



Mulgrave Primary School

Suspension and Permanent Suspension Policy

Policy Written: January 2025

Ratified by Governors: January 2025

Date for Review: February 2026

Aims

Our school aims to ensure that:

- The suspensions process is applied fairly and consistently
- The suspensions 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)

Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on statutory guidance from the Department for Education: Suspension 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 Suspensions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012
- Sections 64-68 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- Suspension and Permanent Suspension from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement Guidance for maintained schools 2022
- Suspension and Permanent Suspension from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement (publishing.service.gov.uk)

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

Definition

For the purposes of suspensions, 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.

The decision to suspend

Only the head teacher, or the deputy head teacher, can suspend a pupil from school. A permanent suspension will be taken as a last resort. Our school is 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 suspension 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 suspensions procedures to ensure that 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 others
- In response to a serious incident of violence towards others

Before deciding whether to suspend a pupil, either permanently or for a fixed period, the head teacher will:

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

Roles and responsibilities

The head teacher will immediately provide the following information, in writing, to the parents of a pupil receiving an external suspension:

- The reason(s) for the suspension
- The length of a fixed-term suspension or, for a permanent suspension, the fact that it is permanent
- Information about parents' right to make representations about the suspension 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 head teacher will also notify parents by the end of the afternoon session on the day their child is excluded that for the first 5 school days of a suspension, or until the start date of any alternative provision where this is earlier, 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 a suspension:

- 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 a suspension, 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 head teacher will immediately notify the governing board and the local authority (LA) of:

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

For a permanent suspension, if the pupil lives outside the LA in which the school is located, the head teacher will also immediately inform the pupil's 'home authority' of the suspension and the reason(s) for it without delay. For all other suspensions, the head teacher will notify the governing board and LA once a term.

The Governing Board

Responsibilities regarding suspensions is delegated jointly to – Chris Tuffey (Chair of Governors) and Rosemary Savinson with a panel, which will consist of at least 3 governors.

The governing board has a duty to consider the reinstatement of a suspended pupil (see considering the reinstatement of a pupil). Within 14 days of receipt of a request, the governing board will provide the secretary of state, and the Royal Borough of Greenwich, with information about any suspensions in the last 12 months.

For a fixed-period suspension of more than 5 school days, the governing board and Royal Borough of Greenwich will arrange suitable full-time education for the pupil. This provision will begin no later than the sixth day of the suspension.

The Local Authority

For permanent suspensions, the Royal Borough of Greenwich is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education to begin no later than the sixth day of the suspension.

Considering the reinstatement of a pupil

The governing board will consider the reinstatement of an excluded pupil within 15 school days of receiving the notice of the suspension if:

- The suspension is permanent

- It is a fixed-term suspension which would bring the pupil's total number of school days of suspension 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 suspension if the pupil would be excluded from school for more than 5 school days, but less than 15, in a single term

Where a suspension would result in a pupil missing a public examination, the governing board will consider the reinstatement of the pupil before the date of the examination. If this is not practicable, the chair of the governing board (or the vice-chair where the chair is unable to make this consideration) will consider the suspension independently and decide whether or not to reinstate the pupil.

The governing board 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 will consider whether the suspension was lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair and whether the head teacher 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 will notify, in writing, the head teacher, parents and the Royal Borough of Greenwich of its decision, along with reasons for its decision, without delay.

Where a suspension is permanent, the governing board's 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 SEND is considered to be relevant to the suspension
- That, regardless of whether the excluded pupil has recognised SEND, parents have a right to require the Royal Borough of Greenwich to appoint a SEND expert to attend the review
- Details of the role of the SEND expert and that there would be no cost to parents for this appointment
- That parents must make clear if they wish for a SEND 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 suspension 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

An independent review:

If parents apply for an independent review, the Royal Borough of Greenwich 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 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 head teacher 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 Royal Borough of Greenwich, or governing board of the excluding school
- Are the head teacher of the excluding school, or have held this position in the last 5 years
- Are an employee of the, Royal Borough of Greenwich or the governing board, of the excluding school unless they are employed as a head teacher at another school
- Have, or at any time have had, any connection with the Royal Borough of Greenwich, school, governing board, parents or pupil, or the incident leading to the suspension, which might reasonably be taken to raise doubts about their impartiality
- Have not had the required training within the last 2 years
- 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.

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 suspension panel's decision to not reinstate the pupil and no application has been made for an independent review panel
- 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

Returning from a Fixed-Term Suspension

Following a fixed-term suspension, 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 suspension:

- Agreeing a behaviour contract or further pastoral support plans
- Further measure through Positive Behaviour Support
- Internal isolation as appropriate to the needs of the pupil and school

Monitoring Arrangements

The Home School Liaison Officer monitors the number of suspensions every term and reports back to the head teacher/governors. They also liaise with the local authority to ensure suitable full-time education for excluded pupils.

Links with other Policies

This suspensions policy is linked to our Behaviour policy.