receive a penalty notice if your child is present in a public place during school hours on those dates. It will be for you to show reasonable justification.

(For pupils of compulsory school age)

Alternative arrangements for **[pupil's name]**'s education to continue will be made. For the first five school days of the exclusion we will set work for **[pupil's name]** and would ask you to ensure this work is completed and returned promptly to school for marking. **[This may be different if suitable alternative full-time educational provision is being provided earlier than the sixth day]**. The local authority **[give the name of the authority]** will provide suitable full-time education no later than the 6th day of the exclusion – i.e. **[specify the date]**. **[Set out the arrangements if known at time of writing. If not known say that the arrangements will be notified shortly by a further letter]**.

(For pupils of compulsory school age)

[Where pupil lives in a local authority other than the excluding school's local authority]

I have also today informed **[name of officer]** at **[name of local authority]** of your child's exclusion and they will be in touch with you about arrangements for **his/her** education from the sixth school day of exclusion. You can contact them at **[give contact details]**.

As this is a permanent exclusion the governing board must meet to consider the reinstatement of your child. At this meeting you may make representations to the governing board if you wish and ask them to reinstate your child into school. The governing board have the power to reinstate your child immediately or from a specified date, or alternatively, they have the power to decline to reinstate your child, in which case you may request that their decision is reviewed by an Independent Review Panel. The latest date by which the governing board must meet is **[specify the date – the 15th school day after the date on which the governing board was notified of the exclusion]** If you wish to make representations to the governing board and wish to be accompanied by a friend and/or representative please contact **[name of contact]** on/at **[contact details – address, phone number, email]**, as soon as possible. You will, whether you choose to make representations or not, be notified by the clerk to the governing board of the time, date and location of the meeting. **[Pupil's name]** also has the right be involved in this process.

You have the right to request to hold the meeting via the use of remote access. The Governing Board must be satisfied that the meeting is capable of being held fairly and transparently via remote access. Should you wish to request the meeting via remote access please contact **[name of contact]** as above.

Please let us know if you have a disability or special needs which would affect your ability to attend the hearing. Also, please inform **[contact]** if it would be helpful for you to have an interpreter present at the meeting.

If you think this exclusion relates to a disability your child has, and you think discrimination has occurred, you may raise the issue with the governing board.

You should also be aware that if you think the exclusion relates to a disability your child has, and you think disability discrimination has occurred, you have the right to appeal and/or make a claim to the First Tier Tribunal, or a 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.

<https://www.gov.uk/courts-tribunals/first-tier-tribunal-special-educational-needs-and-disability>

Making a claim would not affect your right to make representations to the governing board.

The following are sources of free and impartial information that you may find useful.

- Coram's Child Law Advice service can be accessed through their website <https://childlawadvice.org.uk/information-pages/school-exclusion/> or contacted on 0300 330 5485 from Monday to Friday, 8am–6pm.
- Department for Education Guidance for parents and carers on behaviour, suspension and permanent exclusion, which can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusions-guide-for-parents>
- Independent Provider of Special Education Advice (known as IPSEA) www.ipsea.org.uk is a registered charity. It offers free and independent information, advice and support to help get

the right education for children and young people with all kinds of special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities.

- West Sussex SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIAS) <https://westsussexsendias.org/> Tel 03302 228555.
- **[Where considered relevant by the headteacher]** West Sussex Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS) 033022 22111 (Ethnic Minority) 033022 22155 (Traveller)

A copy of the statutory guidance on suspension and permanent exclusion from the Department for Education is available at www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion

You may wish to contact the Fair Access team, West Sussex County Council, Tel. 033022 25001 who can provide advice.

Yours sincerely

[Name]

[Title]

Cc – delete as applicable

Governing Board WSCC Fair Access Team Virtual School for Children Look After Social Worker

Model Letter Five (Letter from the Clerk upholding a permanent exclusion)

Pupil Name: (Full name of pupil)
D.O.B: (Date of birth)
Year Group:

Dear [Parents name],

The meeting of the governing board at [school] on [date] considered the decision by **[Principal]** to permanently exclude your son/daughter **[name of pupil]**. The governing board, after carefully

considering the representations made and all the available evidence, have decided to uphold **[name of pupil]**'s permanent exclusion.

The reasons for the governing board's decision are as follows: **[give the reasons in as much detail as possible, explaining how they were arrived at]**.

You have the right to request an Independent Review Panel to reconsider the exclusion. If you wish to do so, please notify the Clerk to the Independent Review Panel. You must set out the reasons for your request in writing, and send this request to **[insert contact details for Clerk]** by **[specify the latest date — no later than 15 school days from the date the letter is posted, allowing 2 school days for receipt of letter]**. If you have not lodged a request for an Independent Review Panel by **[repeat latest date]**, your right will lapse. Please advise if you have a disability or special needs which would affect your ability to attend the hearing. Also, please inform the Clerk to the Appeal Panel if it would be helpful for you to have an interpreter present at the hearing.

Your request would be heard by an Independent Review Panel. A three or five member panel will comprise one serving, or recently retired (within the last 5 years) headteacher, one serving, or recently serving, experienced governor and one lay member who will be the Chair. The Independent Review Panel will rehear all the facts of the case — if you have fresh evidence to present to the panel you may do so. The panel must meet no later than the 15th school day after the date on which your request is lodged. In exceptional circumstances panels may adjourn a hearing until a later date.

In determining your request for reconsideration the Independent Review Panel can make one of three decisions: they may uphold your child's exclusion; they may recommend the governing board reconsiders their decision or quash the decision and direct that the governing board considers the exclusion again.

However, the independent review panel cannot direct your child be reinstated at the school. You have the right to request an SEN expert to attend the above panel meeting, regardless of whether the excluding school recognises that your child has SEN. You must make it clear if you wish for such an SEN expert to be appointed. Please advise as soon as possible.

Please also note you are permitted, at your own expense, to appoint someone to make written or oral representations to the Independent Review Panel and you may bring a friend to support you.

Excluded pupils should be enabled and encouraged to participate at all stages of the exclusion process, taking in to account their age and understanding.

You should also be aware that if you think the exclusion relates to a disability your child has, and you think disability discrimination has occurred, you have the right to make a claim to the First-tier Tribunal

www.justice.gov.uk/tribunals/send/appeals

Further guidance on the exclusions process can be found at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>

the Coram Children’s Legal Centre: www.childrenslegalcentre.com 08088 020 008; and
[where considered relevant by the governing body], links to local services, such as Traveller Education Services or the local parent partnership (www.parentpartnership.org.uk).

The arrangements currently being made for **[pupil's name]**'s education will continue. The LA / LGB [delete as appropriate] convened panel will shortly send you correspondence and guidance with regards to the Independent Review Panel.

Yours sincerely

Clerk to the Governing board

7 Governor checklist

This should be used in the Behaviour Committee to ensure proper process has been followed and a completed checklist should be sent to the Managing Director at United Learning at the end of the process.

Pupil Name:		Date of Meeting:
1	Telephone call to parent/visit from parent on (date): Letter of notification using model text sent on (date): Copied and sent to Behaviour Committee on (date):	
2	Date of Behaviour Committee Meeting: Within 15 school days from Principal’s letter, for permanent and fixed term exclusions of more than 15 school days (or total more than 15 school days in a term) OR Within 50 school days from Principal’s letter, for fixed term exclusions of less than 15 school days Yes/No	

3	<p>All written statements/evidence circulated in advance of this meeting (at least 48 hours before)</p> <p>Yes/No</p>
4	<p>Procedure for the meeting and confirmation circulated in advance of the meeting</p> <p>Yes/No</p>
5	<p>All relevant information provided on pupil, including: SEN Status; Care status if looked after or active case for Social Care; academic progress</p> <p>Yes/No</p>
6	<p>Where it is a permanent exclusion decision that it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meets the conditions in which permanent exclusion is appropriate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ allowing him/her to remain in the academy seriously harms the learning or welfare of another student or students in the school ○ allowing him/her to remain in the academy seriously harms the welfare of an adult or adults in the school ○ his or her behaviour seriously undermines the ethos of the academy ○ the student's behaviour is judged to be misconduct or is cumulative persistent misconduct to justify permanent exclusion • is consistent with other similar incidents (where appropriate)
	<p>Yes/No</p>

<p>6</p>	<p>Evidence and use of procedures are satisfactory in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The investigation conducted • Firm evidence collected to support decision to exclude • Pupil has been given the opportunity to give his/her version of events • Provocation/harassment has been taken into account, if appropriate • Any SEN taken into account • Where appropriate, a Pastoral Support Program – or Individual Education Plan has been tried. • There is evidence of other interventions that have been tried including, where appropriate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ alternative or enhanced curriculum ○ mediation ○ education welfare involvement ○ family support ○ mentor support for the pupil • No more strategies are available that the school could reasonably be expected to initiate • Requirements of discrimination (under the Equality Act 2010) have been considered • Parent has been given adequate time to make representations • All parties to the meeting know how this decision will be communicated • Satisfactory arrangements in place for pupil to continue their education during exclusion period <p>Yes/No</p> <p>If no, what concerns exist:</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>To be completed after the Behaviour Committee meeting</p> <p>Parent, Principal and Local Authority notified of decision on (date):</p> <p>Letter regarding decision sent out on (date):</p> <p>Signed (Clerk to the Behaviour Committee):</p>

Date:

A copy of this checklist should be sent to United Learning Managing Director at the conclusion of the process.