Exclusions and suspension guidance for schools

3- Considerations before deciding to permanently exclude



When is permanent exclusion appropriate?

A permanent exclusion should only occur:

- For a serious breach (or breaches) of the school's behaviour policy.
- If allowing the pupil to stay would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others.

When is permanent exclusion NOT appropriate?

Unacceptable reasons for exclusion include:

- Poor academic performance, lateness, truancy, or pregnancy.
- Protecting victims of bullying by sending them home.
- Breaches of rules on uniform/appearance.
- Behaviour of parents, such as failing to attend meetings.
- A school's inability to meet a pupil's SEND needs.

Key considerations before deciding to exclude:

- Conduct a thorough investigation and review all evidence.
- Ensure decisions comply with relevant policies and laws, including the Equality Act 2010.
- Consider whether the incident was provoked (e.g., bullying or harassment).
- Provide the pupil with an opportunity to share their version of events.
- Explore trauma-informed approaches and all available support options.

Legal and procedural requirements:

- Decisions must be lawful, reasonable, and procedurally fair.
- Maintain accurate written records of investigations and interviews.
- Notify parents, relevant professionals, and the local authority formally.
- Arrange full-time alternative education for exclusions over five days.

Additional support

- For pupils with an EHCP, ensure the exclusion is not related to unmet SEND needs, which may be discriminatory.
- Schools are encouraged to consult the Exclusions and Reintegration Support Team and EHCP Coordination Team before making a final decision.

Produced by Hillingdon Council | January 2025 | 14843