



**Truro and Penwith
Academy Trust**

Exclusions Policy

Review Summary

Approved By:	Trust Board
Approval Date:	October 2024
Next Review Date:	October 2025



TPAT EXCLUSION POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Date guidance becomes effective: September 2024

Review date: September 2025 (pending updated DfE guidance)

Person responsible for Implementation and Monitoring: Headteacher/ Director of Education/Secondary Executive Lead/ Behaviour Lead

Links to other relevant policies: Behaviour, Safeguarding, Anti-Bullying, Child on Child Abuse, Sexual Harassment, ICT Acceptable Use, Banned Substances,

Legal Framework: This guidance supports the statutory guidance from the Department for Education: Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement Guidance for maintained schools, academies, and pupil referral units in England September 2023

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

Sections 64-68 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998

In addition, this guidance supports:

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

Equality Act 2010

Our School acknowledges its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, in particular in respect to safeguarding, disability and Special Educational Needs.

1. The Aims of this guidance are:

Specifically, this guidance aims to ensure that:

- The suspension and permanent exclusion process is fair, consistently applied and transparent
- The suspension and permanent exclusion process is clear, transparent and understood by parents, pupils, staff and Governance.
- That schools are implementing the Statutory guidance Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units (PRUs) in England appropriately and templates are provided to support schools in the process

2. Introduction

Our schools have clear standards for pupil behaviour. These standards are aligned with the school's values and ensure that all members of the school community are respected and can learn and work in a positive and safe environment. In some circumstances, exclusion from school is a necessary and integral part of the school's approach to upholding our values and standards and to providing a safe environment where pupils can learn and staff can work without disruption. All our behaviour policies contain explanations that there is a potential for suspension and exclusion for serious breaches of the school's behaviour policies. The statutory guidance will be followed at all times and should be read in conjunction with this Policy. This policy and procedure makes appropriate reference to the Equality Act 2010.

3. Types of Exclusion

Our schools can use two types of exclusion, dependent on the circumstances of the incident:

- a. A suspension. This is for a specified period of time, after which the pupil will return to school.
- b. A permanent exclusion. This is used for the most serious incidents. The pupil, after due process has been followed, does not return to school and will be removed from the school roll.

Schools may direct the education of a pupil to another school within the Trust for an agreed period of time. This is termed Trust Direction (see Exclusions Toolkit). A Trust Direction to attend another school does not have the legal framework and status which apply to suspensions and permanent exclusions.

4. The Decision to suspend or permanently exclude

Only the headteacher or acting headteacher, can decide to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil from school. A decision to permanently exclude a pupil is made after discussion with the Director of Education/Secondary Executive Lead/ Chief Executive from the Trust. We are committed to following all statutory exclusion procedures to ensure that every child receives an education in a safe and caring environment.

A decision to permanently 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.

Examples of behaviours which **may** be considered serious, and therefore may warrant consideration of a permanent exclusion include (but are not limited to):

- Physical assault against a pupil
- Physical assault against an adult
- Verbal abuse or threatening behaviour against a pupil
- Verbal abuse or threatening behaviour against an adult
- Use, or threat of use, of an offensive weapon or prohibited item that has been prohibited by a school's behaviour policy
- Bullying
- Racist abuse
- Abuse against sexual orientation or gender reassignment
- Abuse relating to disability
- Sexual assault against a pupil or adult

5. Cancelling exclusions

The headteacher can cancel any exclusion that has already begun (or one that has not yet begun), but this can only happen when the governance panel has not yet met to consider whether the pupil should be reinstated. Where an exclusion is cancelled:

- The headteacher must notify the parents, the local governance, the LA and the pupil's social worker and VSH as applicable, without delay. The notification must also provide the reason for the cancellation;
- The governance duty to consider reinstatement ceases, and there is no requirement to hold a meeting to consider reinstatement;
- Parents (or the excluded pupil if they are 18 years or older) should be offered the opportunity to meet the headteacher to discuss the circumstances that led to the exclusion being cancelled which should be arranged without delay;
- The pupil must be allowed back into the school from which they were excluded without delay.
- Any days spent out of school as a result of any exclusion, prior to the cancellation will count towards the maximum of 45 school days permitted in any school year.
- A permanent exclusion cannot be cancelled if the pupil has already been excluded for more than 45 school days in a school year or if they will have been so by the time the cancellation takes effect.

5. Procedure for suspension or permanent exclusion

Before deciding whether to use a suspension or exclusion the Headteacher will (as per the Statutory guidance):

- Consider all the relevant facts and evidence, including due consideration of provocation. Where appropriate, the investigation will include staff and pupil witness evidence as well as consideration of other evidence.
- Where reasonably possible provide the pupil with an opportunity to account for their actions

- Take into account a pupil's special educational needs (SEND) including, when appropriate, the specialist knowledge and advice of the SENDCo
- Discuss with the PELs (Primary Executive Leads), SEL (Secondary Executive Lead), Behaviour Lead or the Director of Education from the Trust

The Headteacher will make the decision to suspend or permanently exclude on the balance of probabilities, carefully weighing up the available evidence and taking reasonable time to reflect on the decision.

It is unlawful to send a pupil home 'to cool off' regardless of whether the parents are in agreement.

All formal exclusions and suspensions must follow the statutory guidance.

6. Length of suspension

The Headteacher will take into account the seriousness of the incident, the pupil's school record (including previous suspensions), the impact of the incident on other members of the school and any other relevant factors including, for example, any special education needs or disabilities of the child, when deciding the appropriate length of a suspension. Typically, suspensions are up to 5 days, and only the most serious incidents, or those which have been persistent, will result in suspensions which are longer than 5 days. The Trust and school recognise that lengthy suspension from school may be detrimental to a pupils' education and welfare and all suspensions are carefully considered so that the length of time is proportionate to the incident and circumstances. The Headteacher may not suspend a child for a total of more than 45 days in any academic year.

Where significant or substantial information comes to light from further investigation, following an initial decision to apply a suspension, the headteacher may extend the period of suspension. Alternatively, the new evidence may result in a decision being made to permanently exclude the pupil.

7. Informing parents about a decision to suspend.

The headteacher will provide the following information, in writing, to the parents of a suspended pupil as soon as reasonably possible after the incident, and wherever possible before the suspension begins:

- The reason(s) for the suspension
- The length of suspension or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent
- Information about parents' right to make representations about the suspension or permanent exclusion to the governance and how the pupil may be involved in this
- Where there is a legal requirement for the governance to meet to consider the reinstatement of a pupil, that parents have a right to attend a meeting, be represented at a meeting (at their own expense) and/or to bring a friend

The headteacher will notify parents by the end of the afternoon session on the first day their child is suspended 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 an exclusion, in which case the information can be provided with less than 48 hours' notice with parents' consent.

If a pupil has a social worker, or if a pupil is looked-after, the headteacher must, without delay after their decision, notify the social worker and/or Virtual School Headteacher, as applicable.

8. Provision of education during suspension

The school will always provide work for pupils to complete during any period of suspension, for the first 5 days. Work will, wherever possible, follow the pupils planned curriculum and timetable. Where this is not reasonably possible (e.g. the pupil does not have access to specialist equipment) then the teacher will set alternative work. Completed work should be returned to the school for marking and feedback.

For a suspension of more than 5 school days, the school will arrange suitable full-time education for the pupil. This provision will begin no later than the sixth day of the suspension.

In the case of a permanent exclusion, provision of education is the responsibility of Cornwall Council Local Authority from Day 6 onwards.

(Provision does not have to be arranged for pupils in the final year of compulsory education who do not have any further public examinations to sit.)

9. Pupil Welfare during suspension

The school will assess the risk to pupil welfare of any suspension and take appropriate measures to mitigate for this risk, including, as appropriate:

- Welfare support from a trusted adult, at a frequency determined by the Headteacher/ Designated Safeguarding Lead. This may be managed either via home visits, phone call or via an online platform e.g. Teams/
- Welfare support from an external agency e.g. social care, alternative education setting or suitable alternative
- A key adult as a point of contact in school for parents and the pupil, during the period of exclusion
- Other support appropriate to the pupils' needs and circumstances

10. Informing the Governance and Local Authority (Cornwall Council)

The headteacher will ensure that the local monitoring committee (through the Chair), the Trust (via the Director of Education) and the LA are immediately informed of:

- A decision to permanently exclude a pupil
- Any suspension

For a permanent exclusion, if the pupil lives outside the LA in which the school is located, the headteacher will also immediately inform the pupil's 'home authority' of the exclusion and the reason(s) for it without delay.

Where the pupil has a social worker, or is a Looked After Child, the Headteacher must also, as early as possible, inform the social worker and/or Virtual School Headteacher (VSH) of the decision to suspect or exclude the pupil. The social worker and/or VSH must also be informed when a governance panel meeting is taking place and may attend the meeting should they wish to do so.

11. Responsibilities of the Governance

The Local Monitoring Committee (LMC) reviews records of school suspensions and any permanent exclusions termly, as part of their role monitoring pupil behaviour. In the event that a decision to suspend or permanently exclude a student is rescinded by the Headteacher, this must also be reported to the LMC with reasons for both the original decision to suspend/exclude and the reasons for the decision having been rescinded.

Responsibilities regarding review of individual decisions to suspend pupils are delegated to a governance panel consisting of at least 3 individuals involved in the governance of the Trust. Please see the DfE guidance for further information. The panel has a duty to consider the reinstatement of a suspended pupil in some circumstances and a duty to consider the reinstatement of any permanently excluded pupil.

Within 14 days of receipt of a request, the LMC will provide the Secretary of State with information about any suspensions or permanent exclusions in the last 12 months.

12. Independent Review of Permanent Exclusion

Parents may request an independent review of a permanent exclusion, following the Governance Review where the panel do not reinstate a permanently excluded pupils. If parents request an independent review, the academy will arrange for an independent panel to review the decision of the governance panel.

Applications for an independent review must be made within 15 school days of notice being given to the parents by the panel of its decision to not reinstate a pupil.

Please note – governor and governing board is quoted from the DfE guidance – please assume these refer to Local Monitoring Committee and local governance within TPAT.

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 headteacher 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 or trustee of TPAT, or governing board of the excluding school
- Are the headteacher of the excluding school, or have held this position in the last 5 years
- Are an employee of TPAT, or on the governing board of the excluding school (unless they are employed as a headteacher at another school)
- Have, or at any time have had, any connection with TPAT, the school, governing board, parents or pupil, or the incident leading to the exclusion, 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: To uphold the governing board's decision

- To recommend that the governing board reconsiders reinstatement
- To 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.

13. School Registers

In the case of permanent exclusion, a pupil's name will be removed from the school register if:

- 15 school days have passed since the parents were notified of the governance panel's decision to not reinstate the pupil and no application has been made for an independent review panel, or
- The parents have stated in writing (including via email) that they will not be applying for an independent review panel

Where an application for an independent review has been made, the governance 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.

14. Returning to school following a suspension

Following a suspension, a re-integration (sometimes called 'return to school') meeting will be held involving the pupil, parents, a member of senior staff and other staff, where appropriate.

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss and agree the support that the pupil requires to re-integrate positively into the school community. The overarching aim is to support the pupil to learn from the incident, understand the consequences of their behaviour on others, and to prevent

further incidents of inappropriate conduct and in doing so, to reduce the risk of future and further suspension from school. This support may be short term, medium term or long term. During a reintegration meeting, the school should communicate to the pupil that they are valued, and their previous behaviour should not be seen as an obstacle to future success. Where possible this meeting should include the pupil's parents and carers. The following strategies are examples of support which may be implemented when a pupil returns from a suspension:

Agreeing a behaviour contract

Putting a pupil 'on report'

Use of 'internal' provision where the pupil does not return to mainstream lessons for a period of time. In such cases their education must continue.

Adaptations to timetable, class groups or tutor groups

Early Help or other social care or external partner support

A key adult/ mentor or other additional trusted adult support

A managed move, alternative provision (e.g. referral to an APA) or Trust Direction to attend another school within the Trust.

There should be agreement in the meeting about the appropriate timescale for any additional support to be in place, and the timescale for review.

15. Monitoring arrangements

The headteacher monitors the number and type of suspensions and permanent exclusions every term and reports back to the Local Monitoring Committee. The Headteacher is responsible for liaison with the local authority to ensure suitable full-time education for excluded pupils, in line with statutory requirements.

Appendix 1

Power to search

Our School has the right to search pupils for 'prohibited items' including knives and weapons, alcohol, behaviour changing drugs/substances, stolen items, tobacco and cigarette papers (including e-cigarettes), lighters/matches, fireworks, pornographic images, any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence (e.g. aerosols) or cause personal injury or damage to property and any other item which has been banned by the school rules. (See Banned Substances). In such cases as there is reasonable evidence to search for any of the above, two members of staff will be present, including, wherever possible, a member of the Leadership Team.

Where possession of an item by a child is illegal (items such as knives, drugs, suspected stolen items and pornography) the school will always work in partnership with the police. If during a search an electronic device is found and it is suspected that it has been or will be used to commit an offence or cause injury, damage to property, disrupt teaching or break the school rules, then the school may examine any data or files on the device where there is good reason to do so. The school may also delete files or data if it is thought there is a good reason to do so, unless the device is to be given to the police.

If a pupil fails to co-operate the pupil will be required to leave the school site. The school has not suspended the pupil and the pupil's absence will be treated as unauthorised.

A School's general power to discipline, as set out in Section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, enables a member of staff to confiscate, retain or dispose of a pupil's property as a disciplinary penalty, where reasonable to do so. All confiscated items will be disposed of by the school as appropriate.