

# Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

## A Selective Academy



## Exclusion & Suspension Policy

At Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford the named persons with responsibility for this Policy are:

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<b>Governor</b>	Full Governing Body

Approved by: Policies Committee  
Date Approved: 6 June 2022  
Last reviewed: 6 June 2022  
Next date due to be reviewed by the Governors: June 2023

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### VISION AND VALUES

Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford's aim is to provide all members of the school community with the opportunities to engage with life in all its fullness through the highest quality of education, encouragement and endeavour. We are committed to striving for excellence and ensuring that all students are known, valued and can achieve.

**Our core values are: *Achievement, Integrity, Mutual Respect and Self-Discipline.***

#### Principles and aim

Inclusive education is at the heart of the school's vision statement whereby every child is known, valued and achieves as an individual. It is the aim of the school to keep all pupils in school. However, there may be occasions when a suspension or permanent exclusion may be necessary. This policy deals with the procedures and practice when excluding a pupil from school and is linked to the School Behaviour Policy.

This policy follows the DfE Statutory Guidance document on Exclusions from Maintained Schools, Academies and Pupil Referral Units in England.

### REASONS FOR A SUSPENSION OR EXCLUSION

Suspensions and exclusions are an extreme sanction and can only be administered by the Headteacher (or, in the absence of the Headteacher, the Assistant Headteacher responsible for pastoral care) for disciplinary reasons with the headteacher's approval.

The decision to suspend or exclude a pupil can be taken in the following circumstances:

1. An inability of a pupil to comply with the School Behaviour Policy (Suspension);
2. In response to a serious breach or persistent breach of the School 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 (Permanent Exclusion).

Exclusion, whether a suspension or permanent exclusion, may be used for any of the following, all of which constitute examples of unacceptable conduct and are in breach of the School's Behaviour Policy.

Physical assault against a pupil/adult
Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against a pupil/adult
Racist or Homophobic Abuse
Drugs/Alcohol/Tobacco
Sexual Misconduct
Theft (or attempted)
Persistent Disruptive Behaviour
Bullying
Damage
An offensive weapon or an object used offensively
Unacceptable behaviour which has been previously reported and for which support, and sanctions have not been successful in modifying behaviour

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**Please note:** This list produced by the Local Authority is not an exhaustive list and there may be other situations where the Headteacher makes the judgement that a suspension or exclusion is an appropriate sanction.

### **Before deciding to exclude a pupil, the Headteacher will:**

- Ensure that the decision is lawful, rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate;
- Consider the nature and context of the event;
- Ensure that a thorough investigation has been correctly carried out;
- Ensure that all the relevant evidence has been carefully considered e.g. witness statements;
- Allow the pupil to give their written account of events. If necessary, a scribe could be used;
- Consider the pupil's previous conduct in school, age and any mitigating circumstances e.g. provocation, bullying, bereavement;
- Ensure that under the Equality Act 2010 pupils are not being discriminated against, harassed or victimised because of sex; race; disability; religion or belief; sexual orientation; pregnancy or gender reassignment;
- Ensure that any reasonable adjustments are made for SEND pupils in line with the SEN Code of Practice;
- Consider previous exclusions of a similar nature and context to ensure proportionality;
- Consider the impact of an exclusion on any vulnerable pupils e.g. Looked After Children, pupils with Education and Health Care (EHC) Plans;
- Consult with Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) and Head of School.

When establishing the facts in relation to a suspension or exclusion decision, the Headteacher will apply the civil standard of proof, i.e. 'on the balance of probabilities' it is more likely than not that a fact is true, rather than the criminal standard of 'beyond reasonable doubt'. This means that the Headteacher should accept that something happened if it is more likely that it happened than that it did not happen.

Suspended and excluded pupils will be encouraged to take part in the exclusion process given their age and ability to understand.

The Headteacher need not postpone taking a decision on an exclusion solely because a police investigation is underway and/or any criminal proceedings may be brought. In such circumstances, the Headteacher will need to take a decision on the evidence available to them at the time. Where the evidence is limited by a police investigation or criminal proceedings, the Headteacher should consider any additional steps they may need to take to ensure that the decision to exclude is fair. However, the final decision on whether to exclude is for the Headteacher to make.

## SUSPENSIONS

A suspension is where a pupil is temporarily removed from school for a breach of the School Behaviour Policy. See previous sections on 'Reasons for Suspension or Exclusion' and 'Before deciding to suspend a pupil the Headteacher will...'.

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Only the Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) is allowed to suspend a pupil for one or more fixed term periods, not exceeding 45 school days in any one year.

For a suspension of more than five school days, the school will arrange suitable full-time education for pupils of compulsory school age. This provision will begin no later than the sixth school day of the exclusion. This also applies to consecutive fixed term suspensions totalling more than 5 days.

### INFORMING PARENTS

- The school will endeavour to contact parents by telephone, giving basic information, the period(s) of the suspension or exclusion and the reasons for it:
- A letter will be sent to parents as soon as possible and should include the following information:
  - The period of the exclusion;
  - The reason(s) for the exclusion;
  - The name of the person parents should contact to make representations;
  - Where relevant, what alternative provision will be provided from the 6th day of a fixed-period exclusion;
  - Arrangement for setting work and marking work (if appropriate) for the first 5 days of the exclusion;
  - The days on which parents must ensure that the pupil is not present in a public place at any time during school hours. These days would be the first five school days of an exclusion. Any parent who fails to comply with this duty without reasonable justification commits an offence and may be given a fixed penalty notice or be prosecuted;
  - Parents' right to see and have a copy of their child's school record, upon written request to the school;
  - Parents' right to make representations to the Governors' Pupil Discipline Committee (see section on governor involvement);
  - Contact details of the Local Authority Pupil Reintegration Officer: (01522 554525 and <http://www.Outofschool@lincolnshire.gov.uk>);
  - A signpost to where parents can access a copy of the DfE Guidance on Exclusions (<http://www.education.gov.uk>), contact the Children's Legal Centre ( 08088020008 or on <http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com> and source impartial advice such as the Coram Children's Legal Centre ([www.childrenslegalcentre.com](http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com)), ACE Education (<http://www.ace-ed.org.uk>) who can be contacted on 03000 115 142 Monday to Wednesday from 10 am to 1 pm during term time;
  - Where considered relevant by the Headteacher, links to local services, such as Traveller Education Services, the Information Advice and Support Services Network (formerly known as the local parent partnership: <https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/formation-advice-and-support-servicesnetwork/about>), the National Autistic Society (NAS) School Exclusion Service

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(England) (0808 800 4002 or [schoolexclusions@nas.org.uk](mailto:schoolexclusions@nas.org.uk)), or Independent Parental Special Education Advice (<http://www.ipsea.org.uk/>).

### GOVERNOR INVOLVEMENT

- For suspensions of over to 5 days in a term the Governing Body must be notified and consider any representations made by parents, but it cannot make the school reinstate the pupil and is not required to meet the parents.
- Where a pupil receives a suspension for more than five, but fewer than 15 school days in the term, if the parents make representations, the Governing Body must consider within 50 school days of receiving the notice of suspension whether the excluded pupil should be reinstated. In the absence of any representations from the parents, the Governing Body is not required to meet and cannot direct the reinstatement of the pupil.
- The Governing Body must consider the reinstatement of a suspended pupil within 15 school days of receiving notice of the suspension or exclusion if it is a fixed-period exclusion which would bring the pupil's total number of school days of exclusion to more than 15 in a term or would result in a pupil missing a public examination.

### POST-SUSPENSION REINTEGRATION MEETING

The Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher or Head of School, will meet with the pupil before they return to school to discuss reintegration and any further strategies/support which may be appropriate e.g. monitoring report, mentoring, support from agencies, Pastoral Support Plan. Parents will be invited to this meeting.

### NOTIFYING THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

The school should complete Form EXC1 and email it to the Pupil Reintegration Team within five school days of the suspension ([OutofSchool@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:OutofSchool@lincolnshire.gov.uk)).

### PERMANENT EXCLUSION

The decision to exclude a pupil permanently is a serious one. It should only be used as a last resort in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the School 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 (DfE Statutory Guidance).

#### **Persistent breaches of the School 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.**

In addition to the previous sections on 'Reasons for Suspension or Exclusion' and 'Before deciding to exclude a pupil the Headteacher will...', consider whether:

- There are any unmet learning needs;
- Early intervention to address the disruptive behaviour including SEND support (if appropriate) has been provided;

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- Any multi-agency support (if appropriate) has been provided;
- Any reasonable adjustments have been made to ensure there is no discrimination under the Equality Act 2010;
- Any additional support has been provided;
- An alternative placement has been offered.

### **Serious Breach of the School 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.**

There may be exceptional circumstances where it is not appropriate to implement other support strategies and where it may be appropriate to exclude a pupil permanently for a first or 'one off' offence which is a serious breach of the School 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. In addition to the previous sections on 'Reasons for Suspension or Exclusion' and 'Before deciding to exclude a pupil, the Headteacher will:

- Where practical, give pupils an opportunity to present their case before taking the decision to exclude;
- Have taken account of any contributing factors that are identified after the incident of poor behaviour has occurred. For example, when it comes to light that that a pupil has suffered bereavement, has mental health issues or has been subject to bullying;
- Follow the School Drugs Policy (for drugs' misuse);
- Have considered the pupil transferring to another school as part of a managed move with the consent of all parties involved including parents.

Pupils who are Looked After will not be permanently excluded without referral to the Virtual School and the Director of Children's Services.

Pupils with Education, Health Care Plans or SEN Statements may have an emergency review meeting before being permanently excluded.

### **Informing parents**

See procedure for suspension with the exception that the letter sent to parents should also state:

- That the local authority have responsibility for educating the pupil from the 6th day of the permanent exclusion, not the school;
- The latest date by which the Governing Body must meet to consider the pupil's reinstatement;
- Parents' right to attend the meeting and to bring a friend.

### **Governor involvement**

The Headteacher should inform the Governing Body immediately of a permanent exclusion. A Pupil Discipline Committee has delegated authority to consider exclusions and a meeting must be convened within 15 school days of receiving notice of a permanent exclusion. The parents (with a representative or friend) and Headteacher must be invited to the meeting and be allowed to make representations. The excluded pupil should be encouraged to attend or feed in their views to the

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meeting. Parents may invite a representative from the local authority to attend as an observer. The local authority representative may only make representations with the Governing Body's consent.

After considering the representations, governors can either decline to reinstate the pupil and uphold the school decision to permanently exclude or direct the reinstatement of the pupil immediately or on a particular date. The Governing Body must without delay write to parents, the Headteacher and Local Authority with its decision and the reasons for it.

If Governors uphold the decision by the school to permanently exclude, parents can appeal to an Independent Review Body (IRP) who are required to hear the case within 15 school days of the parents receiving notice of the governors' decision. Parents have the right for a SEND expert to attend. The IRP can decide to uphold the governors' decision; recommend that the governors reconsider reinstatement; or quash the decision and direct that the governors reconsider reinstatement.

Where the IRP recommends or directs the Governing Body to reconsiders its decision, the Governing Body must reconvene within 10 school days. If governors do not reinstate the pupil following a direction to reconsider, the school can be fined.

### **Notifying the local authority**

The Headteacher should complete the Initial Notification to Permanently Exclude form and email it to the Pupil Reintegration Team ([OutofSchool@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:OutofSchool@lincolnshire.gov.uk)) as soon as the decision to permanently exclude is made. Form EXC3 form should be completed and emailed to the Pupil Reintegration Team within one day of the permanent exclusion.