

BVPS Exclusions Policy
Reviewed: November 2024

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1. Aims

Our school aims to ensure that:

- The exclusions process is applied fairly and consistently
- The exclusions process is understood by governors, staff, parents and pupils
- Pupils in school are safe and happy
- Pupils do not become NEET (not in education, employment or training)

At Bletchingley Village Primary School, we believe that learning is the most important reason for being at School and that nothing should stop learning. In order to support learning and to create a community in which all pupils and staff feel safe, it may be necessary to consider exclusion as a consequence for behaviour which is contrary to the ethos and expectations of the School.

Summary:

At Bletchingley Village Primary School, exclusion is not used as a punishment

Exclusion is used to:

- Mark that behavior has exceeded the school Behaviour Policy
- Keep all children and members of staff safe
- Allow time for reflection and for a support plan to be put in place

Only the Head Teacher can exclude a pupil.

Permanent Exclusion is governed by legislation.

There is an appeal process if an exclusion is considered unreasonable or unlawful

Excluded children should not be out in public. Allowing them to be, could lead to a fine.

Introduction

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.

Internal exclusion is when a child is isolated and completes the same work as they would be doing in lessons. This is used as an alternative to exclusion. See the Behaviour Policy.

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 will take reasonable steps to set and mark work for the pupil). For a fixed term exclusion of more than 5 days, full time education provision commences from the 6th day and is organised by the School. A pupil may not be excluded for more than 45 days in a school year. A pupil is entitled to return to school once the period of exclusion has ended.

Permanent Exclusion This is where the Headteacher's intention is that the pupil should not be allowed to return to the school. The decision should only be taken if: (i) the pupil has committed a serious breach or persistent breaches of the School's Behaviour policy;

and (ii) allowing him/her to remain in Bletchingley Village Primary School 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 including alternative provision within and outside of school. However, there will be exceptional circumstances where, in the Headteacher's judgment, it might be appropriate to permanently exclude a child for a single serious breach (one-off or first offence).

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on statutory guidance from the Department for Education: [Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units \(PRUs\) in England](#).

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

- Section 52 of the [Education Act 2002](#), as amended by the [Education Act 2011](#)
- [The School Discipline \(Pupil Exclusions and Reviews\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#)
- Sections 64-68 of the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#)

In addition, the policy is based on:

- Part 7, chapter 2 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#), which looks at parental responsibility for excluded pupils
- Section 579 of the [Education Act 1996](#), which defines 'school day'
- The [Education \(Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#), as amended by [The Education \(Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2014](#)

Principles

The following principles underpin the Exclusion Policy at Bletchingley Village Primary School.

The process:

- Is lawful, rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate
- Puts learning at the centre of every decision
- Ensures that the School community is safe, nurturing and focused on learning

Exclusion is a last resort, when all other possible methods of managing pupil behaviour have been exhausted. The decision to exclude is never taken lightly and careful consideration is taken of the facts and surrounding circumstances before reaching the decision to exclude.

We recognise the detrimental impact of exclusion on both the education and well-being of pupils and their families. We also recognise the impact of social exclusion which can result from the permanent exclusion of a pupil and therefore do everything possible to avoid it.

Pupils are managed consistently, but not necessarily in a uniform manner. When considering the decision to exclude, appropriate consideration will be made of aggravating and mitigating factors in each circumstance.

Permanent exclusion is an extremely serious step to take and has a significant impact on the ability of a pupil to access education in the future. It is only used where it is unavoidable and

every possible alternative has been exhausted. We are committed to using alternatives to permanent exclusion, such as managed moves and alternative provision where appropriate.

3. The decision to exclude

Only the headteacher, or acting headteacher, can exclude a pupil from school. A permanent exclusion will be taken as a last resort.

A decision to exclude a pupil will be taken only:

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

Before deciding whether to exclude a pupil, either permanently or for a fixed period, the headteacher will:

- Consider all the relevant facts and evidence, including whether the incident(s) leading to the exclusion were provoked
- Allow the pupil to give their version of events
- Consider if the pupil has special educational needs (SEN)

The standard of proof applied when deciding to exclude is 'on the balance of probabilities' (rather than 'beyond reasonable doubt'). The more serious the allegation, the more convincing the evidence substantiating the allegation needs to be.

Once the decision has been made to exclude, a pupil will only be sent home once contact has been made with the parent and where it is clear that the pupil will be returning to a place of safety, or is collected (depending on the age of the pupil). Arrangements will be made to ensure provision for learning continues throughout the exclusion period.

4. Definition

For the purposes of exclusions, school day is defined as any day on which there is a school session. Therefore, INSET or staff training days do not count as a school day.

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 The headteacher

Informing parents

The headteacher will immediately provide the following information, in writing, to the parents of an excluded pupil:

- The reason(s) for the exclusion
- The length of a fixed-term exclusion or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent
- Information about parents' right to make representations about the exclusion to the governing board and how the pupil may be involved in this

- Where there is a legal requirement for the governing board to meet to consider the reinstatement of a pupil, and that parents have a right to attend a meeting, be represented at a meeting (at their own expense) and to bring a friend

The headteacher will also notify parents that they parents are legally required to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours without a good reason. Parents may be given a fixed penalty notice or prosecuted if they fail to do this.

If alternative provision is being arranged, the following information will be included when notifying parents of an exclusion:

- The start date for any provision of full-time education that has been arranged
- The start and finish times of any such provision, including the times for morning and afternoon sessions, where relevant
- The address at which the provision will take place
- Any information required by the pupil to identify the person they should report to on the first day

Where this information on alternative provision is not reasonably ascertainable by the end of the afternoon session, it may be provided in a subsequent notice, but it will be provided no later than 48 hours before the provision is due to start. The only exception to this is where alternative provision is to be provided before the sixth day of an exclusion, in which case the information can be provided with less than 48 hours' notice with parents' consent.

Informing the governing board and local authority

The headteacher will immediately notify the governing board and the local authority (LA) of:

- A permanent exclusion, including when a fixed-period exclusion is made permanent
- Exclusions which would result in the pupil being excluded for more than 5 school days (or more than 10 lunchtimes) in a term
- Exclusions which would result in the pupil missing a public examination

For a permanent exclusion, if the pupil lives outside the LA in which the school is located, the headteacher will also immediately inform the pupil's 'home authority' of the exclusion and the reason(s) for it without delay.

For all other exclusions, the headteacher will notify the governing board and LA once a term.

5.2 The governing board

Responsibilities regarding exclusions is delegated to the governing board of Bletchingley Village Primary School

The governing board of Bletchingley Village Primary School has a duty to consider the reinstatement of an excluded pupil (see section 6).

Within 14 days of receipt of a request, the governing board will provide the secretary of state with information about any exclusions in the last 12 months.

For a fixed-period exclusion 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 exclusion.

5.3 The LA

For permanent exclusions, the LA is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education to begin no later than the sixth day of the exclusion.

6. Considering the reinstatement of a pupil

The governing board of Bletchingley Village Primary School will consider the reinstatement of an excluded pupil within 15 school days of receiving the notice of the exclusion if:

- The exclusion is permanent
- It is a fixed-term exclusion which would bring the pupil's total number of school days of exclusion to more than 15 in a term
- It would result in a pupil missing a public examination

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

Where an exclusion would result in a pupil missing a public examination, the governing board of Bletchingley Village Primary School will consider the reinstatement of the pupil before the date of the examination. If this is not practicable, the governing board of Bletchingley Village Primary School will consider the exclusion and decide whether or not to reinstate the pupil.

The governing board of Bletchingley Village Primary School can either:

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

In reaching a decision, the governing board of Bletchingley Village Primary School will consider whether the exclusion was lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair and whether the headteacher followed their legal duties. They will decide whether or not a fact is true 'on the balance of probabilities', which differs from the criminal standard of 'beyond reasonable doubt', as well as any evidence that was presented in relation to the decision to exclude.

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

The governing board of Bletchingley Village Primary School will notify, in writing, the headteacher, parents and the LA of its decision, along with reasons for its decision, without delay.

Where an exclusion is permanent, the governing board of Bletchingley Village Primary School decision will also include the following:

- The fact that it is permanent
- Notice of parents' right to ask for the decision to be reviewed by an independent review panel, and:
 - The date by which an application for an independent review must be made
 - The name and address to whom an application for a review should be submitted
 - That any application should set out the grounds on which it is being made and that, where appropriate, reference to how the pupil's SEN are considered to be relevant to the exclusion

- That, regardless of whether the excluded pupil has recognised SEN, parents have a right to require Tandridge Learning Trust to appoint an SEN expert to attend the review
- 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 exclusion has occurred as a result of discrimination, they may make a claim under the Equality Act 2010 to the first-tier tribunal (special educational needs and disability), in the case of disability discrimination, or the county court, in the case of other forms of discrimination. A claim of discrimination made under these routes should be lodged within 6 months of the date on which the discrimination is alleged to have taken place

7. An independent review

If parents apply for an independent review, Tandridge Learning Trust 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 governing board of Bletchingley Village Primary School of its decision to not reinstate a pupil.

A panel of 3 or 5 members will be constituted with representatives from each of the categories below. Where a 5-member panel is constituted, 2 members will come from the school governors category and 2 members will come from the headteacher category.

- A lay member to chair the panel who has not worked in any school in a paid capacity, disregarding any experience as a school governor or volunteer
- School governors who have served as a governor for at least 12 consecutive months in the last 5 years, provided they have not been teachers or headteachers during this time
- Headteachers or individuals who have been a headteacher within the last 5 years

A person may not serve as a member of a review panel if they:

- Are a member of the academy trust, or governing board of the excluding school
- Are the headteacher of the excluding school, or have held this position in the last 5 years
- Are an employee of the academy trust, or the governing board, of the excluding school (unless they are employed as a headteacher at another school)
- Have, or at any time have had, any connection with the academy trust, school, 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)

A clerk will be appointed to the panel.

The independent panel will decide one 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 when the decision is judged to be flawed)

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

8. School registers

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

- 15 school days have passed since the parents were notified of the exclusion panel's decision to not 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, the governing board will wait until that review has concluded before removing a pupil's name from the register.

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.

9. Returning from a fixed-term exclusion

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

The following measures may be implemented when a pupil returns from a fixed-term exclusion:

- Reintegration Plan
- Agreeing a behaviour contract

10. Monitoring arrangements

The headteacher of Bletchingley Village Primary School monitors the number of exclusions every term and reports back to the governors. They also liaise with the local authority to ensure suitable full-time education for excluded pupils.

This policy will be reviewed by the governing board of Bletchingley Village Primary School every 2 years. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

11. Links with other policies

This exclusions policy is linked to our

- Behaviour Policy
- SEN Policy and SEND Report

Appendix 1: independent review panel training

Tandridge Learning Trust must ensure that all members of an independent review panel and clerks have received training within the 2 years prior to the date of the review.

Training must have covered:

- The requirements of the primary legislation, regulations and statutory guidance governing exclusions, 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 headteachers, 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 that Act