

Exclusions – Frequently Asked Questions

What is an internal exclusion?

This is an internal process within the school and is used when the objective is to remove the pupil from class, **not from the school site**, for disciplinary reasons. It may be a formal process within the school but is not a legal exclusion, so exclusions legislation and guidance does not apply. There is no statutory maximum period for internal exclusion but, if a school is regularly using internal exclusions, it should look at the pupil's learning and behaviour needs.

What is a fixed period exclusion?

A fixed period exclusion is one of the sanctions a school can give if a child does something that is against the school's behaviour policy. This means that your child is not allowed on the school site for a precise period of time. This can be for as little as half a school day up to a maximum of 45 days in any one school year. A date will be set by the school for a return to the school. Whilst a pupil has a fixed term exclusion, they should not return to the school premises, nor should they be in a public place during school hours.

What is a permanent exclusion?

A permanent exclusion is the most serious sanction a school can give if a child does something that is against the school's behaviour policy. This means that the child is no longer allowed to attend the school and their name will be removed from the school roll. Permanent exclusion should only be used as a last resort. Head teachers will usually only permanently exclude after a series of interventions to support the pupil. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where one instance leads to a permanent exclusion.

What is a Supported Transfer?

Previously known as a managed move, this is a transfer to another school as an alternative to permanent exclusion. This should only be done with the full knowledge and consent of all parties involved, including the parents, the LA and any other relevant professionals and when all available strategies have been explored. This is to enable the pupil to make a fresh start in a new school and may include a placement at an Extended Learning Centre.

What is a school behaviour policy?

Every school has a behaviour policy, which lists the rules of conduct for pupils during the school day as well as before and after school. The policy should also say what the school does to prevent bullying. You can ask the school for a copy of the policy or it may be available to download from the school's website.

Can my child be excluded for behaviour outside of school?

Yes, a pupil's behaviour outside of school can be considered as grounds for exclusion. However, this should be in line with the school's behaviour policy. Commonly, this will include behaviour on school trips, behaviour when in uniform or on the way to and from school, and behaviour which may bring the school into disrepute.

Can my child be excluded at lunchtime?

Yes, a pupil may be excluded from the school premises at lunchtime. Pupils whose behaviour at lunchtime is disruptive may be excluded for the lunchtime period. Lunchtime exclusions are counted as half of a school day.

Can my child just be sent home to "cool off"?

No, it is unlawful just to send a child home to "cool off" even if parents or carers agree. All exclusions must follow the correct procedure and be recorded as exclusions; any exclusion of a pupil, even for short periods of time, must be formally recorded.

My child is in sixth form. Can he/she be excluded?

Pupils over compulsory school age are able to be excluded, but this must be for behavioural reasons. This does not apply to sixth form colleges, who set their own exclusion policies.

Does the school have to supply work for my child while they are excluded?

Even though your child is not allowed on the school premises, they still should be receiving education. Schools should take reasonable steps to set and mark work for the first 5 days of any exclusion. If no work has been sent home, contact the school and ask for some. Many schools have work available to pupils on the school's website. Any work set should be accessible and achievable to pupils outside school. During the first 5 days of an exclusion, you are responsible for your child's whereabouts; you must make sure they are not in a public place during school hours. You may receive a penalty notice if your child is present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification.

What happens if my child has been excluded for more than 5 days?

If your child has been excluded for more than 5 days, the school has a duty to provide suitable full-time alternative education no later than day 6 of the exclusion.

What happens when my child goes back to school?

Schools no longer have to hold reintegration meetings for pupils; however, guidance does state that schools should have a strategy for reintegrating excluded pupils. If you haven't been offered a meeting, you may wish to ask for one, particularly if your child has SEN or the exclusion is part of a wider pattern of poor behaviour.

My child has been excluded on a number of occasions; can the school do anything else to help prevent further exclusions?

Some children's behaviour in school may be affected by things going on outside school. Guidance recommends that children with persistent disruptive behaviour be given a multidisciplinary assessment. This might pick up SEN, mental health issues or family problems. Such an assessment can be done under the Common Assessment Framework (CAF). The CAF is entirely voluntary and you do not have to agree if you do not want to. As a parent, you can request a CAF yourself. Ask any professional who is working with your child about the CAF process. Pupils with emotional behavioural difficulties who have multiple exclusions may require a statutory assessment.

My child is being sent to another school to improve their behaviour. Can the school do this?

Yes, maintained schools (not academies) have the power to direct a pupil to off-site provision in order to improve their behaviour. Parents must be given clear information about the placement: why, when, where, and how it will be reviewed. Pupils at academies may be educated off-site if parents agree.

Alternative provision statutory guidance for local authorities can be found at www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-provision (page 9).