



Reynalds Cross Vision:
*Reynalds Cross is a safe, supportive and fun environment
that nurtures individuality and enables
every child to flourish to be the best they can be.*

Suspension and Exclusion Policy

Date adopted:

November 2024

Next Review date:

November 2025



Introduction

Reynalds Cross School is a positive learning environment where staff and pupils feel safe and secure. Every member of staff has a key role to play in promoting high standards of behaviour and ensuring pupils are supported to access a curriculum and achieve success. Staff have a duty of care to work together to ensure consistent and effective behaviour strategies are in place to support all pupils in their learning. We encourage good behaviour through a mixture of high expectations, clear policy and an ethos which fosters discipline and mutual respect between pupils, and between staff and pupils.

The Governing body has a duty under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and the Equality Act 2010, requiring them to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children; particularly in respect of pupils with special educational needs (SEN).

We believe that:

- Every pupil and adult has the right to feel safe and unthreatened by verbal or physical abuse.
- Good behaviour is a collective responsibility which should be encouraged and reinforced.
- Pupils and adults, where able, should be fully aware of the consequences of challenging behaviours, which are unacceptable within the school environment and in the wider community.
- It is important to work collaboratively with parents/carers and other professionals in the best interests of the pupil.
- Challenging behaviours need to begin to be addressed when the pupils are young, as it becomes more difficult when they become physically bigger.
- Physical intervention is only used as a last resort to ensure safety and wellbeing of pupils

Suspension and Exclusion Definitions:

In line with the updated guidance for the maintained education sector, School suspensions and permanent exclusions, this document uses the terms “suspension” and “permanent exclusion”.

- A suspension is a “temporary-restricted” or “temporary-up-to-45-days” (as explained below) suspension, and an exclusion is a “permanent” exclusion.
- A temporary-restricted suspension is the requirement for a pupil / pupil not to attend the School for a defined period of time, usually counted in full days.
- A temporary-up-to-45-days is one that has an end date at an accumulated 45 school days’ exclusion for the individual pupil / pupil in a school year, the aim of which is to allow for the conclusion of more complex investigations or other necessary activities the length of which cannot be defined, and which will be concluded within that period of an accumulated 45 days at the earliest practicable opportunity. The purpose of utilising such an exclusion is to avoid having to use multiple, shorter temporary exclusions, where this would create additional uncertainty for those involved.
- A permanent exclusion is the required ending of a pupil’s place at the School marked by the removal of their name from the School roll. ‘Informal’ or ‘unofficial’ suspensions: the school does not adopt the practice of ‘Informal’ or ‘unofficial’ suspensions, such as requiring a pupil / pupil to go home ‘to cool off’. Such suspensions do not feature in this Policy. “Off-site directions”: the school does not adopt the practice of “off-site directions”, as referenced in the maintained sector guidance School suspensions and permanent exclusions. This policy does not apply to a so-called “internal suspension”, in which a pupil / pupil who is attending school is temporarily restricted in where they may be or what activities they may participate in. For clarity:

the government guidance document School suspensions and permanent exclusions does not apply to independent schools.

The decision to suspend or exclude

There are certain factors that are taken into consideration for children who display disruptive behaviour that is as a result of their Special Educational Need (SEN).

- We will engage proactively with parents in supporting the behaviour of pupils with additional needs.
- Early intervention to address underlying causes of disruptive behaviour is in place to support any SEN or disability that a pupil may have.
- The Headteacher will arrange the use of a multi-agency assessment for pupils who demonstrate persistent disruptive behaviour.
- The Headteacher and the Local Authority take account of their statutory duties in relation to SEN when administering the exclusion process. This includes having regard to the SEN Code of Practice.
- Where we have concerns about the behaviour, or risk of suspension/exclusion, of a child with additional needs, a pupil with an EHCP or looked after child, it should be in partnership with others (including the Local Authority as necessary) consider what additional support or alternative placement may be required. The decision to suspend/exclude a pupil must be lawful, reasonable and fair. Schools have a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 not to discriminate against pupils on the basis of protected characteristics, such as disability.

Roles and Responsibilities

Only the headteacher, or acting headteacher, can suspend or permanently exclude a pupil from school on disciplinary grounds. 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 exclude a pupil will be taken only:

- In response to serious or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy, and
- If allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others

Before deciding whether to suspend or 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
- Allow the pupil to give their version of events
- Consider whether the pupil has special educational needs (SEN)
- Consider whether the pupil is especially vulnerable (e.g. the pupil has a social worker, or is a looked-after child (LAC))
- Consider whether all alternative solutions have been explored, such as off-site direction or managed moves

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.

Suspension/Exclusion of a child who has Special Educational Needs

If a pupil is at risk of suspension or exclusion the headteacher will inform the parents 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 will be informed, in person or by telephone, of the period of the suspension or exclusion and the reason(s) for it, without delay.

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

- The reason(s) for the suspension or permanent exclusion
- The length of the suspension or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent
- Information about the parents' right to make representations about the suspension or permanent exclusion to the governing board and, where the pupil is attending alongside parents, how they may be involved in this
- How any representations should be made
- Where there is a legal requirement for the governing board to hold a meeting to consider the reinstatement of a pupil, and that parents have a right to attend the meeting, be represented at the meeting (at their own expense) and bring a friend

- That parents have the right to request that the meetings be held remotely, and how and to whom they should make this request

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' consent.

If the headteacher cancels the suspension or permanent exclusion, they will notify the parents without delay, and provide a reason for the cancellation.

Informing the Governing board

The Head will notify the Chair of Governors

- A permanent exclusion, including when a suspension is made a permanent exclusion;
- Suspensions which would result in the pupil being excluded for more than 1 school day (or more than 2 lunchtimes)
- Any suspension or permanent exclusion that has been cancelled, including the reason for the cancellation

Informing the Local Authority

The headteacher will notify the LA of all suspensions and permanent exclusions without delay, regardless of the length of a suspension.

The notification will include:

- The reason(s) for the suspension or permanent exclusion
- The length of a suspension or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent

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

The headteacher must notify the LA without delay of any cancelled exclusions, including the reason the exclusion was cancelled.

Informing the pupil's social worker and/or virtual school head (VSH)

If a:

- **Pupil with a social worker** is at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion, the headteacher will inform **the social worker** as early as possible
- **Pupil who is a looked-after child (LAC)** is at risk of suspension or exclusion, the headteacher will inform **the VSH** as early as possible

This is 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 permanently exclude a pupil with a social worker/a pupil who is looked after, they will inform the pupil's social worker/the VSH, as appropriate, without delay, that:

- They have decided to suspend or permanently exclude the pupil
- The reason(s) for the decision
- The length of the suspension or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent

- The suspension or permanent exclusion affects the pupil's ability to sit a National Curriculum test or public exam (where relevant)
- They have decided to cancel a suspension or permanent exclusion, and why (where relevant)

The social worker will be invited to any meeting of the governing board about the suspension or permanent exclusion. This is so they can provide advice on how the pupil's background and/or circumstances that may have influenced the circumstances of their suspension or permanent exclusion. The social worker should also help ensure safeguarding needs and risks and the pupil's welfare are taken into account.