

POLICY DOCUMENT



SET Ixworth School - Exclusion Policy

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VERSION CONTROL:			
Version	Date	Author	Reason
V1	29/09/2020	Trustees & Governance Professional	Based on DfE 'Best practice guidance for school complaints procedures 2020' (updated 15/9/2020) and to include policy for managing serial, repetitive and unreasonable complaints.
V2	31/03/2022	Governance Professional	New Trust logo. Clerk to Trustees changed to Governance Professional. MASH changed to CADS. Note: MASH is still used by Suffolk schools
V3	12/09/2022	Governance Professional	Removal of references to Local Governing Body and Governors. Email addresses changed to xx@setrust.co.uk format

Introduction

SET Ixworth School's (the School) exclusion policy aims to set out the process that will be followed and the additional considerations around suspensions and exclusions that the school will apply. Good behaviour and self-discipline lead to effective learning and help prepare children and young people for life beyond the school gate.

Where the School's approach(es) 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 students and staff are protected from disruption and can learn in safe, calm and supportive environments.

The school will always have regard to the Statutory Guidance on Suspensions and Exclusions (July 2022) when making decisions on suspensions and exclusions and will follow the law, as set out in the relevant School Discipline (Student Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulation 2012 (as amended).

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy and the SEND policy for the School.

Application of policy

The School will apply suspensions and exclusions in accordance with this policy and ensure that its contents are relayed to all staff, parents and students.

Types of exclusion

Suspensions and permanent exclusions are different:

- Suspensions (previously called fixed-term exclusions) are where a student 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 student may receive a maximum 45 days of suspension in an academic year before being permanently excluded.
- Permanent exclusions are where, subject to a decision of the Trust Board to reinstate the student to the school, the student 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 student to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the student or others such as staff or students in the school.

Roles and responsibilities

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

The Headteacher

All decisions to suspend or permanently exclude a student will be taken by the headteacher after considering all the circumstances. Every decision made will be proportionate to the seriousness of the behaviour with reference to the SET Ixworth Behaviour Policy.

Seckford Education Trust (the Trust)

The Trust 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 Trust Board will be to decide whether to uphold the exclusion or suspension, or instead to reinstate the student to the school.

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 headteacher.

Students

All students at the school are expected to follow the expectations regarding their behaviour to ensure that each and every student can learn and participate in school life effectively. Where expectations are breached, the Behaviour Policy will apply.

CCTV, witness evidence and student views

There are aspects of school life that are subject to the use of Close Circuit Television (CCTV). This is to provide a safe and secure environment for all stakeholders. 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 an exclusion, then it will be shown in some format (redacted as necessary) at any Trust review meeting.

Where witness evidence is relied upon, whether that be from a student or a member of staff, the witness statement(s) will be provided at any Trust review meeting. All statements will be signed and dated unless the headteacher has good reason to protect the anonymity of the relevant witness. Reasons may include threat(s) of reprisal.

Before taking a decision to suspend or exclude and where appropriate, the headteacher will take the student's views into account, considering these in light of their age and understanding, and inform the student about their views have been factored into any decision made. Where relevant, the student will be given support to express their view, including through advocates such as parents, or if the student, has a social worker. The headteacher will also take account of any contributing factors identified after an incident of misbehavior has occurred.

Reintegration strategy meetings following suspension or off-site direction

Where a student is suspended or is directed to be educated off-site, upon return to the school Both the student and parents will be invited to a reintegration strategy meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to:

- Offer the student 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 student to understand what led to the behaviour and to establish if any changes can be made or further support implemented from a pastoral of practical perspective that might reduce the chance of repeat behaviours. Previous behaviour is not seen as an obstacle to future success.

The School used various measures to support a student 's successful reintegration may including:

- Daily contact with the school's pastoral support worker in-school;
- Use of a report card with personalised targets leading to personalised rewards;
- Ensuring the student receives academic support upon return to catch up on any lost progress;
- Planned pastoral interventions;
- Mentoring by a trusted adult;
- Regular reviews with the student and parents to praise progress being made and raise and address any concerns at an early stage; and
- Informing the student, parents and staff of potential external support.

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

Suspensions before a permanent exclusion

In exceptional circumstances, students may receive a suspension prior to a permanent exclusion. For each decision, the headteacher 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 further evidence has come to light or where the incident was serious, and time is required to fully investigate the circumstances and consider alternatives.

Directing off-site and managed moves

Before taking any decision to permanently exclude a student, the headteacher 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 should be considered.

In the case of directing a student 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 student 's behaviour where in-school interventions and/or outreach have been unsuccessful or are deemed inappropriate. While parental consent is not needed, discussions would take place with parents to feed in their views about the options.

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 as part of the Suffolk IYFAP process. We will share relevant information with the new school and check that they have an integration strategy. At the end of this period, the relevant parties (including the parents) will review the placement before a decision is taken about whether the move becomes permanent.

Independent Review Panels (IRPs)

The Trust arranges its own IRPs, and requests for an IRP where a permanent exclusion has been upheld should be made to the Governance Professional within 15 school days. Details will be provided as required.

Further details on the role and powers of IRPs can be found in Part Ten of the Statutory Guidance on Exclusions.

Reconsideration by the Board of Trustees

Where an IRP either recommends reconsideration or quashes the initial decision of the Board of Trustees, 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 Board of Trustees, members and the clerk present.

Complaints

If parents have any concerns or complaints over the application or implementation of this policy or feels that they are being pressured into a managed move, they should raise their concerns with a staff member or the headteacher in accordance with the SET Ixworth Complaints Policy.

If the concern relates to an exclusion, the statutory procedure set out in the exclusions statutory guidance will be followed.

Equality impact

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

Monitoring arrangements

The Trust reviews data on suspensions and exclusions to ensure that the use of suspensions and exclusions is appropriate. The following are monitored by the Trust to ensure the processes and support for students are appropriate:

- The interventions put in place for students at risk of suspension and permanent exclusion
- The processes in place for determining and reviewing directions to alternative provision and that such placements are reviewed at sufficient intervals to assure that the education is achieving its objectives and that students are benefiting from it
- The full-time educational provision for students 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
 - any previous applicable SEND support has been evaluated
 - there is a process in place to monitor the student's attendance and behaviour at the provision
 - the correct attendance code is being used
 - the student's child protection file and any other information relevant to the student's safeguarding and welfare has been securely transferred to their new setting as early as possible

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- Whether there is any variation within the year on suspensions and permanent exclusions and the characteristics of students
- 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 students receive repeat suspensions
- Whether Personal Education Plans for looked after children have been reviewed on a termly basis.