



Discovery Schools
Academy Trust



Woolden Hill
Primary School

Annex: Supplemental Exclusion Policy during the reopening of schools September 2020

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1. Context

From 1st June 2020 EYFS, Year 1, Year 6, vulnerable children and children of critical workers are reintegrated back to school following the following Government Guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/details-on-phased-wider-opening-of-schools-colleges-and-nurseries>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures/guidance-for-schools-about-temporarily-closing#behaviour-and-exclusions>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-schools-and-other-educational-settings>

This annex to the school Exclusion policy reflects new protective measures and arrangements implemented in response to COVID-19. All other information in the Exclusion policy remain in force.

It is important for schools to be calm and disciplined environments, where everyone follows the rules. Following government advice, the day pupils and staff return to school the updated behaviour policy will be shared to reflect the new protective measures and new rules and routines. The behaviour policy includes consequences, including sanctions and rewards, so that staff can ensure pupils understand them and can enforce them rigorously. Head teachers retain the power to exclude pupils on disciplinary grounds. Any decision to exclude should be lawful, rational; reasonable; fair; and proportionate.

2. Reasonable adjustments and disobeying the Protective Measures

At Woolden Hill, we are aware how the current circumstances can affect the mental health of our pupils and their parents in a way that affects behaviour. Some children will return to school having been exposed to a range of adversity including bereavement and long-term anxiety. This may lead to an increase in social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) concerns. Additionally, where children have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), their provision may have been disrupted during partial school closure and there may be an impact on their behaviour. The support available to pupils is stated in the Annex Behaviour policy.

We recognise the importance of teaching new norms and routines around protective measures and personal hygiene clearly and accessibly to all pupils, this will be carried out on a daily basis along with posters of the new school rules being displayed around the school.

In some occasions our staggered behaviour systems may be bypassed. Violent, extremely abusive and/or behaviours that are challenging to manage in the current context, such as spitting and biting towards peers or an adult could result in a fixed-term exclusion.

3. Pupils displaying challenging behaviour

Due to COVID-19 and following guidance from CPI, parents/carers have a responsibility to come to school to help de-escalate a situation if handling becomes a probable action. Our Annex Physical Intervention policy contains more information.

INFORMAL or UNOFFICIAL exclusions, such as sending pupils home 'to cool off', are unlawful, regardless of whether they occur with the agreement of parents or carers. If parents/carers arrive at school to help de-escalate the behaviour, the school will risk assess whether it is safe for the pupil to remain at school or if an exclusion of the pupil is needed, even for short periods of time. If an exclusion is decided, these will be formally recorded in line with the schools exclusion policy.

4. Permanent Exclusions

Permanent exclusions are only be used as a last resort, in response to a serious breach, or persistent breaches of the behaviour policy, and where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school.

If a permanent exclusion occurs, we will work with parents or carers and the local authority to arrange a place at an alternative educational setting as soon as possible to minimise any further breaks in education provision.

If the pupil permanently excluded is vulnerable, the school will notify the local authority/social worker immediately and will work with the local authority to ensure that the child is found a place in another educational setting quickly. If there is a gap in provision, the school will work together with the local authority and other professionals to ensure adequate and appropriate arrangements are in place to keep in touch with the vulnerable pupil.

5. The effect of coronavirus on governing boards' duties to consider reinstatement of excluded pupils, and the process for independent review panels (IRPs)

The timeframes set out in the School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012 remain in force. This applies to all exclusions, including those that were issued before 23 March 2020.

The government appreciates that it may not be possible to meet the timeframes set out in regulations for review meetings and IRPs, due to the disruption caused by the coronavirus outbreak and the health risks of holding meetings. The Regulations themselves envisage that the timeframes may not always be met, however meetings and panel hearings must still go ahead even if the relevant deadline has been missed.

It is for the advisory board or arranging authority to assess the facts of the case and decide whether the statutory deadlines are achievable or whether, in the circumstances, the meeting has to be delayed. The advisory board and arranging authorities should continue to take reasonable steps to ensure meetings are arranged for a time when all parties are able to attend.

6. Review

The Trust School Improvement Leads and local advisory board monitor the number of exclusions. This Annex policy will be reviewed by the Head of Governance and Behaviour lead in line with the latest government advice.