Oxenhope Church of England Primary School

Exclusion and Suspension Policy

Created By:	Last reviewed:	Next Review Date:
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School Vision

We provide the rich soil allowing children to flourish and develop deep roots. We nurture **growth**, enabling children to thrive as our Christian values blossom in their lives. We cultivate a sense of pride in our rural **community** where children are **loved** and valued.

May our children flourish in their youth like well-nurtured plants. Psalm 144 v 12.

Throughout our curriculum and school life, along with our school vision, these three golden strands permeate through everything we do.

Community

Jesus often spoke of unity in our communities and encouraging one another on our journey. He spoke of bearing each other's burdens in love and helping those in need.

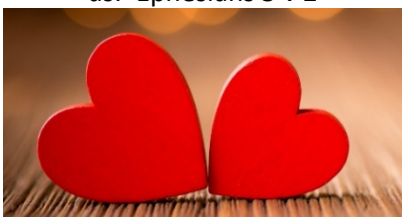
'Live in harmony with one another.' Romans 12 v 16



Love

It says in the Bible that God is Love and encompasses all that is loving and good. Jesus showed the ultimate unconditional love when he laid down his life for us on the cross. Therefore, this love should lead to a desire to love other people.

'Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us.' Ephesians 5 v 2



Growth

Just like a plant, we must endure the difficult times along with the good; but God has sent us his Holy Spirit to help and strengthen us so we can bear fruit and grow in the likeness of Christ.

'Grown in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' 2 Peter 3 v 18



Good behaviour in schools is essential to ensure that all pupils benefit from the opportunities provided by education. The government recognises that school exclusions, managed moves and off-site direction are essential behaviour management tools for headteachers and can be used to establish high standards of behaviour in schools and maintain the safety of school communities. *(DfE Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance Sept 2024)*

The Need for a Policy

Oxenhope CE Primary School promotes positive behaviour through the example set by adults and pupil role models, the Behaviour Policy, curriculum and by having high expectations. Learning that there are consequences to inappropriate behaviour is an important aspect of education and the behaviour strategy has clear sanctions for when expectations are not met.

There are occasions when it is necessary and appropriate to suspend pupils for a fixed period, or, in very rare cases, permanently exclude. In most cases permanent exclusion will be the last resort after a full range of measures have been tried to improve the pupil's behaviour and engender a sense of personal responsibility.

Whenever suspensions or permanent exclusions are used, the DfE Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance is followed. At Oxenhope CE Primary School, pupils identified as being at risk of suspension and permanent exclusion are provided with strategies to meet individual needs so that school leaders can support the pupil and their family as much as possible. Permanent exclusion is viewed as the strongest sanction possible. Only the Headteacher, or in their absence a senior leader with delegated authority, may suspend or permanently exclude a pupil.

A decision to exclude a pupil from the school should be taken only if

a) There is a serious breach or persistent breaches of the Behaviour Policy
b) Where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others such as staff or pupils in the school.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the process for fixed term suspensions and permanent exclusions for the benefit of parents, staff and pupils to ensure a consistent and fair process for all concerned.

Parents

The definition of a parent for the purposes of the Education Act is broadly drawn. In addition to the child's birth parents, references to parents in this guidance include any person who has parental responsibility (which includes the local authority where it has a care order in respect of the child) and any person (for example, a foster carer) with whom the child lives.

Prevention of Suspension and Permanent Exclusion

Managing serious or persistent problems

- School leaders accept that it is the behaviour that is the problem and not the child

- The behaviour of children giving cause for concern will be assessed
- Triggers or antecedents will be established
- Individual programmes will be planned to help modify inappropriate behaviour
- The child may be referred to Behaviour Support Service or other external services through Bradford Local Authority
- Parents will be invited into school to discuss their child's behaviour with their child's class teacher and a member of the Senior Leadership team or SENDCo. An individual Behaviour Support Plan will be drawn up which takes parents' views into consideration. Parents will then be kept informed of their child's progress.
- Before deciding to suspend or permanently exclude, the Headteacher will consider whether the pupil has SEND, an Education Health and Care Plan, or other vulnerabilities and whether reasonable adjustments and appropriate support have been implemented.

The aim of the Behaviour Policy is:

- To help pupils realise the appropriate behaviours and provide strategy/guidance on making the right behaviour choice.
- To promote positive behaviour
- To help support behaviour modification if pupils persist in making 'wrong' choices with their behaviour

To support good behaviour school staff, ensure that the school rules are followed and these are regularly reinforced in class and through assemblies to ensure that the children are clear about the levels of expectation of their behaviour and reviewed to ensure consistent use across the whole school.

Behaviour Support Plans and Risk Assessments

These will be used to help pupils at risk of suspension and permanent exclusion to support them to make correct behaviour choices.

Plans will:

- Identify objectives and address no more than three at a time
- Include strategies for managing the environment, the class or group, and the activities which give rise to the inappropriate behaviours
- Emphasise teaching the child alternative positive behaviours
- Specify the behaviour that is unacceptable and the consequence should it occur
- Include some form of assessment e.g. chart to grade behaviour during a session, to encourage responsibility for own behaviour

Classroom teaching and learning must be able to take place undisturbed in classrooms. If this is prevented from happening by an individual or group, the behaviours must be tackled.

A risk assessment may be used to ensure the safety of the child and adults.

Adult-led internal reflection time

Internal reflection is not a suspension because the pupil remains on school premises and continues to receive educational provision.

The Headteacher, or in their absence a senior leader with delegated authority will decide whether to implement adult-led reflection.

This will mean that the pupil will remain in school, with a member of school staff to re-regulate. Parents will be informed if a child requires adult-led reflection time.

Vulnerable Pupils

The school will have particular regard to the needs of pupils with SEND, pupils with EHCPs, looked after children, previously looked after children, and pupils with social workers when considering suspension or permanent exclusion.

1. Fixed Term Suspension

Fixed Term Suspension means that a pupil is not allowed to come to the school for a fixed period. Pupils can also be suspended for lunchtime periods if behaviour at lunchtime is disruptive. A pupil may be suspended for one or more fixed periods (up to a maximum of 45 school days in an academic year).

Suspension will not be used for minor incidents, poor academic performance or punctuality concerns, etc.

The length of fixed term suspension is at the discretion of the Headteacher but will be for the shortest time deemed appropriate.

Procedure after a decision to fixed term suspend a pupil has been made

1. Parents/carers will be informed by telephone that a decision to suspend has been made. This will be followed by a letter of confirmation outlining the reasons for the decision and the Governors' Pupil Disciplinary Committee process.

2. Any suspension that leads to a pupil totalling over 15 school days suspension in a term must be referred to the Governors' Pupil Disciplinary Committee. This Committee must meet within 15 school days of receiving notice of the suspension. The Headteacher and parents/carers will be invited to make representations to the Committee. The Committee will consider whether the Headteacher's decision to suspend was lawful, reasonable, procedurally fair, and proportionate, and will make a decision on whether or not to reinstate the pupil i.e. whether or not to uphold the suspension which led to the pupil totalling over 15 school days suspension in a term. The clerk will inform parents/carers in writing of the Governors' decision within 1 school day.

3. This Committee must also convene if parents/carers request such a meeting for a suspension that leads to a pupil totalling over 5 school days suspension in a term or up to 15. This Committee must meet within 50 school days of receiving notice of the suspension.

4. If parents/carers request a committee meeting in relation to a suspension that leads to a pupil totalling 5 school days suspension in a term or less, the Committee must consider any

representations made by parents/carers, but it cannot direct reinstatement and is not required to arrange a meeting with parents/carers.

5. Before a meeting of the Governors' Pupil Disciplinary Committee the school will send all the relevant material to the parents/carers and the governors on the panel 5 school days in advance of the meeting. Parents/carers have the right to be accompanied by a friend or representative.

6. Pupils will have a reintegration meeting after a fixed-term suspension (normally with the Headteacher Trust or Deputy/Head of school in their absence.) where it is expected that parents/carers will attend with the pupil in question. The purpose of the meeting is to promote an improvement in behaviour, to emphasise the joint responsibility between school and parents/carers regarding the pupil and to explore measures to prevent further misbehaviour.

7. The school will keep a formal record of all fixed-term suspensions.

8. The Headteacher (Trust or Deputy/Head of school in their absence.) can cancel a suspension.

Pupil welfare during suspension.

1. The parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that the pupil is not present in a public place e.g. parks, shopping centres at any time during school hours. (Bradford Council may issue fines to parents if this is breached.)

2. The school will set work, which will be sent electronically via email, but it is the parent/carers' responsibility to collect the work and return it to school. A paper copy will be made available if parents/carers don't have access to technology.

3. After day 5 of suspension the school will arrange for alternative temporary education – usually at a different local school, or at a Pupil Referral Unit

4. If a pupil is suspended at lunchtimes and is entitled to Free School Meals, then the school can decide for a packed lunch to be provided if parents/carers wish.

2. Permanent Exclusion

Permanent exclusion is very rare as it is a very serious matter and is never undertaken lightly.

Only the Headteacher, or in their absence a senior leader with delegated authority, may suspend or permanently exclude a pupil.

Situations leading to permanent exclusion

After all other initiatives to improve behaviour have been exhausted permanent exclusion may result from serious on-going behaviour problems or the failure of a managed move. There will, however, be exceptional circumstances where, in the Headteacher's judgment, it is appropriate to permanently exclude a pupil for a first or 'one-off' offence.

These may include:

a) Serious actual or threatened violence against another pupil or a member of staff.

b) Sexual abuse or assault.

c) Supplying or being in possession of drugs or illegal substances (including alcohol) on the premises or on the way to or from school in the community

d) Pupils who have a dangerous weapon on the premises or on the way to or from school in the community.

e) Pupils who purposely tamper with or set off the fire alarm or contact 999 without good cause.

These instances are not exhaustive but indicate the severity of such offences and the fact that such behaviour can affect the discipline and well-being of the school community. The decision to permanently exclude a pupil is never taken lightly.

The DfE Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance also states that 'a pupil's behaviour outside school can be considered grounds for a suspension or permanent exclusion.'

Procedure for decision making

The standard of proof to be applied is the civil standard of proof i.e. on the balance of probabilities if it is more probable than not that the pupil did what they are alleged to have done, the Headteacher may permanently exclude the pupil.

Permanent exclusion will not be imposed in the heat of the moment. In exceptional circumstances, usually where further evidence has come to light through an investigation, the Headteacher may issue a permanent exclusion to begin immediately after the end of a suspension.

Before deciding whether to exclude a pupil permanently the Headteacher will:

a) Ensure that a thorough investigation has been carried out;

b) Consider all the evidence available to support the allegations, taking account of the school's behaviour and equal opportunities policies, and, where applicable, The Equality Act 2010

c) Allow the pupil to give their version of events;

d) Check whether the incident may have been provoked, for example by bullying or by racial or sexual harassment;

e) If necessary, consult others, but not anyone who may later have a role in reviewing the Headteacher's decision, for example a member of the Governing Body.

Procedure after a decision to permanently exclude has been made

1. Parents/carers will be informed without delay that a decision to permanently exclude has been made – either by telephone or in a meeting with the Headteacher. This will be followed by a letter of confirmation outlining the reasons for the decision and the Governors' Pupil Disciplinary Committee process (sent electronically or via the post). Where a pupil has a social worker or is looked after, the school will notify the relevant professionals without delay following any suspension or permanent exclusion.

2. The school will inform the parent/carer of the date of the Governors' Pupil Disciplinary Committee meeting at which governors will hear the school's case and the parents/carers/pupil's case.

3. Before the meeting, the school will send all the relevant material to the parents/carers and the Governors on the committee 5 school days in advance of the meeting.

4. The Governors will hear the case, at which parents/carers may be accompanied by a friend or representative. Governors will consider whether the Headteacher's decision to permanently exclude was lawful, reasonable, procedurally fair, and proportionate, and will make a decision on whether or not to reinstate the pupil i.e. whether or not to uphold the permanent exclusion. The clerk will inform parents/carers in writing of the Governors' decision within 1 school day.

5. Parents/carers do have a right of appeal to an independent review panel in the event that Governors uphold the permanent exclusion. Information regarding this will be included in the letter sent to parents/carers. Parents must make this request within 15 school days of receiving notification of the permanent exclusion, and the panel should meet to review the case within 15 school days of the parents' request. Parents have a right to require the Trust to appoint a SEND expert to attend the review, regardless of whether the pupil has recognised special educational needs.

The panel may make one of three decisions:

- uphold the governing board's decision not to reinstate;
- recommend that the governing body reconsiders reinstatement; or
- quash the governing board's decision and direct that the governing body board reconsiders reinstatement.

The Headteacher (Trust or Deputy/Head of school in their absence.) can cancel an exclusion before the governing board has met to consider whether the pupil should be reinstated. This practice is sometimes known as withdrawing or rescinding an exclusion. If this occurs, the parents, the governing board and the local authority, must be notified and, if relevant, the social worker and VSH.

Pupil welfare following a permanent exclusion

1. The pupil may not come to the school or into the school grounds unless invited in.
2. The parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that the pupil is not present in a public place e.g. parks, shopping centres at any time during school hours. (Bradford Council may issue fines to parents if this is breached.)
3. From day 6 onwards of permanent exclusion the Local Authority will arrange for alternative temporary education – usually at a Pupil Referral Unit.

Governing board reinstatement meetings and IRPs can be held via the use of remote access (for example, live video link) for suspension and permanent exclusions if requested by the parents, provided certain criteria are satisfied. Meetings held via the use of remote access should not be a default option and face to face meetings should always be encouraged.

Review

This policy should be reviewed and ratified by the Governing Body of Oxenhope CE Primary School.

Separation of Pupils for Safeguarding Purposes

In rare circumstances, DfE Guidance on Suspension and Exclusions July 2026 gives schools the power to temporarily forbid a pupil from attending the school premises in order to separate them from another pupil (or pupils) for safeguarding reasons. This may include circumstances where an allegation of serious harm has been made by one pupil against another.

This is not a suspension or permanent exclusion on disciplinary grounds and will only be used in situations where:

- There is an identified safeguarding risk;
- Separating the pupils is essential to protect one or more children and;
- The separation cannot practicably be achieved through arrangements that allow the pupils to remain safely on school premises.

Any such decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis in line with the principles of DfE Guidance on Suspension and Exclusions July 2026 and Part 5 of KCSIE 2026. The DSL will take a lead role in completing a risk assessment and exploring safety planning options, taking advice from Children's Social Care, the Police and the BDAT Head of Safeguarding as needed. Using this information, the Headteacher will make the final decision as to whether a safeguarding separation arrangement is required by considering:

- The best interests, safety and welfare of all pupils involved
- The wishes and feelings of pupils where appropriate
- The school's duties under the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998
- Whether reasonable adjustments or alternative on-site arrangements could safely manage the risk
- The educational and support needs of the pupil who will be forbidden from attending the premises

Parents will be informed of the reasons for any safeguarding separation that is put in place. The Local Governing Body should also be notified without delay.

All safeguarding separation arrangements will be kept under regular review and will remain in place only for as long as it is necessary and proportionate. Appropriate education, pastoral support and contact with the pupil will be maintained throughout the period they are not allowed to attend school, and a clear reintegration and safety plan will be agreed prior to them returning.

The local authority should support school to ensure that suitable education is provided during any safeguarding separation, as per their duty under S19 of the Education Act 1996.