

Exclusions Policy



Pride
Passion
Partnership
Professionalism
Positivity

1. What is the policy about?

The Exclusion (to include Permanent Exclusion and Suspension) Policy has been designed in conjunction with the Behaviour, Attendance, Safeguarding and Personal Development policies to ensure that Expulsions (permanent Exclusions) and/or Suspensions (fixed terms Exclusions) of pupils, are used as little as possible and are always used to ensure the safety of all pupils and staff at The Bridge Trust. This policy details:

- The Bridge Trust's approach to exclusions within the statutory framework as defined in the Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement (2022)..
- The Bridge Trust's exclusion statement and where school applies its own additional guidance and policies, which complement and reinforce the statutory guidance.

2. Who does this policy apply to?

This policy applies to all staff including the governing body, teachers, support staff, external contractors, visitors, volunteers and other individuals who work for or provide services on behalf of The Bridge Trust (collectively referred to as 'staff' in this policy) as well as pupils and parents/carers.

3. Policy requirements

We believe that all members of our learning community have equal value and are entitled to the same opportunities as their peers. Exclusions from the school are damaging to pupils' education, sense of belonging within the community, and self-esteem.

The Bridge Trust is an inclusive learning community in both policy and practice. Staff will do everything they can to avoid any exclusions.

Exclusions are used sparingly and only with the consideration of safety, safeguarding and/or as part of an overall behaviour strategy. Behaviour strategies involving exclusion must aim to both accommodate a culture of inclusion around the pupil; and to develop ownership and responsibility within the pupil for one's own behaviour.

The school seeks to find productive alternatives to the exclusion of pupils as well as seeking to reduce the number of incidents leading to exclusions by maintaining a safe learning environment within the school.

3.1 Operational Principles

3.1.1 Only the Headteacher can exclude a pupil and this must only be on disciplinary grounds.

3.1.2 A Suspension from the school can only be authorised by the Headteacher or in their absence by a designated deputising teacher.

3.1.3 Disruptive behaviour can be an indication of unmet needs. Where the school has concerns about a pupil's behaviour, it will identify any causal factors and intervene early in order to reduce the use of exclusion. In this situation, the school will consider whether a multi-agency assessment that goes beyond the pupil's educational needs is required.

3.1.4 A pupil may be excluded for one or more Suspension periods (up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year). High level of Suspensions will elicit a review of the provision offered and the behaviour support plan; for pupils with an EHCP this will include an interim review of their plan.

3.1.5 A Suspension can also be for parts of the school day. The legal requirements relating to exclusion, such as the Headteacher's duty to notify parents, apply in all cases.

3.1.6 'Exclusion' is a sanction used by the school only in cases deemed as serious; a pupil may be at risk of exclusion from the school for:

- Verbal or physical assault of another pupil or adult;

- Selling/possession with intention to deal/the use of drugs or other controlled substances;
- Behaviour that puts the pupil or others at risk of harm;
- Harmful behaviour which is deemed outside the remit of the normal range of sanctions.

3.1.7 The behaviour of a pupil outside the school can be considered grounds for an exclusion.

3.1.8 The decision to exclude a pupil will be rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate.

- It will not discriminate against, harass or victimise pupils because of sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy/maternity, or gender reassignment.
- It will adhere to the SEND Code of Practice and consider the balance between Health & Safety needs with the cognitive ability of the pupils. It will endeavour NOT to exclude pupils with limited cognitive abilities, complex communication needs and social interaction difficulties.
- It will include a thorough fact-finding process to obtain views from all involved in any incidents and establish responsibilities to inform a final decision. The school will apply the civil standard of proof rather than the criminal standard of 'beyond reasonable doubt'; i.e. 'on the balance of probabilities', it is more likely than not that a fact is true.

The school will exhaust all alternatives before issuing an exclusion.

3.1.9 The decision to exclude will consider the school's legal duty of care when sending a pupil home following the exclusion.

3.1.10 All children have a right to education. The school will set and mark work for pupils during the first five school days of an exclusion and alternative provision must be arranged from the sixth day.

3.1.11 The school regularly monitors the number of Suspensions to ensure that no group of pupils is unfairly disadvantaged through their use and that the underlying needs of individuals are being fully met.

3.1.12 Pupils Returning from a Suspension are required to attend an integration or reintegration meeting accompanied by a parent/carer. This meeting will seek to establish practical ways in which relationships and harm may be repaired, further exclusion can be avoided, and the pupil can modify their behaviour to acceptable standards in a partnership agreement between pupil, parent/carer and the school. In cases where this is not possible (e.g. parents' availability) an alternative should be arranged to avoid further absence from education.

3.2 Notification of Exclusion

3.2.1 The school inform parents/carers of the type of exclusion and the reason(s) for it without delay. This will be done on the day of the exclusion being authorised by either direct telephone contact or a face-to-face meeting.

3.2.2 A written confirmation of the reason(s) for and length of the exclusion will be sent to parents/carers the same day.

3.2.3 A pupil who has been excluded will have the reason for their exclusion explained to them by a member of staff so that they understand why the sanction has been implemented and, where reasonable, will have the opportunity to express their views on the matter.

3.2.4 The school will, without delay, notify the governing board and the local authority of:

- Any Permanent Exclusion (including where a Suspension is followed by a decision to permanently exclude the pupil);
- Any exclusion which would result in the pupil being excluded for a total of more than five school days (or more than ten lunchtimes) in a term; and

- Any exclusion which would result in the pupil missing a public examination or national curriculum test.

3.2.5 For a permanent change in provision, if the pupil lives outside the local authority area in which the school is located. The school will also notify the pupil's 'home authority' of the exclusion and the reason(s) for it without delay.

3.2.6 The Local Governing Body (and, where applicable, the The Bridge Trust Board) will be informed of the number of exclusions on a half termly basis.

3.3 Appeals

3.3.1 All correspondence regarding a permanent exclusion from the school will inform parents/carers of their right to appeal to the Local Governing Body/The Bridge Trust Board against the decision to exclude. This will also include how they should go about doing this and how the pupil can be involved. The person who should be contacted to initiate an appeal is the Headteacher. Where relevant, alternative provision from the sixth day of a fixed-term exclusion will be detailed in addition. This procedure is clearly set out in the statutory guidance.

3.4 Monitoring & Review

3.4.1 The school will ensure the exclusion is recorded on the register, that there is a clear log of the events, and the reasons for decision are logged. This should include the excluded pupil's view of the reasons for exclusion and their experience of any incidents related to the decision to exclude. In addition, it should include the experiences and views of any others involved in the decision to exclude or related events.

3.4.2 The impact of the Exclusions Policy will be reviewed by the Local Governing Body/ The Bridge Trust.

3.4.3 The Headteacher will provide the Local Governing Body/ The Bridge Trust with regular monitoring reports to inform ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the Exclusions Policy and the procedures within.

3.4.4 The Exclusions Policy and its procedures will be reviewed and amended beyond statutory expectations and in consultation with representatives of all key stakeholders should evaluation deem it necessary.

4. Definitions

EHCP – Education, health and care plan

SEND – Special educational needs and disability

5. Related policies

The Exclusions Policy should be read in tandem with the school's Behaviour policy as well as other relevant school policies, particularly the Attendance Policy, Special Educational Needs Policy and the Equal Opportunities policy.

Policy Owner and Contact Details

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