



'Believe. Achieve. Be Proud.'

Suspension Policy

Lyngford Park Primary School & Nursery

Signature

N. Arnold

Headteacher

Date July 2024

Signature

F Forsyth

Chair of Governors

Date July 2024

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1. Aims

Richard Huish Trust and each school within the Trust aims to ensure:

- Exclusions process is applied fairly and consistently.
- 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).

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

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

Policy complies with funding agreement the Richard Huish Trust Articles of Association.

3. Decision to exclude

Only the Headteacher, or Interim Headteacher, can exclude a pupil from a school within the Trust. A permanent exclusion will be taken as a last resort.

Our school is aware 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 are committed to following all statutory exclusions procedures to ensure every child receives an education in a safe and caring environment

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 the pupil or others.

Before deciding whether to exclude a pupil, either permanently or for a fixed period, the Headteacher or acting 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, if this is appropriate.
- Consider if the pupil has special educational needs (SEND).
- The Headteacher or Interim Headteacher will inform the CEO of the Trust of the decision taken.

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

The Headteacher

Informing parents

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

- Reason(s) for the exclusion.
- Length of a fixed-term suspension or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent.
- Information about parents' right to make representations about the exclusion to the Local Governing Body and how the pupil may be involved in this.
- How any representations should be made.
- Where there is a legal requirement for the LGB to meet to consider the reinstatement of a pupil, and 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 by the end of the afternoon session on the day their child is excluded for the first 5 school days of an exclusion, or until the start date of any alternative provision where this is earlier.

Parents are legally required to ensure 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 Trust Board and Local Authority

The Headteacher will notify the Board and the local authority (LA) of:

- A permanent exclusion, including when a fixed-period exclusion is followed by a decision to permanently exclude a pupil.
- 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 inform the pupil's 'home authority' of the exclusion and reasons.

5.2 The Board

Responsibilities regarding exclusions are delegated to an Exclusion board constituted from the relevant Local Governing Body and The Trust's Board.

The Exclusion Committee has a duty to consider the reinstatement of an excluded pupil (See section 6).

Within 14 days of receipt of a request, the 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 Headteacher 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 Local Authority

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 Exclusion Committee 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 or national curriculum test.

If requested to do so by parents, the Exclusion Committee 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 one term.

Where an exclusion would result in a pupil missing a public examination, the Exclusion Committee will consider the reinstatement of the pupil before the date of the examination. If this is not practicable, the Exclusion Committee will consider the exclusion independently and decide whether or not to reinstate the pupil.

The Exclusion Committee 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 Exclusion Committee will consider whether the exclusion was lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair and whether the Headteacher/Acting 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 Exclusion Committee 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 Exclusion Committee decision will also include:

- The fact it is permanent.
- Notice of parents' right to ask for the decision to be reviewed by an independent review panel, and:
 - Date by which an application for an independent review must be made.
 - Name and address to whom an application for review should be submitted.
 - Application should set out the grounds on which it is being made and, where appropriate, reference to how the pupil's SEND are considered to be relevant.
 - Details of the role of the SEND expert and there would be no cost to parents for this appointment.
 - Parents must make clear if they wish for a SEND expert to be appointed in any application for a review.
 - Parents may, at own expense, appoint someone to make written and/or oral representations to the panel. Parents may also bring a friend to the review.
 - If parents believe 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. Discrimination claim 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, the 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 Exclusion Committee 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.

- 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 a teacher or Headteacher during this time.

Where a five-member panel is constituted two members will come from the school governors' category and two members will come from the Headteacher category.

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

- A member/director of the Trust or a governor of the excluding school.
- A Headteacher of the excluding school, or have held this position in the last 5 years.
- An employee of the Trust it's Board or the governing body of the excluding school (unless they are employed as a Headteacher at another school)
- Have or had any connection with the Trust, school, local governing body, parents or pupil, or the incident leading to the exclusion, which might reasonably be taken to raise doubts about their impartiality

A clerk will be appointed to the panel.

The independent panel will decide one of the following:

- Uphold the decision or recommend that the Board reconsiders reinstatement.
- When the decision is judged to be flawed, quash the decision and direct they 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.

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 they will not be applying for an independent review panel

Where an application for an independent review has been made, the Headteacher will wait until the 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:

- Agreeing a behaviour contract

10. Monitoring arrangements

The Headteacher monitors the number of exclusions every term and reports to the LGB.

This policy will be reviewed every three years. At every review, the policy and its review will be shared with the LGB of each school within the Trust and the Board will review and approve any updates to this policy.

Related Policies and Documents

- DfE Statutory Guidance on Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England.
- Wellbeing and Behaviour for Learning policy.
- SEN policy and information report.

Appendix 1: Independent review panel training

Those on the Independent Review Panel will receive appropriate training. Training must have covered:

- 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.
- Need for the panel to observe procedural fairness and the rules of natural justice.
- Role of the chair and the clerk of a review panel.
- Headteacher duties, governing boards and the panel under the Equality Act 2010.
- 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.