



Exclusions policy

This Policy has been adopted and approved by Oxlip Learning Partnership and is to be used by all members of the Trust.

History of Document:

Issue No	Author/ Owner	Date Written	Approved by Trust on	Comments	Next Review
V.1	Central Exec. Team	Oct 2024	6-Dec-2024	Trust-wide policy implemented following new DfE guidelines (Sept 2024)	Autumn 2027
V.2	Central Exec. Team	July 2026	4-Sep-2026	Updated in line with new the statutory guidance on suspensions and exclusions (July 2026)	Summer 2029

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Oxlip Learning Partnership's (the Trust) exclusion policy aims to set out the process that will be followed and the additional considerations around suspensions and exclusions that the Trust will apply. Good behaviour and self-discipline lead to effective learning and help prepare children and young people for life beyond the school gate.
- 1.2 Where the Trust's approaches towards behaviour management have been exhausted, then suspensions and permanent exclusions will sometimes be necessary as a last resort. This is to ensure that other pupils and teaching staff are protected from disruption and can learn in safe, calm and supportive environments. The Trust recognises that suspensions, permanent exclusions, managed moves and off-site direction are important behaviour management tools. The Trust will not operate a "no exclusion" policy and will instead seek to create environments where exclusions are rarely necessary because behaviour is effectively supported and managed.
- 1.3 The Trust will always have regard to the statutory guidance on suspensions and exclusions (July 2026) when making decisions on suspensions and exclusions, and will follow the law as set out in the relevant [School Discipline \(Pupil Exclusions and Reviews\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) (as amended).
- 1.4 The Trust will not use suspension, permanent exclusion, off-site direction, managed moves or alternative provision placements as a means of off-rolling. Informal or unofficial exclusions are unlawful regardless of whether parents have agreed to them. Any decision affecting a pupil's placement will be made in accordance with statutory guidance, the law and the best interests of the pupil

- 1.5 This policy should be read in conjunction with the behaviour policy and the SEND policy for the Trust.

2. Application of policy

This policy applies to all members of the Trust community. Each school within the trust will apply suspensions and exclusions in accordance with this policy and ensure that its contents are relayed to all staff, parents and pupils.

3. Types of exclusion

Suspensions and permanent exclusions are different:

- 3.1 Suspensions (previously called fixed-term exclusions) are where a pupil is prevented from attending the school for a fixed period. At the end of the period, they are expected to return to school following a reintegration meeting. A pupil may receive a maximum of 45 days of suspension in an academic year before being permanently excluded.
- 3.2 Permanent exclusions are where, subject to a decision of the governing board to reinstate the pupil to the school, the pupil is prevented from attending the school again. A decision to permanently exclude 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.

4. Roles and responsibilities

All members of the Trust community are expected to follow this policy. Roles, responsibilities and expectations of each section of the Trust community are set out in detail below.

4.1 The Principal

All decisions to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil will be taken by the principal after considering all the circumstances. Every decision made will be proportionate to the seriousness of the behaviour with reference to the school's behaviour policy. Where a pupil has a social worker and/or is looked after, the Principal will ensure notification of the relevant social worker and/or Virtual School Head without delay of any suspension or permanent exclusion decision. The Principal will also notify the local authority without delay of any suspension or permanent exclusion in accordance with statutory requirements.

In reaching any decision, the Principal will consider any relevant contributing factors including whether the pupil has SEND, an Education Health and Care Plan, a social worker, or other vulnerabilities that may be relevant to the circumstances of the incident.

4.2 The Trustees

The Trust board is responsible for forming committees to review exclusions and suspensions when it is required to do so, it is requested by parents or it is, in its view, prudent to review an individual decision. In each case, the decision of the relevant committee formed by the governing board will be to decide whether to uphold the exclusion or suspension or, instead, to reinstate the pupil to the school.

4.3 Parents

Parents will be informed without delay of any suspension or exclusion, and there is an ability to make representations in regard to any suspension or exclusion decision. Details will be provided on the rights parents have with every letter that is sent from the principal.

4.4 **Pupils**

All pupils of the schools in the Trust are expected to follow the expectations regarding their behaviour to ensure that all pupils can learn and participate in school life effectively. Where those expectations are breached, the behaviour policy will apply.

5. **CCTV, witness evidence and pupil views**

- 5.1 Our school's use closed circuit television (CCTV) within its premises. This is to provide a safe and secure environment for pupils, staff and visitors. If behavioural incidents are recorded on CCTV, the footage may be viewed as part of the investigation and the content considered before imposing a sanction. If CCTV is relied upon for a decision on a suspension or exclusion, then it will be shown in some format (redacted as necessary) at any governor review meeting. Please see the school's CCTV policy and privacy notices for more information.
- 5.2 Where witness evidence is relied upon, whether that be from a pupil or a staff member, the statement(s) will be provided at any governor review meeting. All statements will be signed and dated, unless the principal has good reason to protect the anonymity of the relevant witness; reasons may include threats of reprisals.
- 5.3 Before taking a decision to suspend or exclude and where appropriate, the principal will take the pupil's views into account, considering these in light of their age and understanding, and inform the pupil about how their views have been factored into any decision made. Where relevant, the pupil will be given support to express their view, including through advocates such as parents or, if the pupil has one, a social worker. The principal will also take account of any contributing factors identified after an incident of misbehaviour has occurred.

6. **Separation for safeguarding purposes**

- 6.1 Where necessary to safeguard pupils or staff, the school may, in exceptional circumstances, prevent a pupil from attending the school site or from having contact with another pupil whilst safeguarding concerns are investigated or addressed.
- 6.2 Such action is not a suspension or permanent exclusion where the reason for the separation is safeguarding rather than disciplinary.
- 6.3 Any such decision will be lawful, proportionate, time limited and regularly reviewed, with due regard to safeguarding, equality, SEND and human rights obligations.
- 6.4 Parents will be informed of the decision and the reasons for it as soon as reasonably practicable

7. **Reintegration strategy meetings following suspension or off-site direction**

- 7.1 Where a pupil is suspended or is directed to be educated off site, upon return to the school, both the pupil and parents will be invited to a reintegration strategy meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to:
 - offer the pupil a fresh start
 - help them understand the impact of their behaviour on themselves and others
 - teach them to how meet the high expectations of behaviour in line with the school culture
 - foster a renewed sense of belonging within the school community, and
 - build engagement with learning,

so that further suspensions are not needed. School staff will work with the pupil to understand what led to the behaviour, and to establish if any changes can be made or further support

implemented from a pastoral or practical perspective that might reduce the chance of repeat behaviours. Previous behaviour is not seen as an obstacle to future success.

7.2 The school uses various measures to support a pupil's successful reintegration, which may include:

- Daily contact with a designated pastoral professional in-school
- Use of a report card with personalised targets leading to personalised rewards
- Ensuring the pupil receives academic support upon return to catch up on any lost progress
- Planned pastoral interventions
- 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.

7.3 Whilst reintegration meetings are highly encouraged by the Trust, pupils will not be prevented from being admitted to the school or being put in mainstream classes because a meeting has not taken place.

8. Cancelling a suspension or exclusion

8.1 A suspension or exclusion can be cancelled by the principal as long as the suspension or exclusion has not been considered by the governors or trustees. In relation to an exclusion, it cannot be cancelled if the total time the pupil was excluded or suspended that academic year would be over 45 days at the point of the decision to cancel the exclusion.

8.2 Where a suspension or exclusion is cancelled, the relevant parties will be informed by the principal in accordance with the statutory guidance on suspensions and exclusions.

9. Suspensions before a permanent exclusion

9.1 In exceptional circumstances, pupils may receive a suspension prior to a permanent exclusion. For each decision, the principal will send the relevant letter setting out the rights of parents. A suspension cannot be converted into a permanent exclusion and so any subsequent permanent exclusion would be a fresh decision due to commence immediately after the suspension had ended. Exceptional circumstances may include where for example, further evidence has come to light, a further investigation has revealed that the behaviour is more serious than first thought or where the incident was serious and time is required to fully investigate the circumstances and consider alternatives.

10. Directing off-site and managed moves

10.1 Before taking any decision to permanently exclude a pupil, the principal will consider whether a direction to attend alternative provision and/or a managed move as part of a planned intervention would be a reasonable alternative that should be considered.

10.2 In the case of directing a pupil off site to alternative provision, the aim of any direction is for it to be used as a short-term measure as part of the school's behaviour management strategy to improve a pupil's behaviour, where in-school interventions and/or outreach have been unsuccessful or are deemed inappropriate. While parental consent is not needed, discussions will take place with parents to feed in their views about the options. The requirements in relation to any off-site direction will be followed.

10.2a Before directing a pupil off-site, the Principal will seek and consider the views of the pupil and their parents, taking account of the pupil's views age, understanding and individual circumstances. The final decision remains with the school. Appropriate support will be provided, where necessary, to enable the pupil to express their views.

- 10.2b Parents must be provided with at least two school days' written notice before an off-site direction begins. The written notice will include the reason for the placement, the name and address of the alternative provision, the start date, the expected duration of the placement and the arrangements for review of the placement.
- 10.2c Before the placement commences, the school will share relevant information with the alternative provision to support the pupil's education, welfare and safeguarding, including information relating to SEND, health, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding where appropriate.
- 10.2d Any off-site direction will be reviewed at regular intervals to ensure that the placement continues to be in the pupil's best interests and that it is achieving its intended objectives. Reviews will include the Principal (or nominated representative), the parent and a representative nominated by the Trust Board who is not the Principal. Where the pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan, the local authority will also be invited to participate in review meetings.
- 10.2e A written record will be maintained of the rationale for the placement, the objectives of the placement, review outcomes and decisions taken regarding the pupil's continued placement or reintegration
- 10.3 For a managed move to take place, there needs to be agreement between the school, the parents and the new school that a managed move should occur. Before a managed move is agreed to, the pupil will often attend the new school as part of a direction off site, but any managed move will need to comply with the new school's admissions procedures. The school will share relevant information with the new school and check that they have an integration strategy. At the end of this off-site direction period, the relevant parties (including the parents) will review how it has gone before a decision is taken about whether it becomes a permanent managed move. A managed move will only be agreed to where it is in the pupil's best interests.
 - 10.3a A managed move is a voluntary and permanent move to another school and will only take place where all parties agree that it is in the pupil's best interests. Managed moves will not be used as a trial arrangement. Where a pupil attends another school before a managed move is considered, this will be through a separate off-site direction arrangement where the legal requirements for such a placement have been met.
 - 10.3b Managed moves will not be used to circumvent a school's published admission arrangements or the requirements of the School Admissions Code. Any managed move must be completed through the receiving school's normal admission processes.
 - 10.3c A pupil will not be suspended or permanently excluded solely because the pupil or parent has declined a managed move.

11. Independent review panels (IRPs)

- 11.1 The school arranges its own IRPs and requests for an IRP where a permanent exclusion has been upheld should be made within 15 school days. Details of how to make a request for an IRP will be provided in the permanent exclusion hearing outcome letter. Alternatively, please contact the Trust on mail@oxlip.uk.
- 11.2 Further details on the role and powers of IRPs can be found in part ten of the statutory guidance on exclusions and suspensions.

12. Reconsideration by the governing board

Where an IRP either recommends reconsideration or quashes the initial decision of the governing board, the decision will be considered within 10 school days; this may involve a rehearing with oral evidence given by the school and parents or may be a reconsideration, with only the governing board members and the clerk present.

13. Remote meetings

- 13.1 Any trustee/governor and/or an IRP meeting may be conducted remotely where the parents request it be conducted remotely and the meeting can be fairly held remotely, with all participants having access and able to make representations. A meeting may also take place remotely where there is an extraordinary event or unforeseen circumstance that means it is not reasonably practicable to hold the meeting in person; such events can include but are not limited to floods, fire, and an outbreak of an infectious disease.
- 13.2 In addition, where a child's social worker or the virtual school head are due to attend a meeting, they may join an in-person meeting remotely, as long as it can be fairly accessed, the technology is available, and everyone would be able to make representations.

14. Complaints

If parents have any concerns or complaints over the application or implementation of this policy, or feel that they are being pressured into a managed move, they should raise their concerns with a staff member or the principal in accordance with the Trust's complaints policy. If the concern relates to an exclusion or suspension decision, or matters relating to it, the statutory procedure set out in the statutory guidance on exclusions and suspensions will be followed.

15. Equality impact

The Trust does all it can to ensure that its policies do not discriminate against pupils or others, either directly or indirectly, in line with any Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics; these include race, religion, disability, sexual orientation and sex.

16. Monitoring arrangements

The Local Advisory Boards for each school review data on suspensions and exclusions to ensure that the use of suspensions and exclusions is appropriate. The following are monitored by the governors to ensure the processes and support for pupils are appropriate:

- The interventions put in place for pupils at risk of suspension and permanent exclusion.
- The processes in place for determining and reviewing directions off-site and such placements being reviewed at sufficient intervals to assure that the education is achieving its objectives, and that pupils are benefiting from it.
- The full-time educational provision for pupils of compulsory school age from the sixth consecutive school day of a suspension; in particular, checking the provision is suitable and quality assured to ensure that:
 - Any previous placements have been evaluated, including support for any applicable SEND.
 - There is a process in place to monitor the pupil's attendance and behaviour at the provision.
 - The correct attendance code is being used.
 - The pupil's child protection file and any other information relevant to the pupil's safeguarding and welfare has been securely transferred to their new setting as early as possible.
- Whether there is any variation within the year in suspensions, permanent exclusions, off-site directions and managed moves, including analysis of repeat suspensions and the characteristics of pupils affected

- The cost implications of directing children to be educated off site in alternative provision and whether there are any patterns to the reasons or timing of moves.
- Whether the school register and absence codes have been recorded correctly.
- How the behaviour policy is applied and, specifically, its consistency.
- The circumstances in which pupils receive repeat suspensions and the effectiveness of interventions implemented to support successful reintegration and prevent further suspensions.
- Whether personal education plans for looked after children have been reviewed on a termly basis.

Exclusions will be reported to the Trust as set out through the Scheme of Delegation and in real time through the Trust's management information system.

17. Review Period

This policy will be reviewed by the Trust every three years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Trust Board and shared with Local Boards.

18. Links with other policies

This exclusions policy is linked to:

- the school Behaviour Policies
- SEND Policy
- SEN Information Reports in place at each school