



Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy 2026- 2027

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Introduction

This policy must be read in conjunction with the DfE Suspensions and Exclusions Guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>

The information contained within this policy outlines Durrington Multi Academy Trust's (DMAT) approach to suspensions and permanent exclusions. DMAT's aim is to ensure that when a decision to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil is taken, it is lawful, rational, proportionate, fair, and in the best interests of all pupils.

At DMAT we are committed to:

- Creating and maintaining safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environments in all our settings
- Using permanent exclusion only as a last resort
- Supporting pupils to remain engaged in education through our inclusive approach.

DMAT aims to:

- Ensure that the exclusions process is applied fairly and consistently across all settings
- Help local committees, staff, parents and pupils understand the suspension and exclusion process
- Support schools in ensuring pupils are safe, happy and able to access high quality education
- Ensure all suspensions and permanent exclusions are carried out lawfully and in line with the DfE statutory Guidance and the individual school's behaviour policy

Definitions

Suspension: When a pupil is removed from the school for a fixed period. This was previously referred to as a 'fixed-term exclusion'

Permanent exclusion: When a pupil is removed from the school permanently and is taken off the school roll

Off-site direction: When the principal or headteacher of a school 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.

The Power to suspend and/or exclude

Only a headteacher/co-headteacher or acting headteacher, can suspend or permanently exclude a pupil from school.

The decision can be made in respect of behaviour in school. A suspension or permanent exclusion can also be made in respect of behaviour outside school if this is stated in the individual school's behaviour policy. The headteacher/co-headteacher or acting headteacher will only use permanent exclusion as a last resort.

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

- in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy; and
- where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others such as staff or pupils in the school.

Before deciding whether to suspend or exclude a pupil, the headteacher/co-headteacher, or acting headteacher will:

- Consider all the relevant facts and evidence on the balance of probabilities, including whether the incident(s) leading to the exclusion were provoked
- Provide an opportunity for the pupil to give their version of events
- Consider whether the pupil has special educational needs (SEN)
- Consider whether the pupil is especially vulnerable (e.g. the pupil has a social worker, or is a looked-after child (LAC))
- Consider whether all alternative solutions have been explored, such as off-site direction.

The headteacher/co-headteacher or acting headteacher will consider the views of the pupil, taking into account their age and understanding, before deciding to suspend or exclude, unless it is not appropriate to do so.

Pupils who need help to express their views can be supported via an advocate, such as a trusted member of staff, parent or social worker.

Consideration, decision-making, and communication regarding suspensions and exclusion will take place without delay.

Inclusive Practice

DMAT schools aim to minimise suspensions and exclusions through early intervention and inclusive practice.

Before considering suspension or permanent exclusion the school will:

- Consider any identified underlying needs of the child and how these are being supported
- Engage with the pupil, family, and relevant professionals to understand any difficulties and contributing factors to behaviour concerns

- Where possible and deemed appropriate, explore reasonable adjustments and alternative provision.

The Trust expects the full and timely support of parents/carers and all relevant professionals to help the child/children concerned so as to minimise suspensions and exclusions.

Roles and Responsibilities

Headteacher/co-headteacher or acting headteacher:

- Makes all decisions relating to suspension and permanent exclusion, following consideration of the circumstances and the needs of the child
- Notifies parents/carers, the chair of the local committee and the local authority
- Notify the social worker, if a pupil has one, and the Virtual School Head (VSH), if the pupil is a Looked after Child (LAC)
- Ensures the pupil's voice is heard throughout the process
- Ensure that accessible work is provided for the pupil in line with published guidance

Local Committee:

A panel convened by the local committee within 15 school days of receiving notice of a suspension or permanent exclusion from the headteacher if:

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

The panel must review the headteacher's decision to ensure it was lawful, reasonable, and procedurally fair, and then decide whether to uphold the exclusion or direct the pupil's reinstatement.

Parents and Carers:

- Will be informed in writing about all suspensions and exclusions without delay
- Have the right to make representations to the governing board and request an Independent Review Panel (IRP) following a local committee's decision not to reinstate a permanently excluded pupil.

Returning from a Suspension

Reintegration

Following suspension, the school will hold a reintegration meeting and 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.

Part-time timetables will not be used as a tool to manage behaviour, and if used, will be implemented 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.

DMAT and its schools expect 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.

Cancelling a Permanent Exclusion

The headteacher, co-headteacher or acting headteacher can cancel any permanent exclusion that has already begun (or one that has not yet begun), but this can only happen if the local committee has not yet met to consider whether the pupil should be reinstated. This practice is sometimes known as withdrawing or rescinding an exclusion.

If this occurs, the parents, the local committee, and the local authority must be notified and, if relevant, the social worker and Virtual School Head.

Where a permanent exclusion is cancelled:

- The headteacher, co-headteacher or acting headteacher will notify the parents, the governing board, the LA and, if relevant, the pupil's social worker and VSH as applicable, without delay and the notification will also provide the reason for the cancellation
- The governing board's duty to consider reinstatement ceases, and there is no requirement to hold a meeting to consider reinstatement
- Parents will be offered the opportunity to meet the headteacher to discuss the circumstances that led to the exclusion being cancelled which will be arranged without delay
- The pupil will be allowed back into the school from which they were excluded without delay.

Relevant legislation and guidance

This policy is underpinned by:

Education Acts 2002 & 2011

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents>

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/21/contents>

School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/1033/made>

Equality Act 2010

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

Children and Families Act 2014

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents>

Keeping Children Safe in Education <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Behaviour in Schools Guidance Feb 2024

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-in-schools--2>