



**Bath & Wells Multi-Academy Trust
Exclusion Policy**

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1. Legislation

This policy is compliant with the following legislation:

- The Education Act 2002, as amended by the Education Act 2011;
- The School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012;
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006; and
- The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007.

2. Definitions used in the Policy

Use of term 'parent' within this policy

In addition to the child's birth parents, references to parents in this policy include any person who has parental responsibility (which includes the local authority where it has a care order in respect of the child) and any person (for example, a foster carer) with whom the child lives.

Use of the word 'term' within this policy

Where the School year consists of 3 terms or fewer, a reference to a 'term' in this policy means one of those terms. Where the School's academic year consists of more than 3 terms, then a

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reference to 'term' means the period falling between: 31 December to Easter Monday; Easter Monday to 31 July; or 31 July to 31 December

3. Context

The Bath & Wells Multi-Academy Trust (hereafter referred to as the MAT) recognises that in order to ensure a positive atmosphere based on a sense of community and shared values it may, on occasions, be necessary to exclude an individual or individuals either for a fixed period, not exceeding forty five school days in any one academic year, or, in some circumstances, permanently.

Such exclusions will only be resorted to when the academy can demonstrate with adequate evidence that all reasonable steps have been taken (including education off site) and/ or that the presence of the learner is likely to be severely detrimental to his/herself, other learners or staff. There may also be occasions when a short-term exclusion is appropriate because of unacceptable behaviour.

Good discipline in schools is essential to ensure that all pupils can benefit from the opportunities provided by education. The Academy Trust supports its schools in using exclusion as a sanction where it is warranted. However, permanent exclusion should only be used as a last resort, in response to a serious breach, or persistent breaches, of the Academy's 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.

4. Principles

- The school will not discriminate against pupils on the basis of protected characteristics, such as disability or race and will give particular consideration to the fair treatment of pupils from groups who are vulnerable to exclusion.
- Disruptive behaviour can be an indication of unmet needs. Where there are concerns about a pupil's behaviour the first steps will be to identify whether there are any causal factors and intervene early in order to reduce the need for a subsequent exclusion. The Academy will give consideration to a multi-agency assessment that goes beyond the pupil's educational needs.
- All pupils who return to school following a fixed period exclusion will be subject to a re-integration process that will include a meeting with the parent and child prior to their return to their class. This meeting will include an agreement with the pupil on managing their future behaviour.
- The school will take reasonable steps to set and mark work for pupils during the first five school days of exclusion and will arrange alternative provision from the sixth day.
- Where parents dispute the decision of the Local Governing Body / Academy Trust not to reinstate a permanently excluded pupil, they can ask for this decision to be reviewed by an independent review panel to be arranged by the Multi Academy Trust. Where there is an allegation of discrimination (under the Equality Act 2010) in relation to a fixed-period or permanent exclusion, parents can also make a claim to the First-tier Tribunal (for disability discrimination) or a County Court (for other forms of discrimination).
- All parents have the right to request the presence of a SEN expert at an independent review panel. The SEN expert's role is to provide impartial advice to the panel about how SEN could be relevant to the exclusion;

5. The Power to Exclude

- Only the Headteacher, Principal or Executive Principal of the school can exclude a pupil and this must be on disciplinary grounds.
- A pupil may be excluded for one or more fixed periods (up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year), or permanently.

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- Pupils whose behaviour at lunchtime is disruptive may be excluded from the school premises for the duration of the lunchtime period.
- The behaviour of pupils outside school can be considered as grounds for exclusion.
- The Head teacher, Principal or Executive Principal may withdraw an exclusion that has not been reviewed by the MAT.
- The school will take account of their legal duty of care when sending a pupil home following an exclusion.
- The school will use the civil standard of proof, i.e. 'on the balance of probabilities' when making judgements in relation to exclusions.
- The school will not make use of 'informal' or 'unofficial' exclusions, such as sending pupils home 'to cool off', any exclusion of a pupil, even for short periods of time, will be formally recorded.

A decision to exclude a pupil permanently will only be taken:

- In response to a serious breach, or persistent breaches, of the school's 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.

The school will take account of any contributing factors that are identified after an incident of poor behaviour has occurred. For example, where it comes to light that a pupil has suffered bereavement has mental health issues or has been subject to bullying.

6. Informing parties about an exclusion

Whenever a pupil is excluded, the school will notify parents of the period of the exclusion and the reasons for it as soon as is immediately practical. In addition the school will provide parents with the following information in writing:

- the reasons for the exclusion;
- the period of a fixed period exclusion or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent;
- parents' right to make representations about the exclusion to the Local Governing Body and Trust and how the pupil may be involved in this;
- the start date for any provision of full-time education that has been arranged for the pupil during the exclusion;

In addition the school will draw attention to relevant sources of free and impartial information including:

- a link to DfE statutory guidance on exclusions: *exclusions guidance (Exclusion from maintained schools, Academies and pupil referral units in England from September 2012)*
- a link to the Coram Children's Legal Centre: www.childrenslegalcentre.com 08088 020 008;

The Headteacher, Executive Principal and Principal will, without delay, notify the Local Governing Body, Academy Trust and the Local Authority of:

- a permanent exclusion (including where a fixed period exclusion is made permanent);
- exclusions which would result in the pupil being excluded for more than five school days (or more than ten lunchtimes) in a term; and
- exclusions which would result in the pupil missing a public examination or national curriculum test.

For all other exclusions the schools leadership will notify the local authority, local governing body and the MAT once a term.

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For a permanent exclusion, if the pupil lives outside the local authority in which the school is located, the Academy will also advise the pupil's 'home authority' of the exclusion without delay.

7. The Local Governing Body's duty to consider an exclusion

The Local Governing Board, under delegated powers from the Academy Trust, will consider parents' representations about an exclusion. Those invited to this meeting will include:

- parents;
- the Headteacher, Principal or Executive Principal

The Local Governing Board will make every effort to arrange this meeting for a date and time convenient to all parties

Where there is a fixed period exclusion which does not bring the pupil's total number of days of exclusion to more than five in a term, the Local Governing Board must consider any representations made by parents, but it cannot direct reinstatement and is not required to arrange a meeting with parents.

In reaching a decision on whether or not to reinstate a pupil, the Local Governing Board will consider whether the decision to exclude the pupil was lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair, taking account of the legal duties of the Academy Leadership.

8. The MAT's duty to arrange an independent review panel

If applied for by parents within the legal time frame, the MAT will arrange for an independent review panel hearing to review the decision of the Local Governing Board not to reinstate a permanently excluded pupil.

The legal time frame for an application is:

- Within 15 school days of notice being given to the parents by the governing body of their decision to uphold a permanent exclusion or
- Where an application has not been made within this time frame, within 15 school days of the final determination of a claim of discrimination under the Equality Act 2010, in relation to the exclusion

Any application made outside of the legal time frame will be rejected by the MAT.

The Bath and Wells Diocesan Academies Trust operating as Bath & Wells Multi Academy Trust

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