



**The Acorn School**

# Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy

Approved by the Governors:

**September 2026**\_\_\_\_\_

Next review due:

**September 2027**\_\_\_\_\_

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### 1 Aims

Our school aims to ensure that:

- The suspension and permanent exclusion process is applied fairly and consistently
- The process is understood by governors, staff, parents and pupils
- Pupils in school are safe and supported
- Permanent exclusion is used only as a last resort
- The individual needs and circumstances of each pupil are considered carefully, including special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), safeguarding concerns and other vulnerabilities
- Pupils are supported to reintegrate successfully following a suspension

### 2 Legislation and statutory guidance

The Acorn School is an independent school. The statutory suspension and permanent exclusion framework that applies to maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units does not apply to the school in the same way. This policy therefore sets out The Acorn School's own arrangements for suspensions and permanent exclusions.

This policy has regard to the Independent School Standards, including the requirement for an independent school to make available to parents particulars of its arrangements for admissions, misbehaviour and exclusions. The school will also act in accordance with its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and relevant requirements relating to safeguarding, SEND and the school admission register.

This policy should be read alongside the school's other relevant policies and its contractual arrangements with parents.

### 3 The decision to suspend or permanently exclude

Only the Headteacher, or acting Headteacher, may decide to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil. Permanent exclusion will be taken as a last resort, except where a single incident is sufficiently serious to justify permanent exclusion.

A decision will be based on the individual circumstances of the case. Before reaching a decision, so far as is reasonable and appropriate, the Headteacher will:

- Consider all relevant facts and evidence
- Allow the pupil to give their version of events and ensure their views are heard in a way appropriate to their age and needs
- Consider any contributing, contextual or mitigating factors
- Consider whether the behaviour may be related to SEND, disability, safeguarding concerns or other identified needs



- Consider what support and reasonable adjustments have been provided and whether further support may be appropriate
- Consult relevant members of staff, including the LSCO and Designated Safeguarding Lead where appropriate
- Consider the effect of the behaviour on the education, safety and welfare of the pupil and others
- Consider whether suspension or permanent exclusion is reasonable and proportionate

A pupil will not be informally sent home for disciplinary reasons. If a pupil is required to leave the school site as a disciplinary measure, this will be treated and recorded as a formal suspension.

## **4 Definition**

- A suspension is a temporary removal of a pupil from school for disciplinary reasons for a specified period.
- A permanent exclusion is the permanent removal of a pupil from The Acorn School for disciplinary reasons.
- An internal removal or temporary change of teaching arrangements, where the pupil remains in school and continues to receive education and appropriate supervision, is not a suspension.
- A school day is a day on which there is a school session for pupils. INSET and staff training days do not count as school days.

## **5 Roles and responsibilities**

### **5.1 The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for decisions to suspend or permanently exclude and for ensuring that the procedures in this policy are followed.

#### **5.1.1 Informing parents**

The Headteacher will inform parents as soon as reasonably practicable of a decision to suspend or permanently exclude their child and will confirm the decision in writing. The written notification will normally include:

- The reason for the suspension or permanent exclusion
- For a suspension, its start date and duration and the expected date of return
- For a permanent exclusion, the date from which it takes effect
- Arrangements for the pupil's education during a suspension, where applicable
- Arrangements for a reintegration meeting following a suspension
- How parents may make representations or ask for the decision to be reviewed under the school's arrangements
- The school contact for any questions about the decision

### **5.2 The Board of Governors**

The Board of Governors oversees the fairness and effectiveness of the school's arrangements for suspension and permanent exclusion. Parents may make written representations to the Chair of Governors about a suspension or permanent exclusion. In the case of a permanent exclusion, parents may request a review by governors who were not directly involved in making the original decision.

The review will consider whether the decision was made in accordance with this policy, whether relevant evidence and the pupil's circumstances were properly considered, and whether the decision was reasonable and proportionate. The panel may uphold the decision or require the Headteacher to reconsider it.

## **6 Pupils with SEND, disabilities and other vulnerabilities**

The school recognises that behaviour may sometimes be a form of communication and that pupils with SEND or disabilities may require additional support or reasonable adjustments.

Before suspending or permanently excluding a pupil with known or suspected SEND or a disability, the school will consider:

- Whether the pupil's needs or disability contributed to the behaviour
- Whether relevant reasonable adjustments had been made
- Whether additional or different support could reasonably reduce the risk of recurrence
- Whether relevant professionals, parents and, where appropriate, the local authority should be consulted
- For a pupil with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), whether liaison with the responsible local authority or an early review of the plan is appropriate

Nothing in this section prevents the school from taking proportionate action where this is necessary to protect pupils or others from harm.



## **7 Governance review and representations**

Parents will be told how to make representations and, where applicable, how to request a review. The school will ensure that representations are considered fairly and without unreasonable delay.

This internal review process does not remove any rights a parent may have under the school's Complaints Policy, the Equality Act 2010, the parent contract or other applicable law.

## **8 Education during a suspension**

The school will take reasonable steps to support continuity of education during a suspension. Work will normally be provided that is appropriate to the pupil's age, ability, curriculum and individual needs, and arrangements will be made for completed work to be returned or reviewed.

Where a suspension is longer or the pupil has additional needs, the school will consider what further educational and pastoral arrangements are reasonably required.

## **9 Returning from a suspension**

Following a suspension, a reintegration meeting will normally be held involving the pupil, parents, a member of senior staff and other relevant staff where appropriate.

The purpose of reintegration is to support a successful return to school. The meeting may consider:

- The pupil's understanding of what has happened and their views
- Restorative work or repair of relationships where appropriate
- Academic work and any learning missed
- Pastoral, SEND or safeguarding support
- Reasonable adjustments or changes to support
- Clear expectations and any agreed actions for the pupil, school and parents

The school recognises that returning after a suspension can itself be a barrier to learning. Reintegration arrangements should therefore support both academic participation and social inclusion.

## **10 Permanent exclusion and removal from roll**

Where a pupil is permanently excluded, the school will communicate clearly with parents about the decision, the review arrangements and the pupil's educational records. The pupil's name will be removed from the admission register only in accordance with the legal requirements applying to independent schools and the school's contractual arrangements.

Where the pupil has an EHCP, is looked after, has a social worker, or there are other safeguarding or statutory-agency considerations, the school will liaise with the relevant local authority or professionals as appropriate.

## **11 Safeguarding, off-rolling and informal exclusion**

Safeguarding considerations will form part of decision-making where relevant. A suspension or exclusion must not be used in a way that places a child at avoidable risk.

The Acorn School will not off-roll pupils. The school will not pressure parents to withdraw a pupil or to educate them at home where the purpose is to avoid using the school's formal procedures or where withdrawal is primarily in the interests of the school rather than the pupil.

The school will not use unofficial or informal suspensions, including sending a pupil home to "cool off" as a disciplinary measure without recording this as a suspension.

## **12 Monitoring arrangements**

The Headteacher will monitor suspensions and permanent exclusions and report relevant information to the Board of Governors. Monitoring will include consideration of patterns and trends, including whether particular groups of pupils are disproportionately affected.

This policy will be reviewed regularly and whenever there is a relevant change in legislation, regulation, statutory guidance or the school's arrangements. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Board of Governors.

## **13 Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following Acorn School policies and documents:

- Behaviour – Healthy Social Life and Good Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy