

St. John Paul II Multi Academy

Suspension and Exclusion policy

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Contents

1.	Aims	3
2.	Legislation and statutory guidance	4
3.	Definitions.....	4
4.	Roles and responsibilities	5
5.	Considering the reinstatement of a pupil	8
6.	Independent review	10
7.	School registers.....	12
8.	Returning from a suspension	12
9.	Monitoring arrangements	13
10.	Links with other policies	14
	Appendix 1: independent review panel training	14

1. Introduction and Aims

All schools in the St John Paul II MAC are ambitious for all children and reflect the love of

Christ. In all schools in the St John Paul II MAC, we aim to:

- Ensure that exclusions process is applied fairly, consistently and lawfully
- Help governors, staff, parents and pupils understand the exclusions and suspensions process
- Ensure that pupils in school are safe and happy
- Prevent pupils from becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training)
- Ensure all suspensions and permanent exclusions are carried out lawfully
- Use suspensions sparingly and exclusions as a last resort.

A note on off-rolling

All schools in the St John Paul II MAC are aware that off-rolling is unlawful. Ofsted defines off-rolling as: “The practice of removing a pupil from the school roll without a formal, permanent exclusion or by encouraging a parent to remove their child from the school roll, when the removal is primarily in the interests of the school rather than in the best interests of the pupil.”

We will not suspend or exclude pupils unlawfully by directing them off site, or not allowing them to attend:

- Without following the statutory procedure or formally recording the event, e.g. sending them home to 'cool off'
- Because they have special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND) that the school feels unable to support
- Due to poor academic performance
- Because they haven't met a specific condition, such as attending a reintegration meeting
- By exerting undue influence on a parent to encourage them to remove their child from the school

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on statutory guidance from the [Department for Education](#):

3. Definitions

Suspension – when a pupil is removed from the school for a fixed period. This was previously referred to as a “fixed term exclusion.”

Exclusion – when a pupil is removed from the school permanently and taken off the school roll. This was previously referred to as a “permanent exclusion.”

Off-site direction – when a governing board requires a pupil to attend another education setting temporarily to improve their behaviour.

Parent – any person who has parental responsibility and any person who has care of the child.

Managed move – when a pupil is transferred to another school permanently. All parties, including parents and the admission authority for the new school, must consent before a managed move occurs. This is not permanent until the probation period is over.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The Principal

Decision to suspend or exclude

Only the Principal, Executive Principal or Acting Principal (including the Head of School/ Vice Principal when the principal is off-site), can suspend or permanently exclude a pupil from school on disciplinary grounds. The decision can be made in respect of behaviour inside or outside of school. The Principal will only use permanent exclusion as a last resort.

A decision to suspend or exclude a pupil will be taken only:

- In response to serious or persistent breaches of the behavior policy, **and**
- If allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others. Before deciding whether to suspend or exclude a pupil, the principal will:
 - Consider all the relevant facts (including any mitigating circumstances and all available evidence) on the balance of probabilities
 - Allow the pupil to give their version of events
 - Consider the pupil's special educational needs (SEND)
 - Consider the pupil's vulnerability (e.g. the pupil has a social worker, or is a looked-after child (LAC))
 - Consider whether all alternative solutions have been explored

The Principal will make every effort to ensure that the views of the pupil are considered, in light of their age and understanding, before deciding to suspend or exclude, unless it would not be appropriate or possible to do so.

Pupils who need support to express their views will be allowed to have their views expressed through an advocate, such as a parent or social worker.

The Principal will not reach their decision until they have heard from the pupil, and will inform the pupil that their views were taken into account when making the decision.

Informing parents

If a pupil is at risk of suspension or exclusion, the Principal (or a senior leader on behalf of the Principal if principal is not available) will inform the parents as early as possible, in order to work together to consider what factors may be affecting the pupil's behaviour and what further support can be put in place to improve the behaviour.

If the Principal decides to suspend or exclude a pupil, the parents will be informed of the period of suspension or exclusion and the reason(s) for it, without delay. The parents will also be provided with the following information in writing, without delay:

- The reason(s) for the suspension or exclusion
- The length of the suspension or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent.
- Information about parents' right to make representations about the suspension or permanent exclusion the governing board and how the pupil may be involved in this
- How any representations should be made.
- Where there is a legal requirement for the governing board to hold a meeting to consider the reinstatement of a pupil, and that parents (or the pupil if they are 18 years old) have a right to attend a meeting, be represented at the meeting (at their own expense) and to bring a friend.

The principal will also notify parents without delay and by the end of the afternoon session on the first day their child is suspended or permanently excluded, that:

For the first 5 school days of a suspension (or until the start date of any alternative provision or the end of the suspension, where this is earlier), the parents are legally required to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours without a good reason. This will include specifying on which days this duty applies. Parents may be given a fixed penalty notice or prosecuted if they fail to do this.

Informing the governing board

The principal will, without delay, notify the Chair of the governing board of:

- Any permanent exclusion, including when a suspension is followed by a decision to permanently exclude a pupil
- Any suspension or permanent exclusion which would result in the pupil being suspended or permanently excluded for a total of more than 5 school days (or more than 10 lunchtimes) in a term
- Any suspension or permanent exclusion which would result in the pupil missing a National Curriculum test or public examination.

The principal will notify the governing board once per term of any other suspensions of which they have not previously been notified.

Informing the local authority (LA)

The principal will notify the Suspensions and Exclusions Team at Birmingham City Council of all suspensions and exclusions without delay, regardless of the length of a suspension.

The notification will include:

The reason(s) for the suspension or permanent exclusion
The length of a suspension

For an exclusion, if the pupil lives outside the Local Authority in which the school is located, the principal will also, without delay, inform the pupil's 'home authority' of the exclusion and the reason(s) for it. Informing the pupil's social worker and/or virtual school head (VSH)

If a:

Pupil with a social worker is at risk of suspension or exclusion, the principal (or nominated member of staff if the principal is not available) will inform **the social worker** as early as possible

Pupil who is a looked-after child (LAC) is at risk of suspension or exclusion, the principal (or nominated member of staff if the principal is not available) will inform **the VSH** as early as possible

This is in order to work together to consider what factors may be affecting the pupil's behaviour, and what further support can be put in place to improve the behaviour. If the principal decides to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil with a social worker / a pupil who is looked after, they will inform the pupil's social worker / the VSH, as appropriate, without delay, that:

They have decided to suspend or permanently exclude the pupil
The reason(s) for the decision

The length of the suspension or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent

The suspension or permanent exclusion affects the pupils' ability to sit a National Curriculum test or public exam (where relevant)

The social worker / VSH will be invited to any meeting of the governing board about the suspension or permanent exclusion. This is so they can provide advice on how the pupil's background and/or circumstances may have influenced the circumstances of their suspension or permanent exclusion. The social worker should also help ensure safeguarding needs and risks and the pupils' welfare are taken into account.

Cancelling suspensions and permanent exclusions

The Principal may cancel a suspension or exclusion that has already begun, but this will only be done where it has not yet been reviewed by the governing board. Where there is a cancellation:

The parents, governing board and LA will be notified without delay

Where relevant, any social worker and VSH will be notified without delay

Parents will be offered the opportunity to meet with the principal to discuss the cancellation

As referred to above, the principal will report to the governing board once per term on the number of cancellations

The pupil will be allowed back in school

Providing education during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion

During the first 5 days of a suspension, if the pupil is not attending alternative (AP) provision, the principal will take steps to ensure that achievable and accessible work is set and marked for the pupil. The school's current arrangements for Remote Learning may be used for this. If the pupil has a special educational need or disability, the principal will make sure that reasonable adjustments are made to the provision where necessary.

If the pupil is looked after or if they have a social worker, the school will work with the LA to arrange AP the first day following the suspension or permanent exclusion. Where this isn't possible, the school will take reasonable steps to set and mark work for the pupil, including the use of online pathways.

4.1 The governing board

Considering suspensions and exclusions

Responsibilities regarding exclusions are delegated to a school's governing body who will identify an Exclusions Committee. The Exclusions Committee has a duty to consider parents' representations about a suspension or exclusion. It has a duty to consider the reinstatement of a suspended or excluded pupil (see sections 5 and 6) in certain circumstances.

Within 14 days of receiving a request, the governing board will provide the Secretary of State with information about any suspensions or exclusions within the last 12 months.

6th Day Provision

For any suspension of more than 5 school days, the governing board will arrange suitable full-time education for the pupil. This provision will begin no later than the sixth day of the suspension (See 6th Day provision above).

For secondary schools only:

The governing board does not have to arrange such provision for pupils in their final year of compulsory education who do not have any further public exams to sit.

Monitoring and analysing suspensions and exclusions data

The governing board and Board of Directors will challenge and evaluate the data on the school's use of suspension, exclusion, off-site direction to alternative provision and managed moves.

The governing board and Board of Directors will consider:

How effectively and consistently the school's behaviour policy is being implemented

The school register and absence codes

Instances where pupils receive repeat suspensions

Interventions in place to support pupils at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion

Any variations in the rolling average of permanent exclusions, to understand why this is happening, and to make sure they are only used when necessary

Timing of moves and permanent exclusions, and whether there are any patterns, including any indications which may highlight where policies or support are not working

The characteristics of suspended and permanently excluded pupils, and why this is taking place

Whether the placements of pupils directed off-site into alternative provision are reviewed at sufficient intervals to assure that the education is achieving its objectives and that pupils are benefiting from it

The cost implications of directing pupils off-site

4.2 The local authority (LA)

For exclusions, the LA (Birmingham City Council) will arrange suitable full-time education to begin no later than the sixth school day after the first day of the exclusion.

For pupils who are LAC or have social workers, the LA and the school will work together arrange suitable full-time education to begin from the first day of the exclusion.

5. Considering the reinstatement of a pupil

The Exclusions Committee will consider and decide on the reinstatement of a suspended or excluded pupil within 15 school days of receiving the notice of the suspension or exclusion if:

The exclusion is permanent

It is a suspension which would bring the pupil's total number of days out of school to more than 15 in a term; or

It would result in a pupil missing a public exam or National Curriculum test.

Where the pupil has been suspended, and the suspension does not bring the pupil's total number of day of suspension to more than 5 in a term, the Exclusions Committee must consider any representations made by parents. However, it is not required to arrange a meeting with parents and it cannot direct the principal to reinstate the pupil.

Where the pupil has been suspended for more than 5 days, but less than 16 days, in a single term, and the parents make representations to the FGB, the Exclusions Committee will consider and decide on the reinstatement of a suspended pupil within 50 school days of receiving notice of the suspension. If the parents do not make representations, the FGB is not required to meet and it cannot direct the principal to reinstate the pupil.

Where a suspension or permanent exclusion would result in a pupil missing a public exam or National Curriculum test, the Exclusions Committee will, as far as reasonably practicable, consider and decide on the reinstatement of the pupil before the date of the exam or test. If this is not practicable, the Exclusions Committee may consider the suspension or permanent exclusion and decide whether or not to reinstate the pupil.

The following parties will be invited to a meeting of the Exclusions Committee and be allowed to make representations or share information:

Parents, or the pupil if they are 18 or over (and, where requested, a representative or friend)

The pupil, if they are aged 17 or younger and it would be appropriate to their age and understanding (and, where requested, a representative or friend)

The Principal

The pupil's social worker, if they have one

The VSH, if the pupil is looked after

The Exclusions Committee will try to arrange the meeting within the statutory time limits set out above and must try to have it at a time that suits all relevant parties. However, its decision will not be invalid simply on the grounds that it was not made within these time limits.

The Exclusions Committee can either:

Decline to reinstate the pupil, or

Direct the reinstatement of the pupil immediately, or on a particular date (except in cases where the board cannot do this – see earlier in this section)

In reaching a decision, the Exclusions Committee will consider:

Whether the decision to suspend or permanently exclude was lawful, reasonable, and procedurally fair
Whether the principal followed their legal duties

The welfare and safeguarding of the pupil and their peers
Any evidence that was presented to the

governing board. They will decide whether or not a fact is true 'on the balance of probabilities'.

Minutes will be taken of the meeting, and a record kept of the evidence that was considered. The outcome will also be recorded on the pupil's educational record, and copies of relevant papers will be kept with this record.

The Exclusions Committee will notify, in writing, the following stakeholders of its decision, along with reasons for its decision, without delay:

The parents, or the pupil, if they are 18 or

older The principal

The pupil's social worker, if they have one

The VSH, if the pupil is looked after

The local authority

The pupil's home authority, if it differs from the school's

Where and the Exclusions Committee has decided not to reinstate an excluded pupil, the notification of decision will also include the following:

The fact that it is an exclusion

Notice of parents' right to ask for the decision to be reviewed by an independent review panel

The date by which an application for an independent review must be made (15 school days from the day on which notice in writing of the governing board's decision is given to parents)

The name and address to which an application for a review and any written evidence should be submitted That any application should set out the grounds on which it is being made and that, where appropriate, it

should include reference to how the pupil's special educational needs (SEN) are considered to be relevant to the permanent exclusion

That, regardless of whether the excluded pupil has recognised SEND, parents have a right to require the MAC to appoint an SEN expert to advise the review panel

Details of the role of the SEN expert and that there would be no cost to parents for this appointment That parents must make clear if they wish for an SEN expert to be appointed in any application for a review

That parents may, at their own expense, appoint someone to make written and/or oral representations to the panel, and parents may also bring a friend to the review

That, if parents believe that the permanent exclusion has occurred as a result of unlawful discrimination, they may make a claim under the Equality Act 2010 to the first-tier tribunal (special educational needs and/or disability), in the case of disability discrimination, or the county court, in the case of other forms of discrimination. Also that any 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

6. Independent review

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

Applications for an independent review must be made within 15 school days of notice being given to the parents by the Exclusions Committee of its decision to not reinstate the pupil **or**, if after this time, within 5 school days of the final determination of a claim of discrimination under the Equality Act 2010 regarding the permanent exclusion. 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 governor category and 2 members will come from the principal category. At all times during the review process there must be the required representation on the panel.

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.

Current or former 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 principals during this time.

Principals or individuals who have been a principal within the last 5 years
A person may not serve as a member of a review panel if they:

Are a Director of the MAC

Are the principal of the excluding school, or have held this position in the last 5 years

Are an employee of the MAC, or a member of the governing board of the excluding school

Have, or at any time have had, any connection with the Board of Directors, the school, the local governing board, parents or pupil, or the incident leading to the exclusion, which might reasonably be taken to raise doubts about their impartiality

Have not had the required training within the last 2 years (see appendix 1 for what training must cover)

The panel must consider the interests and circumstances of the pupil, including the circumstances in which the pupil was permanently excluded, and have regard to the interests of other pupils and people working at the school.

Taking into account the pupil's age and understanding, the pupil or their parents will be made aware of their right to attend and participate in the review meeting and the pupil should be enabled to make representations on their own behalf, should they desire to.

Where a SEN expert is present, the panel must seek and have regard to the SEN expert's view of how SEN may be relevant to the pupil's permanent exclusion.

Where a social worker is present, the panel must have regard to any representation made by the social worker of how the pupil's experiences, needs, safeguarding risks and/or welfare may be relevant to the pupil's permanent exclusion.

Where a VSH is present, the panel must have regard to any representation made by the social worker regarding any of the child's background, education and safeguarding needs were considered by the principal in the lead up to the permanent exclusion, or are relevant to the pupil's permanent exclusion.

Following its review, the independent panel will decide to do 1 of the following:

Uphold the governing board's decision

Recommend that the governing board reconsiders reinstatement

Quash the governing board's decision and direct that they reconsider reinstatement (only if it judges that the decision was flawed)

New evidence may be presented, though the school cannot introduce new reasons for the permanent exclusion or the decision not to reinstate. The panel must disregard any new reasons that are introduced. In deciding whether the decision was flawed, and therefore whether to quash the decision not to reinstate, the panel must only take account of the evidence that was available to the governing board at the time of making its decision. This includes any evidence that the panel considers would, or should, have been available to the governing board and that it ought to have considered if it had been acting reasonably.

If evidence is presented that the panel considers it is unreasonable to expect the governing board to have been aware of at the time of its decision, the panel can take account of the evidence when deciding whether to recommend that the governing board reconsider reinstatement.

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

Once the panel has reached its decision, the panel will notify all parties in writing without delay.

This notification will include:

The panel's decision and the reasons for it. Where relevant, details of any financial readjustment or payment to be made if the governing board does not subsequently decide to offer to reinstate the pupil within 10 school days
Any information that the panel has directed the governing board to place on the pupil's educational record

7. School registers

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

15 school days have passed since the parents were notified of the Exclusions Committee decision not to reinstate the pupil and no application has been made for an independent review panel, or

The parents have stated in writing that they will not be applying for an independent review panel

Where an application for an independent review has been made within 15 school days, the governing

board will wait until that review has concluded before removing a pupil's name from the register. While the pupil's name remains on the school's admissions register, the pupil's attendance will still be recorded appropriately. Where alternative provision has been made for an excluded pupil and they attend it, code B (education off-site) or code D (dual registration) will be used on the attendance register. Where excluded pupils are not attending alternative provision, code E (absent) will be used.

Making a return to the LA

Where a pupil's name is to be removed from the school admissions register because of a permanent exclusion, the school will make a return to the LA. The return will include:

The pupil's full name

The full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally resides

At least 1 telephone number at which any parent with whom the pupil normally resides can be contacted in an emergency

The grounds upon which their name is to be deleted from the admissions register (i.e., permanent exclusion) Details of the new school the pupil will attend, including the name of that school and the first date when the pupil attended or is due to attend there, if the parents have told the school the pupil is moving to another school Details of the pupil's new address, including the new address, the name of the parent(s) the pupil is going to live there with, and the date when the pupil is going to start living there, if the parents have informed the school that the pupil is moving house

This return must be made as soon as the grounds for removal is met and no later than the removal of the pupil's name.

8. Returning from a suspension

8.1 Reintegration strategy

Following suspension, the school will put in place a strategy to help the pupil reintegrate successfully into school life and full-time education.

Where necessary, the school will work with third-party organisations to identify whether the pupil has any unmet special educational and/or health needs.

The following measures may be implemented, as part of the strategy, to ensure a successful reintegration into school life:

Maintaining regular contact during the suspension or off-site direction and welcoming the pupil back to school Daily contact in school with a designated pastoral professional

Mentoring by a trusted adult or a local mentoring charity

Regular reviews with the pupil and parents to praise progress being made and raise and address any concerns at an early stage

Informing the pupil, parents and staff of potential external support

Part-time timetables will not be used as a tool to manage behaviour and, if used, will be put in place for the minimum time necessary.

The strategy will be regularly reviewed and adapted where necessary throughout the reintegration process in collaboration with the pupil, parents, and other relevant parties.

8.2 Reintegration meetings

The school will explain the reintegration strategy to the pupil in a reintegration meeting before or on the pupil's return to school. During the meeting, the school will communicate to the pupil the standards or behavior and conduct expected, that they are getting a fresh start and that they are a valued member of the school community. The pupil, parents, a member of senior staff, and any other relevant staff will be invited to attend the meeting. The meeting can proceed without the parents in the event that they cannot or do not attend.

The school expects all returning pupils and their parents to attend their reintegration meeting, but pupils who do not attend will not be prevented from returning to the classroom.

9. Monitoring arrangements

The school will collect data on the following:

Attendance, permanent exclusions and suspensions (including analysis of vulnerable groups) Use of pupil referral units, off-site directions and managed moves
Surveys of staff, pupils, governors and other stakeholders on their perceptions and experiences The data will be analysed and reported to FGB and the Board of Directors by school leaders

The school will use the results of this analysis to make sure it is meeting its duties under the Equality Act 2010. If any patterns or disparities between groups of pupils are identified by this analysis, the school will review its policies in order to tackle it.

The multi-academy trust will work with its schools to consider this data, and to analyse whether there are patterns across the MAC, recognising that numbers in any 1 academy may be too low to allow for meaningful statistical analysis.

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Directors every 3 years or following updated statutory guidance from the DfE, whichever is sooner. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Board of Directors and shared with FGBs to add local information.

10. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to individual schools' policies, including:

Behaviour Policy
SEND policy and information report
Safeguarding policy (Peer on peer abuse/ Harmful sexual behaviours) Equality objectives statement

Appendix 1: independent review panel training

The MAC must make sure 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 suspensions and permanent exclusions on disciplinary grounds, 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 principals, governing boards 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 the Act.