



The Rivers
C.of E. Academy Trust

Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy

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This document sets out the regulations for the MAT and all member academies

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Introduction and Behaviour Principles

The Rivers' Suspensions and Exclusion Policy aims to set out the process that will be followed and the additional considerations around suspensions and exclusions that the trust's schools 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 an individual school's approaches towards behaviour management have been exhausted, suspensions and permanent exclusions will sometimes be necessary as a last resort. This is to ensure that the education and welfare of other pupils and welfare of teaching staff are protected from harm or disruption and pupils can learn in safe, calm, and supportive environments.

The Rivers' schools will always have regard to the Statutory Guidance on Suspensions and Exclusions (September 2024) when making decisions on suspensions and exclusions and will follow the law, as set out in the relevant School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended). Only the headteacher or an acting headteacher can exclude a pupil from school.

This policy should be read in conjunction with each individual school's Behaviour Policy and the Rivers' SEND policy.

We do not practice off-rolling. Ofsted defines off-rolling as:

"...the practice of removing a pupil from the school roll without a formal, permanent exclusion 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 do not send children home for a cooling off period.

The trust's behaviour principles will apply in all Rivers' schools and be referenced in individual school's behaviour policies.

Partnership with Parents/Carers

Parents/carers working in partnership with the school to consistently reinforce the school's expectations is an important factor in every child's success. At all of our settings we will work in partnership with parents/carers to ensure that expectations are clear and parents/carers can reinforce them with their children. This includes ensuring that parents/carers are kept informed about decisions made in response to a child's behaviour so that we can work together in the best interests of pupils to ensure expectations for behaviour are made clear. The school is responsible for communicating its expectations of standards of conduct to pupils, parents/carers and staff.

Supporting Pupils to Succeed

We aim to include, not exclude, and we approach all challenging behaviour in a supportive and positive way. We recognise that such behaviour can sometimes be symptomatic of a real, deeper need for our support and understanding. All children can go through times of inappropriate

behaviour. We strive to never 'give up' easily on a child as we recognise that each person has a unique contribution to make to school life and we want to support them to achieve this. We will use behaviour data to assess patterns of challenging behaviour in pupils. Where patterns emerge, we will systematically intervene, drawing up an action plan with the child, parent/carer and teacher.

Exclusions

No suspension or exclusion will be initiated without first attempting other strategies or, in the case of a serious single incident, a fair and reasonable investigation.

A permanent exclusion decision may be made when there is a:

- serious breach of the school's rules, values or policies; and
- where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the individual pupil or others such as staff or pupils in the school.

This can either be a very serious incident or the repetition of serious incidents. Any suspension or permanent exclusion will be at the decision of the head, usually in consultation with other members of the senior leadership team (particularly if they were involved in investigating the incident). All suspensions and permanent exclusions will be logged by the school and analysed on a termly basis by the Director of Inclusion to help identify trends and address issues and reported to the board of trustees each term.

Types of Exclusion

Suspension

A suspension (previously called a fixed term exclusion) is when a pupil is excluded from school and must remain home for a fixed amount of time. This should be for the shortest time necessary to ensure minimal disruption to the child's education, whilst mindful of the seriousness of the incident.

After that time, they are expected to return to school following a reintegration meeting. A pupil may receive a maximum of up to 45 days of suspension in an academic year before being permanently excluded.

Permanent Exclusion

A permanent exclusion is when a pupil, subject to any later decision of the school's Governing Board determine whether to reinstate the pupil to the school, is permanently excluded from school and not allowed to return. This is a significant decision and the headteacher will consult with senior leaders and the Director of Inclusion as soon as possible in such a case. Please refer to DfE statutory guidance for those with legal responsibilities in relation to exclusion: *Suspension and permanent exclusion of pupils from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England including pupil movement*.

In exceptional circumstances, pupils 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.

Reasons for Suspension or Permanent Exclusion

A decision to exclude a pupil, either for a fixed period (suspension) or permanently, is seen as a last resort by the school. The physical and emotional health and wellbeing/welfare of our children and staff is our primary concern and we therefore accept that, in some serious situations, suspension or exclusion may be necessary. The decision to suspend or exclude will often follow a range of strategies and be seen as a last resort or it will be in response to a very serious breach of school rules, values and policies or a disciplinary offence such as (this is not an exhaustive list):

- serious actual or threatened violence against another pupil or a member of staff
- possession or use or supply of an illicit drug on school premises
- bullying
- prejudice-based harassment or hatred-based acts

Suspension or permanent exclusion may be the result of persistently poor behaviour or a serious single incident.

Persistent or Cumulative Problems

Suspension may be used in response to persistent poor behaviour which breaches school rules, values and policies. In the most serious cases where the problem persists and there is no improvement (despite various strategies having been previously implemented) a permanent exclusion may be necessary.

This will be imposed only when the school has already offered and implemented a range of support and management strategies. These could be joint action plans with parents/carers, child and school, behaviour intervention, target setting, home/school communication book etc.

The length of a suspension will depend upon a number of factors such as the severity of the incident and the likely impact on the child's learning and ability to succeed on returning to school. Such decisions will be made in the best interests of the child, whilst also being mindful of the need to maintain order and reinforce the rules and expectations of the school in a clear and consistent way.

Single Incidents

Sometimes it may be necessary in serious cases to implement a permanent exclusion decision for a one-off or first-time disciplinary offence. In such cases, the headteacher or a designated senior leader will investigate the incident and consider all available or relevant evidence relating to the allegation taking account of the school's policies.

The pupil will be encouraged to give his/her version of events, and the headteacher will check whether the incident may have been provoked, for example, by bullying or racial harassment.

The Decision to Exclude

Only the headteacher, or acting headteacher, can suspend or permanently exclude a pupil from school on disciplinary grounds. The headteacher or acting headteacher, will inform and discuss the decision with the Director of Inclusion.

The decision can be made in respect of behaviour inside or outside of school. The headteacher will only use permanent exclusion as a last resort.

A decision to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil will be taken only:

- In response to a serious or persistent breach(es) of the school's behaviour policy
- If allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others such as other pupils or staff

Before deciding whether to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil, the headteacher will consider:

- all the relevant facts and evidence on the balance of probabilities, including whether the incident(s) leading to the exclusion were provoked
- the pupil's version of events
- the pupil's protected characteristics
- whether the pupil has special educational needs (SEN) or a disability
- whether the pupil is especially vulnerable (e.g. the pupil has a social worker, or is a Looked-After Child)
- whether all alternative solutions have been explored, such as off-site direction or managed moves

Evidence

A school may use closed circuit television (CCTV) within their premises. This is to provide a safe and secure environment for pupils, staff and visitors. 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 suspension or exclusion, then it will be shown in some format (redacted as necessary) at any reinstatement panel meeting or independent review panel meeting ("panel meeting"). Please see The Rivers Data Protection Policy for more information.

Where witness evidence is relied upon, whether that be from a pupil or a staff member, the statements will be provided at any panel meeting. All statements will be signed and dated and may be anonymised if the headteacher has good reason to protect the anonymity of the relevant witness. Reasons may include threats of reprisals.

The headteacher will consider the views of the pupil, in light of their age and understanding, before deciding to suspend or exclude, unless it would not be appropriate to do so. Pupils who need support to express their views will be allowed to have their views expressed through an advocate, such as a parent or social worker. The headteacher will not reach their decision until they have heard from the pupil and will inform the pupil of how their views were taken into account when making the decision.

Informing Parents/Carers

If a pupil is at risk of suspension or exclusion, the headteacher will inform the parents/carers as early as possible, in order to work together to consider what factors may be affecting the pupil's behaviour, and what further support can be put in place to improve the behaviour.

If the headteacher decides to suspend or exclude a pupil, the parents/carers will be informed of the period of the suspension or exclusion and the reason(s) for it, without delay (see letter templates in appendices 3-4).

The parents/carers will also be provided with the following information in writing, without delay:

- The reason(s) for the suspension or exclusion
- The length of the suspension or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent
- Information about parents/carers' right to make representations about the suspension or permanent exclusion to the governing board (trustees) and how the pupil may be involved in this
- That the parents or pupil may make representations to the proprietor of the school and how such representations can be made or how the pupil may be involved in the meeting
- Whether there is a legal requirement for the governing board to hold a meeting to consider the reinstatement of a pupil and, if so, that parents/carers (or the pupil if they are 18 years old) have a right to attend the meeting, can request a remote meeting, can be represented at the meeting (at their own expense) and can be accompanied a friend.
- The means by which and to whom representations or a remote meeting request can be made

The headteacher will also notify parents/carers without delay and by the end of the afternoon session on the first day their child is suspended or permanently excluded, that:

- for the first 5 school days of an exclusion (or until the start date of any alternative provision or the end of the suspension, where this is earlier), the parents/carers are legally required to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours without a good reason. This will include specifying on which days this duty applies
- parents/carers 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, if possible:

- 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 the pupil needs in order to identify the person they should report to on the first day

If the headteacher does not have all the information about the alternative provision arrangements by the end of the afternoon session on the first day of the suspension or permanent exclusion, they can provide the information at a later date, without delay and 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 or permanent exclusion, in which case the school reserves the right to provide the information with less than 48 hours' notice, with parents/carers' consent.

Safeguarding

A suspension will not be enforced if, by doing so, it may put the safety of the pupil at risk. In cases where parents/carers will not comply by, for example, refusing to collect the child, the child's welfare is the priority. In this situation, depending on the reason for suspension, the school may consider an internal exclusion until the end of the day, implementing the original suspension decision from the time the child is collected from school, or, in more severe circumstances the school may contact social services and/or the police to safely take the pupil off site.

Work Set

When a pupil is suspended for more than one day, work should be set by the school within a reasonable timescale and this should be returned to the school when the suspension is over. If a child is suspended at the end of a school day, then it may not be possible to arrange for work to be set until the following morning.

Behaviour Outside School

Pupils' behaviour outside school, on school business (e.g. on school trips, at sports events, whilst wearing school uniform when walking to and from school) or when outside of school, not on school business, is subject to the school's behaviour policy. Unacceptable behaviour in such circumstances will be dealt with as if it had taken place in school, this includes any serious breach of policy which could 'bring the school into disrepute'.

Pupils with SEND

The school must take account of any special educational needs when considering whether or not to suspend/exclude a pupil. The headteacher should ensure that reasonable adjustments, in line with the Equality Act 2010, have been taken by the school to remove any substantial disadvantage relating to a pupil's disability so the pupil is not treated less favourably for their disability or reasons arising from their disability or indirectly.

Directing off-site and Managed Move

In cases where the headteacher and parents/carers agree that the progress of the pupil has been unsatisfactory and the pupil is unwilling or unable to benefit from the educational opportunities offered, or if a parent's failure to engage in strategies implemented by the school are resulting in a continuing pattern of poor behaviour or lack of improvement in behaviour, the headteacher may consult with the appropriate bodies and propose a managed move to another local school. This is not permanent exclusion, and in such cases the headteacher may assist the parents/carers in placing the pupil in another school.

- Before taking any decision to permanently exclude a pupil, 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 that should be considered.
- In the case of directing a pupil 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 pupil'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 to feed in their views about the options.

Removal from School

The headteacher may send a pupil home, after consultation with the pupil's parents/carers and a health professional as appropriate, if the pupil poses an immediate and serious risk to the health and safety of other pupils and staff, for example, because of a diagnosed illness such as a

notifiable disease. This is not a suspension and should be for the shortest possible time. A pupil cannot be 'sent home' for other reasons, including poor behaviour.

Off-rolling

Off-rolling is the practice of removing a pupil from the school roll without a formal, permanent exclusion or by encouraging a parent to remove their child from the school roll, where doing this is primarily in the interests of the school rather than in the best interests of the child. It is unlawful and is not undertaken by any of the schools in the trust.

Cancelling a Suspension or Exclusion

A suspension or exclusion can be cancelled by the headteacher as long as the suspension or exclusion has not been considered by the governing board's reinstatement panel. In relation to a permanent exclusion, it cannot be cancelled if the total time the pupil for which the pupil was suspended for that academic year would be over 45 days at the point of the decision to cancel the exclusion.

Where a suspension or exclusion is cancelled, the headteacher will inform the Director of Inclusion who will then inform the board of trustees in accordance with the statutory guidance on suspensions and exclusions.

Considering Reinstatement

The headteacher will consult the governance lead to arrange a date for the governing board reinstatement meeting. A panel will consider and decide on the reinstatement of a suspended or permanently excluded pupil within 15 school days of receiving the notice of the suspension or exclusion if:

- The exclusion is permanent
- It is a suspension which would bring the pupil's total number of days out of school to more than 15 in a term; or
- It would result in a pupil missing a public exam or national curriculum test

Where the pupil has been suspended, and the suspension does not bring the pupil's total number of days of suspension to more than 5 in a term, the governing board must consider any representations made by parents/carers. However, it is not required to arrange a meeting with parents/carers and it cannot direct the headteacher to reinstate the pupil.

Where the pupil has been suspended for more than 5 days, but less than 16 days, in a single term and the parents/carers make representations to the board, the governing board will consider and decide on the reinstatement of a suspended pupil within 50 school days of receiving notice of the suspension. If the parents/carers do not make representations, the board is not required to meet, and it cannot direct the headteacher to reinstate the pupil.

Where a suspension or permanent exclusion would result in a pupil missing a public exam or national curriculum test, the governing body will, as far as reasonably practicable, consider and decide on the reinstatement of the pupil before the date of the exam or test. If this is not practicable, the governing board reinstatement panel (comprising two trustees (panel members) and one executive member (panel member), who does not oversee that specific school, may consider the suspension or permanent exclusion and decide whether or not to reinstate the pupil.

The following parties will be invited to a meeting of the governing board and allowed to make representations or share information:

- Parents/carers, or the pupil if they are 18 or over (and, where requested, a representative or friend)
- The pupil, if they are aged 17 or younger and it would be appropriate to their age and understanding (and, where requested, a representative or friend)
- The headteacher
- The pupil's social worker, if they have one
- The VSH (Virtual School Head), if the pupil is looked after
- Two trustees (panel members)
- One Executive Member (panel member)

The governing board will try to arrange the meeting within the statutory time limits set out above and at a time that suits all relevant parties. However, its decision will not be invalid simply on the grounds that the meeting was not made within these time limits.

The governing board can either:

- Decline to reinstate the pupil, or
- Direct the reinstatement of the pupil immediately, or on a particular date (except in cases where the board cannot do this – see earlier in this section)

In reaching a decision, the governing board will consider:

- Whether the decision to suspend or permanently exclude was lawful, reasonable, and procedurally fair;
- Any representations about the exclusion made by or on behalf of the parents or pupil, the headteacher, the social worker or the virtual school head;
- Whether the headteacher followed their legal duties;
- Interests and circumstances of the excluded pupil, including the circumstances in which the pupil was excluded;
- Have regard to the interests of other pupils and persons working at the school including persons working at the school voluntarily); Any evidence that was presented to the governing board.

They will decide whether or not any alleged facts are true 'on the balance of probabilities'.

Minutes will be taken of the meeting, and a record kept of the evidence that was considered. The outcome will also be recorded on the pupil's educational record, and copies of relevant papers will be kept with this record.

The governing board will notify, in writing, the following stakeholders of its decision, along with reasons for its decision, without delay:

- The parents/carers, or the pupil, if they are 18 or older
- The headteacher
- The pupil's social worker, if they have one
- The VSH, if the pupil is looked after
- The local authority
- The pupil's home authority, if it differs from the school's

Where an exclusion is permanent and the governing board has decided not to reinstate the pupil, the notification of decision will also include the following:

- The fact that it is a permanent exclusion
- Notice of parents/carers' right to ask for the decision to be reviewed by an independent review panel
- The date by which an application for an independent review must be made (15 school days from the date on which notice in writing of the governing board's decision is given to parents/carers)
- That a remote hearing request can be made to attend the meeting using remote access
- The name and address to which an application for a review, any written evidence and/or a remote hearing request should be submitted
- That any application should set out the grounds on which it is being made and that, where appropriate, it should include reference to how the pupil's special educational needs (SEN) are considered to be relevant to the permanent exclusion
- That, regardless of whether the excluded pupil has recognised SEN, parents/carers have a right to require the academy trust to appoint an SEN expert to advise the review panel
- Details of the role of the SEN expert and that there would be no cost to parents/carers for this appointment
- That parents/carers must make clear if they wish for an SEN expert to be appointed in any application for a review
- That parents/carers may, at their own expense, appoint someone to make written and/or oral representations to the panel, and parents/carers may also be accompanied by a friend to the review
- That, if parents/carers believe that the permanent exclusion has occurred as a result of unlawful 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. Also, that any 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.

Procedure for Appeal

If parents/carers wish to appeal the decision to exclude, the matter will be referred to the appropriate body and handled through an independent review panel. Details of this can be found in Parts 9 and 10 of the DfE guidance.

[Suspension and permanent exclusion guidance](#)

Independent Review

If parents/carers apply for an independent review within the legal timeframe, the academy trust 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/carers by the governing board of its decision to not reinstate the pupil **or**, if after this time, within 15 school days of the final determination of a claim of discrimination under the Equality Act 2010 regarding the permanent exclusion.

A panel of 3 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 governor category

and 2 members will come from the headteacher category. At all times during the review process there must be the required representation on the panel.

- 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
- Current or former 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 trustee/director of the academy trust 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 the academy trust, or 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 the academy trust, school, governing board, parents/carers or pupil, or the incident leading to the exclusion, which might reasonably be taken to raise doubts about their impartiality (although an individual must not be taken to have such a connection simply because they are employed by the local authority/academy trust as a headteacher at another school)
- Have not had the required training within the last 2 years (see appendix 1 for what training must cover)

The panel must consider the interests and circumstances of the pupil, including the circumstances in which the pupil was permanently excluded, and have regard to the interests of other pupils and people working at the school.

Taking into account the pupil's age and understanding, the pupil or their parents/carers will be made aware of their right to attend and participate in the review meeting and the pupil should be enabled to make representations on their own behalf, should they desire to.

Where a SEN expert is present, the panel must seek and have regard to the SEN expert's view of how SEN may be relevant to the pupil's permanent exclusion.

Where a social worker is present, the panel must have regard to any representation made by the social worker of how the pupil's experiences, needs, safeguarding risks and/or welfare may be relevant to the pupil's permanent exclusion.

Where a Virtual School Headteacher is present, the panel must have regard to any representation made by the social worker of how any of the child's background, education and safeguarding needs were considered by the headteacher in the lead up to the permanent exclusion, or are relevant to the pupil's permanent exclusion.

Following its review, the independent panel will decide to do 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 if it judges that the decision was flawed)

New evidence may be presented, though the school cannot introduce new reasons for the permanent exclusion or the decision not to reinstate. The panel must disregard any new reasons that are introduced.

In deciding whether the decision was flawed, and therefore whether to quash the decision not to reinstate, the panel must only take account of the evidence that was available to the governing board at the time of making its decision. This includes any evidence that the panel considers would, or should, have been available to the governing board and that it ought to have considered if it had been acting reasonably.

If evidence is presented that the panel considers it is unreasonable to expect the governing board to have been aware of at the time of its decision, the panel can take account of the evidence when deciding whether to recommend that the governing board reconsider reinstatement.

The panel's decision can be decided by a majority vote. In the case of a tied decision, the chair has the casting vote.

Once the panel has reached its decision, the panel will notify all parties in writing without delay.

This notification will include:

- The panel's decision and the reasons for it
- Where relevant, details of any financial readjustment or payment to be made if the governing board does not subsequently decide to offer to reinstate the pupil within 10 school days
- Any information that the panel has directed the governing board to place on the pupil's educational record

Concerns and Complaints

If parents have any concerns or complaints over the application or implementation of this policy or feel that they are being pressured into a managed move, they should raise their concerns with a staff member of the headteacher in accordance with the trust's 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 Rivers C.of E. Academy Trust does all it can to ensure that its policies do not discriminate against pupils or others, either directly or indirectly, in line with the Equality Act (2010) protected characteristics. This includes race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, and sex.

Monitoring Arrangements

The trustees and school improvement team review data on suspensions and exclusions on a termly basis to ensure that the use of suspensions and exclusions is appropriate.

The following are monitored by the school leadership team and during trust SEND and safeguarding reviews to ensure the processes and support for pupils are appropriate:

- the interventions put in place for pupils 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 pupils are benefiting from it
- the full-time educational provision for pupils of compulsory school age from the sixth consecutive school day of a suspension, in particular checking the provision is suitable and quality-assured
- whether there is any variation within the year on suspensions and permanent exclusions and the characteristics of pupils
- how the behaviour policy is applied and specifically its consistency

The following are monitored by the school leadership team, including the DSL to ensure the processes and support for pupils are appropriate:

- the circumstances in which pupils receive repeat suspensions
- that a pupil is assessed for additional educational needs if they receive a repeat suspension
- that any previous placements have been evaluated, including support for any applicable SEND
- there is a process in place to monitor the pupil's attendance, welfare and behaviour at an alternative provision
- the pupil's child protection file and any other information relevant to the pupil's safeguarding and welfare has been securely transferred to their new setting within five days of the transfer
- 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
- the correct attendance code is being used at an alternative provision
- whether Personal Education Plans for looked after children have been reviewed on a termly basis

Legislation

This document should be read in conjunction with the DfE statutory guidance for those with legal responsibilities in relation to exclusion:

Suspension and permanent exclusion of pupils from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement guidance:

- [School suspensions and permanent exclusions - GOV.UK](#)

This policy also links with the following legislation:

- [Education and Inspections Act \(2006\)](#)

- [Equality Act \(2010\)](#)
- [Children and Families Act \(2014\)](#)

The Rivers C.of E. Academy Trust is committed to valuing diversity and to equality of opportunity. We aim to create and promote an environment in which pupils, parents/carers and staff are treated fairly and with respect and feel able to contribute to the best of their abilities.

Reintegration

After a suspension, the pupil and parent/carer will be requested to attend a reintegration meeting with a senior member of staff. At this meeting the behaviour leading to exclusion will be discussed and targets will be set for improvement. Support around behaviour will also be discussed. The meeting will be recorded on the school re-integration form (Appendix 2) and a copy retained by the parent/carer, child and school. It will need to be signed by all parties.

The contents of a reintegration plan (appendix 2) should be clear and may contain the following:

- **Child and Young Person's Views**
This should explore how the child is feeling about their return to school including what they are worried about, what they enjoy and are looking forward to. The school should also seek to explore this with the parent, considering strategies, support, and interventions that it is felt would be helpful in supporting their child.
- **Alternative Provision Views (where relevant)**
It is important that where a child has been receiving their education at an alternative provision, they are part of the plan as they will be able to share specific interventions and strategies that have been successful and how this could be implemented in the child's school. They will also be able to identify how they can assist with any ongoing support or provision required.
- **Health and Wellbeing**
It is important to identify if there have been any changes to the child's health and wellbeing. This should have regard to any updated involvement or advice from health professionals. If a health need may be suspected, it is advisable for the school to consider an Individual Health Care Plan to identify the need and specific arrangements required. If the child has an EHCP then an interim review of this plan should also be considered.
- **Known Risks/Concerns**
This will be an opportunity to put in place strategies to avoid and manage risks appropriately and whether adaptations or additional support is required to ensure this happens. It will also be an opportunity to explore whether there are any factors that would cause the child to be at risk of harm both in and outside of the school community.
- **Family Circumstances**
Family dynamics can impact on children's behaviour, attendance and engagement and therefore understanding this is helpful to assess any changes that may have occurred during their absence. It is also useful to identify strategies that can be used both in the home and in school.
- **Curriculum Offer**
This should be an opportunity to assess the child's academic progress and potential. Adaptations to the curriculum, including the continuation of alternative provision/part-time arrangements may be required to support the child.

- **Specific Support and Interventions**

This will provide identified strategies and interventions to be used by the school. This should be clear and have regard to the SEND Local Offer and Graduated Response.

- **Transitional Arrangements**

Children and young people should have a sense of belonging to the school and therefore opportunities to promote this throughout a child's absence should be embedded in any arrangement made.

It is essential that the contact arrangements and frequency of this are established as soon as the absence is known. Where a child is receiving alternative provision, it is also essential that all relevant information about the child and school is shared so that the consistency of expectations and ethos can be maintained within reason. This will ensure that any concerns can be identified and responded to effectively to avoid causing unnecessary delay and anxiety.

Providing as much information as possible about the school day and week, including the expected changes that will or are likely to occur over the identified time of reintegration will maximise the success of the plan. This will help to minimise any disruption to the arrangements but also assist in identifying any additional challenges or strategies that may need to be considered or implemented.

- **Named Key Contacts and Agency Involvement**

The plan must detail all key persons and services, along with their contact details, involved in the implementation of the plan.

- **Review of Additional Plans (Behaviour Plan, Individual Health Care Plan)**

The reintegration plan must be reviewed in conjunction with any other plan. Furthermore, consideration should also be given as to whether other plans may be required.

- **Identifying What Success Is**

The reintegration plan should clearly identify what success will look like for the child having regard to short, medium- and longer-term goals. This should focus specifically on successful reintegration. It should also have regard to the child's future aspirations and actions that may need to be taken if the expected progress is not being achieved.

Monitoring and Analysing Suspensions and Exclusions Data

The governing board will challenge and evaluate the data on the school's use of suspension, exclusion, off-site direction to alternative provision and managed moves.

The trustees will consider:

- How effectively and consistently the school's behaviour policy is being implemented
- The school register and absence codes
- Instances where pupils receive repeat suspensions
- Interventions in place to support pupils at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion
- Any variations in the rolling average of permanent exclusions, to understand why this is happening, and to make sure they are only used when necessary

- Timing of moves and permanent exclusions, and whether there are any patterns, including any indications which may highlight where policies or support are not working
- The characteristics of suspended and permanently excluded pupils, and why this is taking place
- Whether the placements of pupils directed off-site into alternative provision are reviewed at sufficient intervals to assure that the education is achieving its objectives and that pupils are benefiting from it
- The cost implications of directing pupils off-site

Appendix 1: Promoting Inclusion Guidance for Schools - Prevention

Often when we are faced with behaviour that challenges, children and young people are using this to communicate feelings they find difficult to express through language. At these times of high stress, children and young people are unable to access the part of the brain that allows them to plan and consider consequences, instead they are in flight, fight or freeze mode.

Every school should be curious about what the behaviour is trying to tell you. A metaphor that is often used is that of an iceberg; we see behaviours on top of the water (top of the iceberg) but underneath there are a range of emotions that children and young people cannot express in another way at that point in time (e.g. shame, embarrassment, guilt).

There are a range of school-based interventions that may be used to support children's social and emotional strategies.

Suggested Strategies

Below is a list of strategies that have been suggested by the external agencies and local authorities and may only apply in specific situations.

Whole School Behaviour Policy	A behaviour policy has a consistent system of rules, rewards, and consequences. The policy should set out clear expectations for behaviour and attitudes to learning. It should be supported by a school ethos that teaches social, emotional and behaviour skills. This must be shared with pupils and parents/carers and reviewed annually by the governing board.
Whole School Anti-Bullying Policy	The use and effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies in schools: DfE research report 2011 (publishing.service.gov.uk)
Restorative Approaches to Behaviour and Relationships	Restorative approaches are a range of practices used to promote positive relationships and behaviour in schools. Restorative Practice has been shown to build a school culture where the climate for learning is improved so enabling learners to learn and teachers to teach. Restorative Practice has also been shown to be a highly effective tool in improving behaviour and reducing exclusions.
Pastoral Support Programme (PSP)	A Pastoral Support Programme (PSP) is a school-based intervention that is designed to support young people who are at risk of permanent exclusion, or who are at risk of becoming disaffected through repeated suspensions. National guidance recommends the use of a PSP when behaviour is deteriorating and there is a risk of exclusion, and that the PSP should offer multi-disciplinary support.
Trauma Informed Schools (TIS) Virtual School (CLA)	A trauma informed school is one that can support children and teenagers who suffer with trauma or mental health problems and whose behaviour challenges act as a barrier to learning. TISUK's training is highlighted in the DfE Advice to Schools: Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools as supporting and promoting positive mental health.
Graduated Response	The guidance has been designed to help ensure children and young people across the County with Special Educational Needs

	reach their full potential. It sets out Local Authority expectations for the ways in which all schools and settings should meet the needs of children and young people with SEND.
Alternative Provision providers	Each provider can offer a range of support to prevent a permanent exclusion. Find a school or specialist educational provision Worcestershire County Council Alternative Provision Strategy Revolution for Schools Dudley Family Information Service Hub Listings in Alternative Education (sandwell.gov.uk)
Specialist provision support	A range of special schools may offer outreach & support. Special Schools Dudley Council Resourced Provision and SEND Units Dudley Council Family Information Service Hub Listings in Special Schools (sandwell.gov.uk) Specialist Ed provision (worcestershire.gov.uk)
General advice on Behavioural Provision	Education Endowment Foundation: Behaviour interventions EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) Getting the simple things right: Charlie Taylor's behaviour checklists: Behaviour in schools - GOV.UK
WCC Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Guidance for Professionals	Social, emotional and mental health Worcestershire County Council This toolkit was developed with the support of local headteachers, senior pastoral leads, Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinators (SENDCOs) and learning support leads. It aims to provide a quick guide to best practice to help Worcestershire schools, colleges and other education settings know what they should be providing or commissioning to meet the emotional wellbeing needs of their pupils and learners, and to know when and how to access further support if needed. It does this by condensing the best practice described in the national guidance documents and other sources into a simple checklist and it also provides 'how to' guides on accessing further support.

Appendix 2 – Reintegration Plan

Pupil Name:	
Meeting Date	
School Name:	
Staff Completing Reintegration Plan	
Attendees	
Suspension details	
Meeting Notes:	
Pupil's Views	
This should explore how the child is feeling about their return to school including what they are worried about, what they enjoy and are looking forward to. The school should also seek to explore this with the parent, considering strategies, support, and interventions that it is felt would be helpful in supporting their child.	
Alternative Provision Views (where relevant)	
It is important that where a child has been receiving their education at an alternative provision, they are part of the plan as they will be able to share specific interventions and strategies that have been successful and how this could be implemented in the child's school. They will also be able to identify how they can assist with any ongoing support or provision required.	
Health and Wellbeing	
It is important to identify if there have been any changes to the child's health and wellbeing. This should have regard to any updated involvement or advice from health professionals. If a health need may be suspected, it is advisable for the school to consider an Individual Health Care Plan to identify the need and specific arrangements required. If the child has an EHCP then an interim review of this plan should also be considered.	
Known Risks/Concerns	

<p>This will be an opportunity to put in place strategies to avoid and manage risks appropriately and whether adaptations or additional support is required to ensure this happens. It will also be an opportunity to explore whether there are any factors that would cause the child to be at risk of harm both in and outside of the school community.</p>	
<p>Family Circumstances</p>	
<p>Family dynamics can impact on children's behaviour, attendance and engagement and therefore understanding this is helpful to assess any changes that may have occurred during their absence. It is also useful to identify strategies that can be used both in the home and in school.</p>	
<p>Curriculum Offer</p>	
<p>This should be an opportunity to assess the child's academic progress and potential. Adaptations to the curriculum, including the continuation of alternative provision/part-time arrangements may be required to support the child.</p>	
<p>Specific Support and Interventions</p>	
<p>This will provide identified strategies and interventions to be used by the school. This should be clear and have regard to the SEND Local Offer and Graduated Response.</p>	
<p>Transitional Arrangements: Preparing for the return, timetable, locations, and getting to and from school</p>	
<p>Children and young people should have a sense of belonging to the school and therefore opportunities to promote this throughout a child's absence should be embedded in any arrangement made. It is essential that the contact arrangements and frequency of this are established as soon as the absence is known. Where a child is receiving alternative provision, it is also essential that all relevant information about the child and school is shared so that the consistency of expectations and ethos can be maintained within reason. This will ensure that any concerns can be identified and responded to effectively causing unnecessary delay and anxiety. Providing as much information about the school day and week, including the expected changes that will or are likely to occur over the identified time of reintegration will maximise the success of the plan. This will help to minimise any disruption to the arrangements</p>	

but also assist in identifying any additional challenges or strategies that may need to be considered or implemented	
Named Key Contacts and Agency Involvement	
The plan must detail all key persons and services, along with their contact details, involved in the implementation of the plan.	
Review of Additional Plans (Behaviour Plan, Individual Health Care Plan)	
The Reintegration Plan must be reviewed in conjunction with any other plan. Furthermore, consideration should also be given as to whether other plans may be required.	
Identifying What Success Is	
The Reintegration Plan should clearly identify what success will look like for the child having regard to short, medium- and longer-term goals. This should focus specifically on successful reintegration. It should also have regard to the child's future aspirations and actions that may need to be taken if the expected progress is not being achieved.	

	Name	Signature	Date
School Staff			
Parent/Carer			
Child (if appropriate)			

Please ensure a signed copy is retained by school and a signed copy is provided to the parent/carers and child.

Appendix 3 – Suspension Letter Template

[Add school logo and address]



Parent/Carer's name

Address

Address

Postcode

Date

Re Suspension of **pupil's full name and date of birth**

Dear **[Parent/Carer's name]**,

I am writing to inform you of my decision to suspend **pupil's first name** for a fixed period of **[number]** days. This means that **pupil's name** will not be allowed in school for this period. The suspension began at **[time]** on **[day/date]** and ends at **[time]** on **[day/date]**.

I realise that this suspension may be upsetting for you and your family, but the decision to suspend **pupil's name** has not been taken lightly. **Pupil's name** has been suspended for this fixed period because of **[give reasons for the suspension – include any other relevant previous history]**.

You have a duty to ensure that your child is not present in a public place in school hours during this suspension i.e. **[specify the dates]** unless there is reasonable justification for this. You could be prosecuted or receive a penalty notice if your child is present in a public place during school hours on the specified dates. If so, it will be for you to show reasonable justification.

Alternative arrangements for your child's education to continue will be made. During the suspension we will set work for **pupil's name** and would ask you to ensure this work is completed and returned promptly to school for marking. **[Set out how work will be set and whether it should be collected or will be sent to the parent.]**

You and your child have the right to make representations about this decision to the governing board. If you wish to make representations, please contact **[name of school contact and contact details]** as soon as possible. Whilst the governing board has no power to direct reinstatement, it must consider any representations made by you and your child and may place a copy of its findings on your child's school record.

You are advised that the following sources of advice are available to you:

- **[Add contact details for relevant exclusions team]**

- [School exclusions: guide for parents - GOV.UK](#)
- **[Add contact details for relevant SENDIASS]**
- Coram's Child Law Advice Service on 0300 330 5485 or via their website [School exclusion - childlawadvice.org.uk](#) The advice line is available Monday-Friday from 8.00am to 6.00pm.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher's name

Headteacher of **name of school**

Appendix 4 – Permanent Exclusion Letter Template

[Add school logo and address]



Parent/Carer's name

Address

Address

Postcode

Date

Re Permanent exclusion of [pupil's full name and date of birth]

Dear [Parent/Carer's name],

I am writing to inform you of my decision to permanently exclude [name of pupil] from [name of school] with effect from [date]. This means that [name of pupil] will not be allowed in this school unless they are reinstated by the governing board.

I realise that this exclusion may be upsetting for you and your family but the decision to permanently exclude [pupil's name] has not been taken lightly. [Pupil's name] has been permanently excluded because [set out reasons whether decision is for a single serious breach and/or persistent breaches of the behaviour policy and why allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously the education or welfare of the pupil or others such as staff or pupils in the school]. [Where the pupil has a disability, or additional needs/special educational needs which may amount to a disability, confirm what adjustments have previously been made for the pupil to avoid permanent exclusion.]

You have a duty to ensure that your child is not present in a public place in school hours during the first five school days of this exclusion i.e. [specify the precise dates] unless there is reasonable justification for this. You could be prosecuted or receive a penalty notice if your child is present in a public place during school hours on the specified dates. If so, it will be for you to show reasonable justification.

Alternative arrangements for [pupil's name] education to continue will be made. For the first five school days of the exclusion, we will set work [set out how work will be set and whether it should be collected or will be sent to the parent] for [pupil's name] and would ask you to ensure this work is completed and returned promptly to school for marking. [OR if alternative provision is being arranged during the first five days, set out the following details if known at this stage: the start date for any provision of full-time education that has been arranged for the child during the exclusion; 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.] From the sixth school day of the exclusion onwards, i.e. from [specify date], the local authority will provide suitable full-time education. The arrangements for this will be set out in a further letter.

As this is a permanent exclusion, the governing board must meet to consider it. At the review meeting you may make representations to the governing board if you wish and ask them to reinstate your child in school. The governing board has the power to reinstate your child immediately or from a specified date, or, alternatively, it has the power to uphold the exclusion, in which case you may request that its decision be reviewed by an independent review panel. The latest date by which the governing board must meet is **[date – 15 school days after receiving notice of exclusion]**.

If you wish to make representations to the governing board and wish to be accompanied by a friend and/or representative, please contact **[name]** on **[number/email]** as soon as possible. Whether you choose to make representations or not, you will be notified by the clerk to the governing board of the time, date and location of the meeting.

You have the right to request that this meeting takes place remotely and if you wish for the meeting to take place remotely, please let **[name]** know as soon as possible. However, please consider the following before making this decision:

Your internet connectivity is good enough and not intermittent or slow.

You have a suitable space free from distraction to enable you to fully take part in the meeting. Whether a face-to-face meeting may be better.

[[Name of pupil]'s [social worker] [Virtual School Head] will be invited to attend.] Please let us know if you have a disability or special needs which would affect your ability to attend the meeting. Also, please inform **[name]** if it would be helpful for you to have an interpreter present at the meeting. If you think this exclusion relates to a disability your child has, and you think discrimination has occurred, you may raise the issue with the governing board.

If there are issues with the technology during the meeting that cannot be resolved, a face-to-face meeting will need to be arranged thereby delaying the process. If the governing board does not consider that the meeting can be held fairly and openly via remote access, they will talk to you about how a face-to-face meeting can be arranged that will be convenient for you instead.

For further details, use the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusions-guide-for-parents>

The statutory guidance connected to exclusions can be found at:

- [School suspensions and permanent exclusions - GOV.UK](#)

You may wish to contact the exclusion officer at **[local authority name]** for further advice and guidance in relation to the exclusion. The exclusion officer can be contacted by telephone on **[number]**, or by email on **[email]**.

There are sources of free and impartial advice available on exclusions:

- The Department's Guidance for parents and carers on behaviour, suspension and permanent exclusion, which can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusions-guide-for-parents>
- Every local area has a SENDIAS service who provide information, advice and support to children and young people with SEND, including on exclusions. Every exclusion letter should include details of the local service which can also be found here

<https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/about-us-0/networks/information-advice-and-support-services-network>

- Coram's Child Law Advice service can be accessed through their website <https://childlawadvice.org.uk/information-pages/school-exclusion/> or contacted on 0300 330 5485 from Monday to Friday, 10am – 4pm.
- Independent Provider of Special Education Advice (known as IPSEA – www.ipsea.org.uk) is a registered charity. It offers free and independent information, advice and support to help get the right education for children and young people with all kinds of special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher's name

Headteacher of **name of school**

Copy to:

Pupil's school file

Clerk to Trustees

Relevant local authority

Social worker (if applicable)

Virtual school head (if applicable)