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Barnham CEVC Primary School

SUSPENSIONS AND EXCLUSIONS POLICY

At Barnham CEVC Primary School, a Thrive School of Excellence, we are committed to creating a nurturing environment where every child can flourish and reach their full potential, becoming “*the best they can be for themselves, for others, and for God’s world.*” We aim for all children to feel valued, respected, and secure as active contributors to our school community.

Intent

At Barnham CEVC Primary School, we are committed to creating a safe, inclusive and nurturing environment rooted in our Christian values, where every child is supported to thrive academically, socially and emotionally. We believe that positive relationships, restorative approaches and early intervention are the most effective ways to promote good behaviour and wellbeing.

Suspension and permanent exclusion (the statutory terms used) are serious sanctions and are used only as a last resort. This policy sets out how the school will ensure that any decision to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil is lawful, reasonable, fair and proportionate, and that the rights and needs of pupils—particularly those who are vulnerable—are fully considered.

This policy is based on the most recent statutory guidance from the Department for Education *Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England*, and is underpinned by the following legislation:

- Section 51a of the Education Act 2002, as amended by the Education Act 2011
- The School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012
- Part 7, Chapter 2 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Section 579 of the Education Act 1996
- The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended 2014)
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children and Families Act 2014

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- The School Inspection Handbook (definition of 'off-rolling')

The intent of this policy is to:

- Ensure exclusions are carried out lawfully and consistently
- Safeguard the welfare, dignity and educational entitlement of all pupils
- Ensure pupils with SEND, vulnerabilities or protected characteristics are not unfairly disadvantaged
- Promote shared responsibility between school, parents/carers, and external agencies
- Prevent unlawful or informal exclusions, including off-rolling
- Ensure pupil voice is considered before any exclusion decision, where practicable

Implementation

Roles and Responsibilities

Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher

- Has the legal authority to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil
- Ensures all decisions are lawful, reasonable, fair and proportionate
- Considers all relevant factors, including the pupil's age, SEND, mental health, safeguarding concerns and previous support
- Provides the pupil with an opportunity to give their account of events before a decision is made, where practicable
- Ensures parents/carers are informed without delay and provided with written reasons and next steps
- Ensures alternative provision and safeguarding arrangements are in place
- Notifies the Local Authority and, where relevant, the pupil's social worker or Virtual School Head promptly

Wellbeing and Inclusion Lead

- Plays a key advocacy role for the child
- Works closely with pupils, families and staff to understand underlying needs
- Supports early intervention, behaviour plans and reasonable adjustments
- Contributes to decision-making by ensuring the child's voice, wellbeing and context are fully considered
- Liaises with external professionals where appropriate, including for pupils with SEND, children with a social worker, or other vulnerabilities

Governing Body

- Ensures the school complies with statutory guidance and legislation
- Reviews exclusions when required, including:
 - Suspension totalling more than 5 school days in a term
 - Suspension totalling more than 15 school days in a term
 - Permanent exclusions

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- Considers representations from parents/carers and ensures due process
- Ensures policies and practices do not discriminate unlawfully
- Monitors exclusion data by characteristic (e.g., SEND, gender, disadvantage) and patterns to identify potential disproportionality

Principles Governing Suspension and Exclusion

- Suspension and permanent exclusion are only used in response to serious breaches of the behaviour policy or where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others
- All alternatives must be considered and documented before exclusion
- Decisions are made on the balance of probabilities
- Informal or unofficial exclusions are unlawful and will not be used
- Pupils will not be pressured to move schools to avoid exclusion (off-rolling)

Suspension

A suspension is for a fixed number of school days and can be for part of a day, one day or multiple days, up to a legal maximum of 45 school days in any academic year.

Before suspending a pupil, the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher will:

- Investigate the incident thoroughly
- Consider the pupil's individual circumstances, including SEND and safeguarding factors
- Seek input from the Wellbeing and Inclusion Lead
- Consider whether reasonable adjustments have been made
- Provide the pupil an opportunity to share their account of events

Parents/carers will be:

- Notified immediately by telephone from the school office where possible
- Provided with written notification including reasons, duration, next steps, and statutory rights
- Informed of their responsibility to ensure the pupil is not present in a public place during school hours for the first five school days
- Advised that failure to comply may result in a penalty notice
- Be informed that the school will be unable to meet with parents at collection of the child or take telephone calls regarding the absence during the suspension period. Any opportunity to discuss the situation will be provided at the reintegration meeting.

Work will be set for the first five school days, marked and returned. From the sixth school day, suitable full-time education will be arranged by the local authority.

Permanent Exclusion

Permanent exclusion is used only in exceptional circumstances, typically where:

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- There has been a serious or persistent breach of the behaviour policy
- Allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others

The Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher will:

- Ensure all evidence has been considered
- Take account of the Equality Act 2010 and Children and Families Act 2014
- Seek advice and advocacy input from the Wellbeing and Inclusion Lead
- Notify the Governing Body and Local Authority without delay
- Inform parents/carers of their right to request an Independent Review Panel (IRP) and the involvement of a SEN expert where appropriate

Parents/carers will receive written confirmation outlining their right to make representations and request a review.

Pupils with SEND, Vulnerabilities or Protected Characteristics

The school recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and Children and Families Act 2014. We will:

- Avoid excluding pupils for behaviour arising directly from unmet SEND where reasonable adjustments have not been made
- Consider whether failures in provision have contributed to the behaviour
- Ensure exclusion is not a discriminatory response
- Review EHCPs, risk assessments or support plans prior to exclusion where relevant

The Wellbeing and Inclusion Lead will advocate for the pupil and ensure appropriate support and adjustments are explored.

Parental/Carer Responsibilities

In line with the Education and Inspections Act 2006, parents/carers are responsible for ensuring their child is not in a public place during school hours in the first five days of a suspension or permanent exclusion, unless there is reasonable justification. Failure to comply may result in a penalty notice.

Appealing a Suspension or Exclusion Decision

Parents or carers have the right to appeal a decision to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil. To do so, the following procedure should be followed:

- 1. Written Appeal Submission**
 - An appeal must be made in writing, stating the grounds for the appeal.
 - The written appeal should be addressed to the **Chair of Governors** and sent via email to **admin@barnham.suffolk.sch.uk**.
- 2. Acknowledgement**

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- The school will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within 5 school days.
- 3. **Appeal Panel**
 - The appeal will be considered by a panel of governors who were not involved in the original decision. This will usually happen within one calendar month of the written appeal (it may be longer when school is closed for the summer)
 - The panel will review all relevant documentation and may invite the parent/carer and/or pupil to attend a meeting to present their case.
- 4. **Outcome Notification**
 - The decision of the appeal panel will be communicated in writing, including reasons for the outcome, within 10 school days of the appeal hearing.
- 5. **Further Recourse**
 - If parents or carers remain dissatisfied with the outcome, they may seek advice from the **Local Authority** or, in the case of permanent exclusions, may request a review by an **Independent Review Panel (IRP)**, in accordance with statutory guidance.

Independent Review of Permanent Exclusion

If a pupil has been **permanently excluded**, parents or carers have the right to request an **Independent Review of the exclusion**. This process is conducted in accordance with the **Education Act 2002** and the **School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012**.

1. **Requesting an Independent Review**
 - A request must be submitted in writing to the Clerk to the Independent Review Panel, via the Suffolk County Council Exclusions Team, within 15 school days of receiving the governing body's decision.
 - Contact details for the Suffolk County Council Exclusions Team are:
Email: exclusions@suffolk.gov.uk
2. **Independent Review Panel (IRP)**
 - The IRP is completely independent of the school and the governing body.
 - The panel will usually consist of:
 - One panel member with legal expertise (often a solicitor or barrister),
 - One lay member (someone with no recent involvement in the school),
 - One experienced headteacher or former headteacher.
3. **Review Procedure**
 - The panel will review the written evidence from the school and parents/carers.
 - Parents/carers may attend the review and present their case, either in person or via a representative.
 - The panel may ask questions but does not have the power to reinstate the pupil; it can only make one of the following recommendations to the governing body:
 - Uphold the exclusion,
 - Recommend reconsideration of the exclusion, or
 - Recommend reconsideration with specific actions.

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4. Outcome Notification

- The IRP will send its findings in writing to the parents/carers and the governing body, usually within 5 school days of the review.
- The governing body must consider the IRP's recommendations but is not legally required to overturn the exclusion.

5. Further Advice

- Parents/carers can seek advice or support from the Suffolk County Council Exclusions Team or from a local independent advice service.

Reintegration Meetings


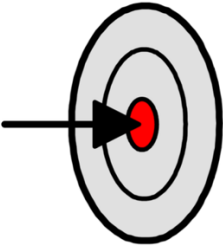

Following a suspension, a reintegration meeting will be arranged, lasting approximately 15 minutes. These meetings involve school representatives, parents/carers, and the pupil where appropriate and when the pupil is comfortable attending.

The child will be supported to attend using visual aids and reasonable adjustments such as comfort toys, fidgets or other personalised support.

The purpose of the reintegration meeting is to:

1. Consider "What went wrong?"
2. Set clear targets
3. Agree actions to support the pupil moving forward

Example of visuals to support the child:

First	Then	Later
 What went wrong?	 Targets	 Agreed actions

Meetings will be formally recorded, and all parties will sign the minutes where possible. Here is a sample of the reintegration meeting form:

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Barnham CEVC Primary School - Reintegration Meeting for Fixed Term Suspension

Date of meeting:

People present:

Pupil details		
Pupil's name:	Address:	Name of parent/guardian:
Date of birth:		Contact details:
Year group/class:		
Is the pupil in care? Yes/No		
Is the pupil subject to a child protection plan? Yes/No		
Is the pupil identified as having special educational needs (SEN)? Yes/No		
If yes, please give details:		

PART 1: Details of exclusion		
Date of exclusion:	Date of return to school:	Total number of days excluded:
Reason for exclusion:		
Current Attendance -		

PART 2: Targets for behaviour and learning				
Area for development	Current score (0-10); 0=never, 10=always	Target score (0-10) 0=never, 10=always	How will we achieve this?	Timescale/review date
			•	
PART 3: Other actions agreed				
Additional comments				
Pupil's comments:		Parent/guardian's comments:		School's comments:
Signed: _____		Signed: _____		Signed: _____

After the meeting, the child will be supported to return to their classroom and rejoin their peers. The main purpose is to warmly welcome the child back, reassure them of a fresh start, and strengthen their sense of belonging within the school community.

Impact

Through the consistent and compassionate implementation of this policy, Barnham CEVC Primary School aims to:

- Maintain a safe, calm and inclusive learning environment

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- Reduce the need for suspension and exclusion through early intervention
- Ensure fair, transparent and lawful decision-making
- Protect vulnerable pupils from disproportionate or discriminatory outcomes
- Strengthen trust and partnership with families
- Demonstrate accountability to pupils, parents/carers and the Governing Body
- Analyse exclusion data by characteristic (e.g., SEND, gender, disadvantage) to ensure equity and inform improvement

We regularly review exclusion data and individual cases to identify patterns, evaluate effectiveness and improve practice. The Governing Body uses this information to hold leaders to account and ensure the policy achieves its intended outcomes.

Monitoring, Feedback and Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly by the Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body to ensure it remains effective and responsive to the needs of the school community.

Review Term:	Every two years
Led member of staff responsible for review:	Amy Arnold (Headteacher)
Lead governor responsible for review: (Full GB to approve)	
Date adopted:	
Dates policy reviewed	
Dates policy amended in between reviews	

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Appendix – Exclusion Letter Template



Barnham Church of England V.C. Primary School

Mill Lane, Barnham, Thetford, Norfolk IP24 2NG

Telephone No: 01842 890253

Email: admin@barnham.suffolk.sch.uk

Headteacher: Amy Arnold

(date)

Dear [Parent/Carer Name],

Re: Fixed-Term Exclusion of [Pupil Name]

I am writing to inform you that, following careful consideration and investigation, the Headteacher has made the decision to [suspend / permanently exclude] your child, [Pupil Name], from Barnham CEVC Primary School.

I understand that this exclusion may be upsetting but please rest assured that this decision has not been taken lightly. This decision has been made in accordance with our Suspensions and Exclusions Policy and statutory guidance from the Department for Education.

Reason for Exclusion:

[Pupil Name] has been excluded because they:

- [Describe behaviour/incident factually and clearly, e.g., "punched another child during lunchtime play, leaving a significant mark"]

Parental Responsibilities During Exclusion:

- You have a legal duty to ensure that [Pupil Name] is not present in a public place during school hours for the duration of this exclusion unless there is reasonable justification. Failure to comply may result in a penalty notice.
- The school will be unable to meet with parents at collection of the child or take telephone calls regarding the absence during the suspension period. Any opportunity to discuss the situation will be provided at the reintegration meeting.

Right to Make Representations:

- You have the right to make a written statement to the Governing Body regarding this exclusion. The Governing Body must consider any representations, although

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they cannot direct reinstatement. They may place a copy of their findings on your child's school record.

- To submit a representation, please contact Caroline Dowson, Chair of Governors, via writing to admin@barnham.suffolk.sch.uk as soon as possible.

Independent Advice and Support:

- **Joanna Howell**, Lead Family Services Coordinator, Suffolk County Council: joanna.howell@suffolk.gov.uk
- **Parent Partnership**, confidential advice and support service: 01473 265210 or parent.partnership@suffolk.gov.uk
- **Coram Children's Legal Centre**, providing free legal advice: 0808 802 0008 or <http://childrenslegalcentre.com>. Advice line open 8am–8pm Monday to Friday.
- **Statutory guidance** on exclusions: Department for Education guidance

Reintegration Meeting:

We will meet with you and [Pupil Name] at [date and time] for a reintegration meeting, lasting approximately 15 minutes. This meeting will involve school staff, yourself, and your child where appropriate, using visual aids or other reasonable adjustments as needed.

The purpose is to:

1. Consider "What went wrong?"
2. Set clear targets
3. Agree actions to support your child moving forward

We remain committed to supporting [Pupil Name]'s wellbeing, learning, and safe return to school.

Warm regards,



Amy Arnold