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1. Aims

The Multi Academy Trust (MAT) aims to ensure that:

- The exclusions process is applied fairly and consistently.
- The exclusions process is understood by directors, staff, parents and pupils.
- Pupils in school are safe and happy.
- Pupils do not become NEET (**N**ot in **E**ducation, **E**mployment or **T**raining).

2. Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy is based on statutory guidance from the Department for Education: Exclusion from Maintained Schools, Academies and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) in England. It is based on the following legislation, which outline schools' powers to exclude pupils:

- Section 52 of the Education Act 2002, as amended by the Education Act 2011.
- The School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012.

In addition, the policy is based on:

- Part 7, Chapter 2 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, which looks at parental responsibility for excluded pupils.
- Section 579 of the Education Act 1996, which defines 'school day'.
- The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended by The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. The Decision to Exclude

Only the Principal, or acting Principal, can exclude a pupil from school. A permanent exclusion will be taken as a last resort.

The MAT is aware that off-rolling is unlawful. 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."

The MAT is committed to following all statutory exclusions procedures to ensure that every child receives an education in a safe and caring environment.

A decision to exclude a pupil will be taken only:

- In response to serious or persistent breaches of the Academy's Behaviour for Learning Policy (Secondary Phase) **and**
- If allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others.

Before deciding whether to exclude a pupil, either permanently or for a fixed period, the Principal will:

- Consider all the relevant facts and evidence, including whether the incident(s) leading to the exclusion were provoked.
- Allow the pupil to give their version of events.
- Consider if the pupil has **Special Educational Needs (SEN)**.

4. Definition

For the purposes of exclusions, school day is defined as any day on which there is a school session. Therefore, INSET or staff training days do not count as a school day.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 The Principal

Informing Parents

The Principal will immediately provide the following information, in writing, to the parents of an excluded pupil:

- The reason(s) for the exclusion.
- The length of a fixed-term exclusion or for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent.
- Information about parents' right to make representations about the exclusion to the Strategic Board of Directors (referred to as Strategic Board) and how the pupil may be involved in this.
- How any representations should be made.
- Where there is a legal requirement for the Strategic Board to meet to consider the reinstatement of a pupil and that parents have a right to attend a meeting, be represented at a meeting (at their own expense) and to bring a friend.

The Principal will also notify parents by the end of the afternoon session, on the day their child is excluded, that for the first 5 school days of an exclusion or until the start date of any alternative provision where this is earlier, parents are legally required to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours without a good reason. Parents may be given a fixed penalty notice or prosecuted if they fail to do this.

If alternative provision is being arranged, the following information will be included when notifying parents of an exclusion:

- The start date for any provision of full-time education that has been arranged.
- The start and finish times of any such provision, including the times for morning and afternoon sessions, where relevant.
- The address at which the provision will take place.
- Any information required by the pupil to identify the person they should report to on the first day.

Where this information on alternative provision is not reasonably ascertainable by the end of the afternoon session, it may be provided in a subsequent notice, but it will be provided no later than 48 hours before the provision is due to start. The only exception to this is where

alternative provision is to be provided before the sixth day of an exclusion, in which case the information can be provided with less than 48 hours' notice with parents' consent.

Informing the Strategic Board and Local Authority

The Principal will immediately notify the Strategic Board and the Local Authority (LA) of:

- A permanent exclusion, including when a fixed-period exclusion is followed by a decision to permanently exclude a pupil.
- Exclusions which would result in the pupil being excluded for more than 5 school days (or more than 10 lunchtimes) in a term.
- Exclusions which would result in the pupil missing a public examination.

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

For all other exclusions, the Principal will notify the Strategic Board and LA once a term.

5.2 The Strategic Board

Responsibilities regarding exclusions are delegated to the Strategic Board consisting of at least 3 directors.

The Strategic Board has a duty to consider the reinstatement of an excluded pupil (see section 6).

Within 14 days of receipt of a request, the Strategic Board will provide the Secretary of State and LA with information about any exclusions in the last 12 months.

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

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

5.3 The Local Authority (LA)

For permanent exclusions, the LA is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education to begin no later than the sixth day of the exclusion.

6. Considering the Reinstatement of a Pupil

The Strategic Board will consider the reinstatement of an excluded pupil within 15 school days of receiving the notice of the exclusion if:

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

If requested to do so by parents, the Strategic Board will consider the reinstatement of an excluded pupil within 50 school days of receiving notice of the exclusion if the pupil would be excluded from school for more than 5 school days, but less than 15, in a single term.

Where an exclusion would result in a pupil missing a public examination, the Strategic Board will consider the reinstatement of the pupil before the date of the examination. If this is not practicable, the Strategic Board will consider the exclusion and decide whether or not to reinstate the pupil.

The Strategic Board can either:

- Decline to reinstate the pupil or
- Direct the reinstatement of the pupil immediately or on a particular date.

In reaching a decision, the Strategic Board will consider whether the exclusion was lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair and whether the Principal followed their legal duties. They will decide whether or not a fact is true 'on the balance of probabilities', which differs from the criminal standard of 'beyond reasonable doubt', as well as any evidence that was presented in relation to the decision to exclude.

Minutes will be taken of the meeting and a record of evidence considered kept. The outcome will also be recorded on the pupil's educational record.

The Strategic Board will notify, in writing, the Principal, parents and the LA of its decision, along with reasons for its decision, without delay.

Where an exclusion is permanent, the Strategic Board' decision will also include the following:

- The fact that it is permanent.
- Notice of parents' right to ask for the decision to be reviewed by an independent review panel and the date by which an application for an independent review must be made.
- The name and address to whom an application for a review should be submitted.
- That any application should set out the grounds on which it is being made and that, where appropriate, reference to how the pupil's SEN are considered to be relevant to the exclusion.
- That, regardless of whether the excluded pupil has recognised SEN, parents have a right to require the LA or MAT to appoint an SEN expert to attend the review.
- Details of the role of the SEN expert and that there would be no cost to parents for this appointment.
- That parents must make clear if they wish for an SEN expert to be appointed in any application for a review.
- That parents may, at their own expense, appoint someone to make written and/or oral representations to the panel and parents may also bring a friend to the review.
- That if parents believe that the exclusion has occurred as a result of 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. A 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.

7. An Independent Review

If parents apply for an independent review, the MAT will arrange for an independent panel to review the decision of the Strategic 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 by the Strategic Board of its decision to not reinstate a pupil.

A panel of 3 or 5 members will be constituted with representatives from each of the categories below. Where a 5-member panel is constituted, 2 members will come from the Strategic Board category and 2 members will come from the headteacher category.

- A lay member to Chair the panel who has not worked in any school in a paid capacity, disregarding any experience as a school director or volunteer.
- School governors who have served as a governor for at least 12 consecutive months in the last 5 years, provided they have not been teachers or headteachers during this time.
- Headteachers or individuals who have been a headteacher within the last 5 years.

A person may not serve as a member of a review panel if they:

- are a director of the MAT or Strategic Board of the excluding school;
- are the Principal of the excluding school or have held this position in the last 5 years;
- are an employee of the MAT or the Strategic 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 MAT, Strategic Board, parents or pupil, or the incident leading to the exclusion, which might reasonably be taken to raise doubts about their impartiality;
- have not had the required training within the last 2 years (see Appendix 1 for what training must cover).

A clerk will be appointed to the panel.

The independent panel will decide one of the following:

- Uphold the Strategic Board's decision.
- Recommend that the Strategic Board reconsiders reinstatement.
- Quash the Strategic Board's decision and direct that they reconsider reinstatement (only when the decision is judged to be flawed).

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

8. School Registers

A pupil's name will be removed from the school admissions register if:

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

Where an application for an independent review has been made, the Strategic Board will wait until that review has concluded before removing a pupil's name from the register.

Where alternative provision has been made for an excluded pupil and they attend it, code B (education off-site) or code D (dual registration) will be used on the attendance register.

Where excluded pupils are not attending alternative provision, code E (absent) will be used.

9. Returning from a Fixed-Term Exclusion

Following a fixed-term exclusion, a reintegration meeting will be held involving the pupil, parents, a member of senior staff and other staff, where appropriate.

The following measures may be implemented when a pupil returns from a fixed-term exclusion:

The points below are suggestions only and should be adapted to your school's specific circumstances.

- Agreeing a behaviour contract
- Putting a pupil 'on report'
- Internal isolation

10. Monitoring Arrangements

The Assistant Principal (Pastoral) monitors the number of exclusions every term and reports back to the Principal and Strategic Board. They also liaise with the Local Authority to ensure suitable full-time education for excluded pupils.

This policy will be reviewed by the Assistant Principal (Pastoral) and will be in turn, reviewed by the Strategic Board director contact link every 2 years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Strategic Board.

11. Links with Other Policies

This exclusions policy is linked to our:

- Behaviour for Learning Policy (Secondary Phase)
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- SEND Policy and Information Report

Appendix 1: Independent Review Panel Training

The LA / MAT must ensure that all members of an independent review panel and clerks have received training within the 2 years prior to the date of the review.

Training must have covered:

- The requirements of the primary legislation, regulations and statutory guidance governing exclusions, which would include an understanding of how the principles applicable in an application for judicial review relate to the panel's decision making.
- The need for the panel to observe procedural fairness and the rules of natural justice.
- The role of the Chair and the Clerk of a review panel.
- The duties of headteachers, governing boards and the panel under the Equality Act 2010
- The effect of section 6 of the Human Rights Act 1998 (acts of public authorities unlawful if not compatible with certain human rights) and the need to act in a manner compatible with human rights protected by that Act.