



Selwyn Hall School Exclusion Policy

REVIEWED: SEPTEMBER 2024

Guiding Principles

Government guidance on exclusions - both to aid the decision making process and to support the administration of procedures - does not automatically apply to independent schools. However, in order to promote good practice, Polaris has regard for the principles of this guidance and this informs our working practice.

Exclusion from Selwyn Hall School

Young people are admitted to Selwyn Hall School after a full and thorough assessment period. Many have experienced exclusions from previous schools or educational settings.

The special educational needs of the children and young people include social, emotional and mental health difficulties, communication problems, learning difficulties. They may also find managing their own behaviour difficult. These, at times, are secondary to communication frustrations or social misunderstandings arising from the young person's primary problems. The staff work closely to support the children and young people during their daily routines and the teaching and support staff work closely with all the children and young people in the school to support them and to help them overcome or minimise the impact of their special educational needs. The aim is for the children and young people to become full and active citizens who are able to live cooperatively within their own community.

Support for the children and young people continues during difficult times. Exclusion is not seen as a system for managing difficulties within the school. It is the action of last resort and will only happen when an incident is deemed so serious there is no other option or all other options have been tried and only after a meeting of the school's senior management team (SMT). The SMT will review all action taken to date, together with the nature of the young person's difficulty and will make a decision on whether an exclusion is the only option available. The headteacher will take the final responsibility for the decision to exclude a young person and will then initiate the appropriate procedures. If exclusion is made, the headteacher will inform school's proprietor, the parents/carers of the young person, and the placing authority.

The headteacher will ensure that parents/carers are informed of the terms of the exclusion, whether it is a suspension from school for a number of days or a permanent exclusion, when the period of exclusion will end and how to appeal or receive further information relating to the exclusion procedures. Letters will be sent to parents/ carers and copied to the LEA. Parents/carers will have the right to discuss the procedures with the senior management team and with a representative from the proprietary body.

Procedure

Informing parents about the Exclusion

The head teacher will follow the procedures set out in the guidance as a matter of good practice. These procedures are designed to ensure fairness and openness in the handling of exclusions. Following these procedures will also reduce legal challenges to the exclusion at a later stage.

Whenever the head teacher excludes a child /young person, the parents/ carers will be notified immediately, ideally by telephone followed up by a letter within one school day. Letters of notification of exclusion must state:

- For a fixed period exclusion, the precise period of the exclusion;

- for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is a permanent exclusion;
- the reason for the exclusion;
- the parents/ guardian's rights to make representation about the exclusion to the headteacher and chair of governors;
- the person whom the parents/ carers should contact if they wish to make such representations.

The school administrator will provide the appropriate contact details for parents/ carers on request.

Letters should include the following information:

- The latest day in which the SMT and the chair of the governing body must meet to consider the circumstances in which the child /young person was excluded (except where the exclusion is for a total of not more than five school days in any one term, and would not result in the child /young person missing a public examination);
- in the case of a fixed period exclusion, the date and time when the child /young person should return to school and how this will be managed;
- if the exclusion is permanent, the date it takes effect and any relevant previous history;
- for fixed term exclusion the arrangements made for enabling the child /young person to continue working, including the setting and marking of work. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that work sent home is completed and returned to school.
- Model Letter 1 should be used for fixed period exclusions of more than five days and where a public examination is not missed;
- model letter 2 should be used for fixed period exclusions of more than five and up to 15 school days (single or cumulative) or where a public examination is missed;
- model letter 3 should be used for fixed period exclusions (single or cumulative) of more than 15 school days.
- model letter 4 should be used for permanent exclusion.

ALL EXCLUSION CASES SHOULD BE TREATED IN THE STRICTEST CONFIDENCE.

Informing the Governing Body and the Placing LEA

Within one school day the head teacher will inform the governing body and the placing LEA of:

- Permanent exclusions;
- exclusions, which would result in the child /young person being excluded for more than five school days in one term;
- exclusions, which would result in the child /young person missing a public examination;
- fixed period exclusions totalling five or fewer school days in any one term must be reported to the governing body in the termly report.

Exclusion reports should include: -

- The child/young person's name;

- the length of the exclusion;
- the reason for the exclusion;
- the child /young person's age, gender and ethnicity;
- whether the child /young person has a statement of special educational needs;
- whether the child /young person is in Local Authority care.

Exclusions from Lessons or Activities/Individual Route Timetable

We aim to include all children and young people in all activities at all times. Children and young people often have difficulties regulating their own behaviour and the school will provide opportunities for inclusion that are not dependent on high levels of internal control by pupils. Providing differentiated amounts of external control supports pupils. The curriculum is specifically designed to facilitate better patterns of behaviour and behaviour management, and individuals who are trained in behaviour management, handling emotion and aggression, de-escalation and restraint, staff the school. Nevertheless, it is sometimes necessary to provide an individual route through parts of the curriculum for a period of time, for some pupils.

If pupils are finding it difficult to follow the group timetable (maybe one aspect of this is causing them problems) they may need to be withdrawn for all or part of the lesson. These absences are fully logged and the replacement activity carefully documented. If this happens for more than five sessions / lessons a review meeting is called to decide if the pupil needs to be placed on an individual timetable. When pupils are not following the group timetable, for a prolonged period, their individual route is discussed fully with the placing authority, parents/ carers, carers and social workers at the review meeting. All aspects of the timetable they actually follow (charted against any activities they miss) are logged. The meeting will also decide when to reconvene to discuss progress. A pupil will be on an individual timetable for a maximum period of one term before a review meeting is called.

For some pupils in the school an individual timetable needs to be in place whilst staff work on aspects of the behaviour that prevent the pupil from following the group timetable. All pupils on an individual timetable will work in a group situation or participate in regular activities whenever they can. For example, some pupils may be able to eat with all the pupils, or participate in the horticultural sessions, etc. The senior management team do not want pupils isolated from their peers and every effort will be made to ensure that all pupils gain as much from the community as is possible for them. Any worries about isolation will be fully explored in the review meeting.

Internal Exclusions are used as per Government Guidance on Internal Exclusion

Fixed term or Permanent Exclusion

This is used as a last resort or for a very serious breach of school rules/criminal act.

MODEL LETTER 1

From the Head teacher notifying parents of a fixed period exclusion of 5 school days or fewer in one term, and where a public examination is not missed.

Dear (Parents' names)

I am writing to inform you of my decision to exclude (child's name) for a fixed period of (period). This means that he/she will not be allowed in school for this period. The exclusion begins/began on (date) and ends on (date).

I realise that this exclusion may be upsetting for you and your family, but the decision to exclude (child's name) has not been taken lightly. (Child's name) has been excluded for this fixed period because (reason for exclusion).

You have the right to make representation to the Governing Body. If you wish to make representations please contact-----
-----, through the school office, as soon as possible.

The school will set work for (name of child) during the period of his/her exclusion (detail the arrangements for this).

You may wish to contact your LEA officer, who can provide advice.

(Name of child)'s exclusion expires on (date) and we expect (name of child) to be back in school on (date) at (time).

I am sure it would be helpful for us to meet to discuss (name of child)'s return to school. Please could you contact (name of child)'s head teacher to arrange a convenient time and date.

Yours sincerely,
Headteacher

MODEL LETTER 2

From the Head teacher notifying parents of a fixed period exclusion of more than five and up to and including 15 school days in total in one term, or where a public examination would be missed.

Dear (Parent' name)

I am writing to inform you of my decision to exclude (child's name) for a fixed period of (period). This means that he/she will not be allowed in school for this period. The exclusion begins/began on (date) and ends on (date).

I realise that this exclusion may be upsetting for you and your family, but the decision to exclude (child's name) has not been taken lightly. (Child's name) has been excluded for this fixed period because (reason for exclusion).

You have the right to make representation to the Governing Body. If you wish to make representations please contact -----
-----, through the school office, as soon as possible. As the length of the exclusion is more than 5 school days in one term, the senior management team will meet if you request it to do so. The latest date by which they can meet is (insert date – no later than 15 school days from the date the senior leadership and management team is notified). If you wish to make representation to the senior leadership and management team and wish to be accompanied by a friend or representative please contact (child's name)'s head teacher as soon as possible.

The school will set work for (name of child) during the period of his/her exclusion (detail the arrangements for this).

You may wish to contact your LEA officer, who can provide advice.

(Name of child)'s exclusion expires on (date) and we expect (name of child) to be back in school on (date) at (time).

I am sure it would be helpful for us to meet to discuss (name of child)'s return to school. Please could you contact (name of child)'s head teacher to arrange a convenient time and date.

Yours sincerely
Headteacher

MODEL LETTER 3

From the Head teacher notifying parents of a fixed period exclusion of more than 15 days in total in one term.

Dear (parents' names

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I am writing to inform you of my decision to exclude (child's name) for a fixed period of (period). This means that he/she will not be allowed in school for this period. The exclusion begins/began on (date) and ends on (date).

I realise that this exclusion may be upsetting for you and your family, but the decision to exclude (child's name) has not been taken lightly. (Child's name) has been excluded for this fixed period because (reason for exclusion).

You have the right to make representation to The Governing Body. If you wish to make representations please contact -----, through the school office, as soon as possible. As the length of the exclusion is more than 15 school days in one term, the senior management team will meet to discuss the exclusion. At the meeting, you can make representation. The latest day the senior leadership and management team can meet is (date-no later than 15 school days from the date the senior leadership and management team is notified). If you wish to make representation to the senior leadership and management team and wish to be accompanied by a friend or representative please contact (child's name)'s head teacher, as soon as possible.

The school will set work for (name of child) during the period of his/her exclusion (detail the arrangements for this). You may wish to contact your LEA officer, who can provide advice.

(Name of child)'s exclusion expires on (date) and we expect (name of child) to be back in school on (date) at (time). I am sure it would be helpful for us to meet to discuss (name of child)'s return to school. Please could you contact (name of child)'s head teacher to arrange a convenient time and date.

MODEL LETTER 4

From the Head Teacher notifying parents of a permanent exclusion.

Dear (Parent's names)

I am writing to inform you of my decision to exclude (child's name) permanently from (date). This means that (child's name) will not be allowed back to this school. Alternative arrangements for (child's name)'s education will need to be made.

I realise that this exclusion may be upsetting for you and your family, but the decision to exclude (child's name) has not been taken lightly. (Child's name) has been excluded permanently for (reason for exclusion).

You have the right to make representation to the Governing Body. If you wish to make representations please contact -----, through the school office, as soon as possible. As this is a permanent exclusion the senior leadership and management team and The Governing Body representative, Marina Gough, will meet to discuss the exclusion. At the meeting you can make representation. The latest day the senior leadership and management team can meet is (date – no later than 15 school days from the date the senior leadership and management team is notified). If you wish to make representation to the senior leadership and management team and wish to be accompanied by a friend or representative please contact (child's name)'s assistant Head teacher, as soon as possible.

You may wish to contact your LEA officer, who can provide advice.

Yours sincerely
Headteacher