

EXCLUSION POLICY

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1. DEFINITIONS

- 1.1 This applies to all Academy students. The term 'Academy' is used to refer to any school within the Federation.
- 1.2 The term 'Head of School' is used to refer to the most senior member of staff within the Academy, delegated by the Executive Principal of the Federation to have responsibility for its day-to-day running; currently the Principal at Catmose College, Head of School at Catmose Primary and Harington School.
- 1.3 An academic term in respect of the Department for Education's guidance is equivalent to two Academy terms (approximately 12 weeks). Within this policy the use of the word term is equivalent to two Academy terms.
- 1.4 Suspension – when a student is excluded from the school for a fixed period. This was previously referred to as a 'fixed-term exclusion'.
- 1.5 Permanent exclusion – when a student is removed from the school permanently and taken off the Academy roll. This is sometimes referred to as an 'exclusion'.
- 1.6 Off-site direction – when the Academy requires a student to attend another education setting temporarily, to improve their behaviour.
- 1.7 Parent – any person who has parental responsibility and any person who has care of the child.
- 1.8 Managed move – when a student is transferred to another school permanently. All parties, including parents and the admission authority for the new school, should consent before a managed move occurs.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 This policy is linked to our:
 - Behaviour Policy
 - SEND Policy
- 2.2 The Academy requires everyone to show respect, tolerance and understanding towards others. We believe that many disciplinary issues will be avoided through students' self-discipline and consideration and if they behave in a sensitive and civilised fashion.
- 2.3 Disciplinary procedures identify the appropriate action to be taken when a student's behaviour fails to meet the requirements of the Academy's Behaviour Management policies and our 'Routines for Learning' (disciplinary code).
- 2.4 The decision to exclude a student rests with the Head of School. The decision to exclude will only be taken if there has been a serious breach to the Academy's 'Routines for Learning' including bullying, and usually only after a range of alternative strategies have been tried and proven to have failed.
- 2.5 A student disciplinary sub-committee of three governors is delegated by the governing body to consider exclusion decisions when they are required by this policy.

- 2.6 The Academy may advise the police, youth offending teams or social workers of any criminal activity; this includes racist incidents that are categorised as crimes.

3. LEGISLATION AND STATUTORY GUIDANCE

This policy is based on statutory guidance from the Department for Education:

[Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement - from September 2023.](#)

It is based on the following legislation, which outlines schools' powers to exclude students:

- Section 51a of the Education Act 2002, as amended by the Education Act 2011
- The School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012

In addition, the policy is based on:

- Part 7, chapter 2 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#), which sets out parental responsibility for excluded pupils
- Section 579 of the [Education Act 1996](#), which defines 'school day'
- The [Education \(Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#), as amended by [The Education \(Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2014](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Children and Families Act 2014](#)
- The [School Inspection Handbook](#), which defines 'off-rolling'
- This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the governors of the Academy and remain under constant review by the Executive Principal.

5. PRINCIPLES

- 5.1 The Academy is committed to treating its students fairly and with the same respect and consideration as adult members of the Academy.
- 5.2 The Academy will at all times adhere to the statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education in respect to suspensions and exclusions from its Academies.
- 5.3 The Academy will adopt a series of high expectations of behaviour, based on individual responsibility and mutual respect in order to generate an environment where positive relationships between students and staff are encouraged to flourish.
- 5.4 The Academy will seek to put in place a range of intervention strategies which minimise the need for suspensions or exclusions. Please read our Behaviour Management Policy for more details regarding our approach, but strategies may include; being placed on report, allocation of a key worker, restorative justice, mediation, working in Client Services or a senior manager's office, moving tutor groups, curriculum alternatives (at Key Stage 4), the use of pastoral support plans, temporary placement at another provision, the involvement of appropriate external agencies, following the Rutland County Council (RCC) Early Help referral process as required, or a managed move.

5.5 Decisions to suspend or exclude a student will only be taken on the balance of probabilities in response to breaches in the Academy's Behaviour Management Policy, including persistent and disruptive behaviour, bullying or sexual harassment or assault.

6. EXCLUSION (PERMANENT)

6.1 A decision to exclude a student permanently should only be taken:

- in response to a serious breach, or persistent breaches, of the Academy's Behaviour Management Policy, and
- when allowing the student to remain in the Academy would seriously harm the education or welfare of the student or others in the Academy.

A decision to exclude a student permanently is recognised by the Academy as a serious one and will usually only be taken where the basic facts have been clearly established on the balance of probabilities. It will usually be the final step in a process for dealing with disciplinary offences following a wide range of other strategies which have been tried without success.

There will, however, be exceptional circumstances which in the Head of School's judgement can result in permanent exclusion as a result of a first or 'one-off' offence. The following list is not exhaustive but are indicative of the severity of offences that may lead to permanent exclusion:

- serious actual or threatened violence against another student or member of staff;
- use, or threat of use, of an offensive weapon or item that is prohibited by the academy's behaviour management policy;
- serious bullying of another student, please read our behaviour policy for further information regarding our approach to bullying;
- serious abuse that is considered racist, sexual harassment, against someone's sexual orientation or relating to a disability;
- possession or supplying of an illegal substance.

7. PROCEDURES

7.1 Students could be required to leave the Academy site under the following circumstances where:

- there is sufficient evidence that a student has committed a disciplinary offence which, by allowing the student to stay on site, may seriously harm the education or welfare of others;
- a student is accused of a criminal offence;
- for medical reasons the student's presence on site represents a risk to the health and safety of others (this does not constitute a suspension);
- where a student is in breach of the Academy's policy on uniform and appearance which could be easily corrected at home (this does not constitute a suspension).

7.2 Only the Head of School or in their absence someone delegated by the Executive Principal to fulfil that role may take the decision to suspend or exclude a student.

- 7.3 In taking the decision to suspend or exclude a student, the Head of School will take into consideration mitigating and aggravating factors:
- Mitigating factors may include; provocation as a result of bullying, the student's emotional and/or medical condition, special needs or disability, potential coercion by other students, the nature of the offence and whether it is a first offence, previous behaviour, an apology, an admission, willingness to cooperate with the investigation and a willingness to make restitution towards the victim.
 - Aggravating factors may include; failing to heed warnings about the risk of exclusion, premeditation of the offence, use of a weapon, previous history of similar incidents, witness intimidation, the victim(s) sustaining injury, the victim being a younger or vulnerable student, significant support provided by the Academy to modify behaviour, lack of contrition or willingness to accept responsibility for his/her action and not cooperating with the investigation or seeking to frustrate it.

8. INVOLVING THE STUDENT

- 8.1 Students who are the subject of suspension or exclusion should be enabled to make representations themselves at every point in the process. If, due to their age or understanding, it is not appropriate to represent themselves at the governing body review of the suspension or exclusion, then they should be given support by the Head of School and subsequently the governing body should consider how they will take their views into account. Having done so, they should be told how they have had their views considered.

9. INFORMING PARENTS AND OTHER KEY PROFESSIONALS

- 9.1 When the decision to exclude a student has been made, the parent will be notified immediately by telephone and this will be confirmed in writing.
- 9.2 When a student with a social worker and/or a looked after or previously looked after student is at risk of suspension or exclusion, the Academy should inform their social worker and/or the designated teacher should inform the Virtual School Head, the Academy's Designated Safeguarding Lead and if relevant the student's parents to involve them all as early as possible in identifying additional support needs. Should the student subsequently receive a suspension or exclusion, the student's social worker and the Virtual School Head have a legal obligation to be involved in every point of the suspension or exclusion process, alongside or in place of their parents.
- 9.3 Written confirmation of the suspension or exclusion will include the following details:
- for a suspension, the precise period of the exclusion;
 - for an exclusion, the fact that it is a permanent exclusion and the date from which the exclusion takes effect;
 - the reasons for the suspension or exclusion including any relevant previous history;
 - the days and dates on which the parent is required to ensure that the student is not present in a public place during school hours without a good reason. Parents may be given a fixed penalty notice or prosecuted if they fail to do this.

- free and impartial information including:
 - The Department for Education Guidance for parents and carers on behaviour, suspension and permanent exclusion, which can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusions-guide-for-parents>
 - Each local area has a SENDIAS service who also provide information, advice and support to children and young people with SEND, including on exclusions. The Rutland SENDIAS team can be contacted via email: info@sendiassrutland.org.uk or further information here: councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/about-us-0/networks/informationadvice-and-support-services-network
 - Coram’s Child Law Advice service can be found through their website: childlawadvice.org.uk/information-pages/school-exclusion/ or contacted on 0300 330 5485 from Monday to Friday, 8am – 6pm.
 - ACE education run a limited service and can be reached on 0300 0115 142 on Monday to Wednesday from 10am to 1pm during term time. Information can be found on the website: www.ace-ed.org.uk/.
 - Independent Provider of Special Education Advice (known as IPSEA – www.ipsea.org.uk) is a registered charity. It offers free and independent information, advice and support to help get the right education for children and young people with all kinds of special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities.
- the parent’s right to make representations regarding the suspension or exclusion to the governing body and how the student may be involved in this;
- how any representation should be made;
- that where there is a legal requirement for the governing body to consider the suspension or exclusion, that the parents have the right to attend a meeting, be represented (at their expense) and to bring a friend;
- the latest date when the governing body must meet to consider the circumstances of the exclusion;
- the arrangements that will be put in place to ensure that the student is able to continue their education during the first five days of the exclusion, including the setting and marking of work (it is the parent’s responsibility to ensure that this is completed and returned to the Academy);
- the Academy days on which a student may be provided with alternative full-time education or may be required to attend an alternative provision. This information may be given by separate notification but will be at least 48 hours before the education is to be provided;
- if alternative provision is being arranged, parents must be informed of the details of this at the earliest opportunity possible.
- that parents have the right to make a request to hold the meeting via the use of remote access, and how and to whom to make this request. However, this should not be a default option.

10. OFF-ROLLING

The Federation is aware that off-rolling is unlawful. Ofsted defines off-rolling as:

‘The practice of removing a student from the school roll without a formal, permanent exclusion or by encouraging a parent to remove their child from the school roll, when the removal is primarily in the interests of the school rather than in the best interests of the student’.

We will not suspend or exclude students unlawfully by directing them off site, or not allowing students to attend the Academy:

- Without following the statutory procedure or formally recording the event, e.g. sending them home to ‘cool off’.
- Because they have special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND) that the Academy feels unable to support;
- Due to poor academic performance;
- Because they have not met a specific condition, such as attending a reintegration meeting;
- By exerting undue influence on a parent to encourage them to remove their child from the Academy.

11. CANCELLING SUSPENSIONS AND PERMANENT EXCLUSIONS

The Head of School may cancel a suspension or permanent exclusion that has already begun, but this will only be done where it has not yet been reviewed by the governing body. This might be done when an investigation brings to light further information that alters the decision to suspend or exclude.

Where an exclusion is cancelled:

- The parents, governing body and the local authority will be notified without delay;
- Where relevant, any social worker and Virtual School Head will be notified without delay;
- The notification must provide the reason for the cancellation;
- The governing body’s duty to consider reinstatement ceases, and there is no requirement to hold a meeting to consider reinstatement;
- Parents will be offered the opportunity to meet with the Head of School to discuss the cancellation;
- The student will be allowed back to the Academy.

Any days spent out of school as a result of any exclusion, prior to the cancellation, will count towards the maximum of 45 school days permitted in any school year.

A permanent exclusion cannot be cancelled if the student has already been excluded for more than 45 school days in a school year, or, if they will have been so by the time the cancellation takes effect.

12. RETURNING FROM A SUSPENSION

Following a suspension, a re-integration meeting will be held involving the student, parents, a member of senior staff and other staff, where appropriate. The meeting will focus on the support the student needs so that them, the Academy and the family can work together to avoid further suspension or an exclusion.

The following measures may be implemented when a student returns from a suspension:

- daily contact with a designated pastoral key worker;
- use of a report card with personalised targets to encourage reflection and allow close monitoring of behaviour;
- ensuring the student receives academic support upon return to catch up on any lost progress;
- planned pastoral interventions e.g., emotional support, mentoring, SEND support etc as appropriate to the individual;
- to encourage the child's involvement in the wider life of the academy e.g., trips, residential, electives, sport, music and drama.
- regular reviews with the student and parents to praise progress being made, and
- raise and address any concerns at an early stage; and
- any further support to avoid a further exclusion.

13. REMOTE ACCESS TO MEETINGS

Parents can request that a governing body meeting, or independent review panel be held remotely. If parents do not express a preference, the meeting will be held in person.

In the case of extraordinary or unforeseen circumstances, which mean it is not reasonably practicable for the meeting to be held in person, the meeting will be held remotely.

Remotely accessed meetings are subject to the same procedural requirements as in-person meetings.

The governing body should make sure that the following conditions are met before agreeing to let a meeting proceed remotely:

- All the participants have access to the technology which will allow them to hear, speak, see and be seen;
- All the participants will be able participate fully;
- The remote meeting can be held fairly and transparently.

Social workers and the Virtual School's Head always have the option of joining remotely, whether the meeting is being held in person or not, as long as they can meet the conditions for remote access listed above.

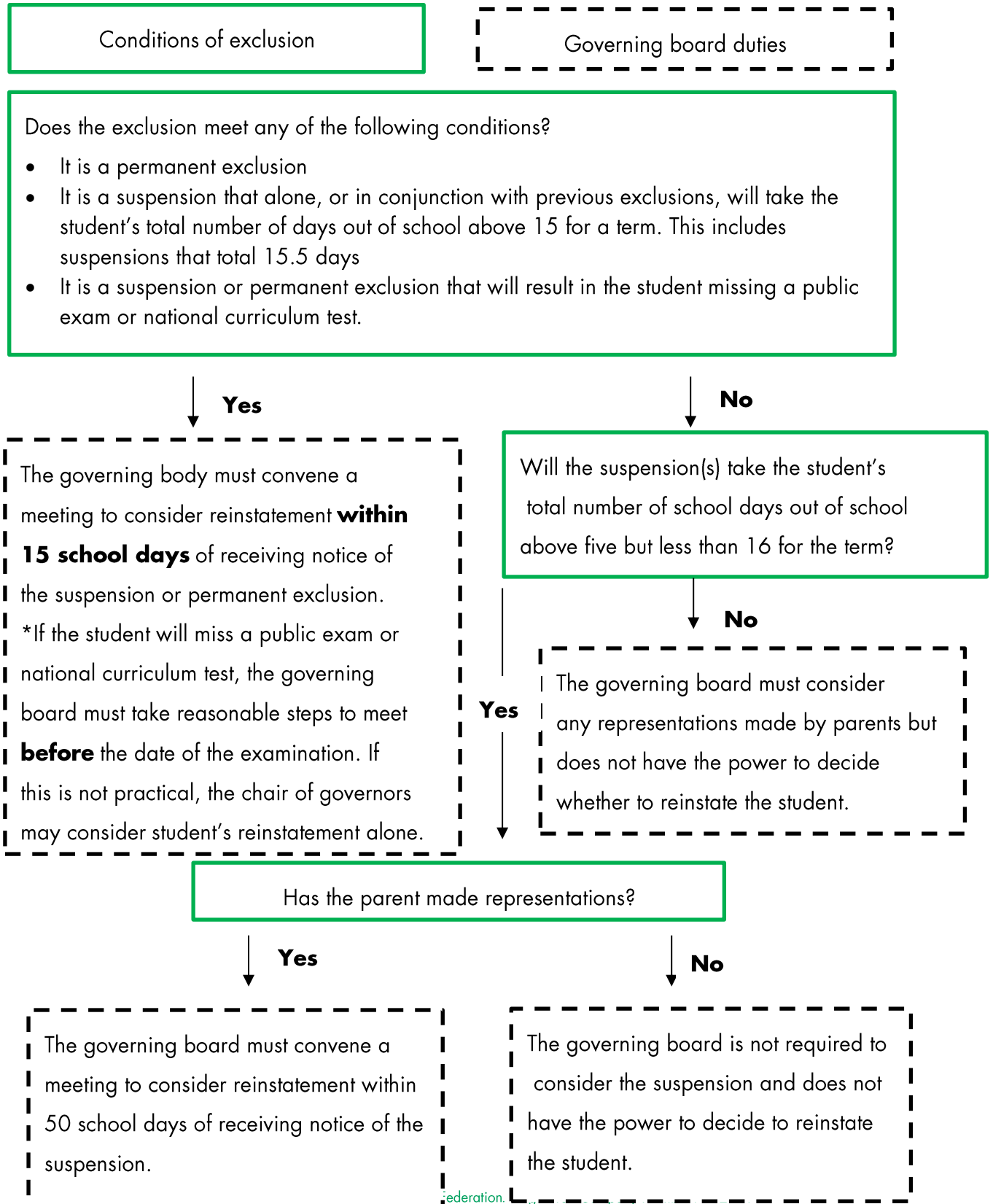
The meeting will be rearranged to an in-person meeting without delay if technical issues arise that cannot be reasonably resolved and:

- Compromise the ability of participants to contribute effectively, or
- Prevent the meeting from running fairly and transparently.

14. THE ROLE OF GOVERNORS

14.1 The governing body will be informed of all suspensions once per term.

14.2 The requirement to review a suspension or exclusion depends on a number of factors which are summarised in the diagram on the next page.



14.3 The Head of School will inform the governing body and make a return to the local authority without delay of all permanent exclusions or suspensions which would result in a student being excluded for five days within one term or would result in a student missing a public exam. For all other exclusions the Head of School must notify the governing body once a term. This notification will include the following:

- the length of the suspension;
- the reason for the suspension or exclusion.

14.4 The governing body may consider more than one exclusion at a meeting and will seek to meet to ensure that any exclusion does not result in a student missing a public examination.

14.5 On receiving notification from the Head of School the governing body will:

- Consider the reinstatement of an excluded student within 15 days' if:
 - the exclusion is permanent;
 - it is a suspension that would bring the student's total number of days to more than 15 in a term (two Academy terms);
 - it would result in a student missing a public examination or national curriculum test.
- For suspensions of more than five but not more than 15 days, where a parent has requested consideration by the governors, convene a meeting within 50 Academy days after receiving notification of the exclusion;
- For exclusions less than 5 days, governing bodies must consider representation but cannot direct reinstatement and are not required to meet with parents.

14.6 The following parties will be invited to a meeting of the governing body and are allowed to make representations:

- the parents;
- the student;
- the student's social worker, if they have one;
- the Virtual School Head, if the student is looked after;
- the Head of School;
- the parent may invite a representative of the Local Authority to attend the meeting as an observer but they would only be able to make representation at the governing body's consent.

14.7 The governing body will request written statements and will circulate these at least five academy days in advance of the meeting.

14.8 When establishing the facts in relation to exclusions, governing bodies should apply the civil standard of proof – 'on the balance of probability.'

14.9 The outcome of the review will be added to the student record in the Academy.

15. ACADEMY REGISTER CODING

15.1 A student's name will be removed from the Academy admissions register if:

- 15 school days' have passed since the parents were notified of the exclusion panel's decision to not reinstate the student and no application has been made for an independent review panel, or
- The parents have stated in writing that they will not be applying for an independent review panel.

15.2 Where an application for an independent review has been made, the Academy will wait until that review has concluded before removing a student's name from the register.

15.3 Where alternative provision has been made for an excluded student and they attend it, code B (education off-site) or code D (dual registration) will be used on the attendance register.

15.4 Where excluded students are not attending alternative provision, code E (absent) will be used.

16. INDEPENDENT REVIEW PANEL

16.1 The role of the independent panel is to review the governing body's decision not to reinstate a permanently excluded student. In reviewing the decision, the panel must consider the interests and circumstances of the excluded student, including the circumstances in which the student was excluded, and have regard to the interests of other students and people working at the Academy.

16.2 Where a permanent exclusion is upheld by the governing body, the parents must be notified in writing. Where relevant, the student's social worker and the Virtual School Head have a legal obligation to be involved in every point of the suspension or exclusion process, alongside or in place of their parents. (Please refer to section 9.2) This notification must include the following:

- the reasons for the decision;
- the fact that the exclusion is permanent;
- notice of the parents' right to ask for the decision to be reviewed by an independent review panel and the following information:
 - the date by which an application for a review must be made (i.e. 15 school days' from the date on which notice in writing of the governing body's decision was given to parents;
 - the name and address to whom an application for a review (and any written evidence) should be submitted;
 - that any application should set out the grounds on which it is being made and that, where appropriate, this should include a reference to how the student's special educational needs are considered to be relevant to the exclusion;
 - that, regardless of whether the excluded student has recognised special educational needs, parents have a right to require the Academy to appoint an SEN expert to attend the review;

- details of the role of the SEN expert and that there would be no cost to parents for this appointment;
- that parents must make clear if they wish for a SEN expert to be appointed in any application for a review; and
- that parents may, at their own expense, appoint someone to make written and / or oral representations to the panel and that parents may also bring a friend to the review.
- That, in addition to the right to apply for an independent review panel, if parents believe that the exclusion has occurred as a result of discrimination then they may make a claim under the Equality Act 2010 to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability), in the case of disability discrimination, or the County Court, in the case of other forms of discrimination.
- That a claim of discrimination made under these routes should be lodged within six months of the date on which the discrimination is alleged to have taken place, e.g. the day on which the student was excluded.
- That independent reviews can be held remotely at the request of parents.

16.3 A review panel will meet to consider the review no later than the 15th Academy day after the day on which the appeal is lodged. Any application made outside of the legal time frame must be rejected.

16.4 The panel may agree to adjourn the hearing if, after having regard to the particular circumstances, it considers it would not be appropriate for it to proceed to determine the outcome. This may arise from circumstances where further information is required or the parent requests a hearing after the 15th Academy day following the lodging of the review.

16.5 The appeal panel will inform all parties of the outcome by the end of the second working day after the hearing, outlining the reasons for the decision, with clear information about the behaviour and offences.

16.6 Where the panel directs the governing body to reconsider their decision, the governing body must reconvene within 10 Academy days of being given the notice.

16.7 In the case of either a recommendation or direct reconsideration, the governing body must notify the parents, Head of School, the Local Authority and, where relevant, the 'home authority' social worker and Virtual School Head of their reconsidered decision and their reasons. The governing body should do the following:

- look afresh at the question of reinstating the student, in light of the findings of the independent review panel. There is no requirement to seek further representations from other parties or to invite them to the reconsideration meeting. The governing body is not prevented from taking into account other matters that it considers relevant. It should, however, take care to ensure that any additional information does not make the decision unlawful. This could be the case, for example, where new evidence is presented or information is considered that is irrelevant to the decision at hand.

- ensure that clear minutes are taken of the meeting as a record of the evidence that was considered by the governing body. These minutes should be made available to all parties on request.
- ask any parties in attendance to withdraw before making a decision. Where present, a clerk may stay to help the governing body by reference to their notes of the meeting and with the wording of the decision letter.
- note the outcome of its consideration on the student's educational record, along with copies of any papers for future reference.
- base its reconsideration on the presumption that a student will return to the Academy if reinstated, regardless of any stated intentions by the parents or student. Any decision of a governing body to offer reinstatement which is subsequently turned down by the parents should be recorded on the student's educational record. The governing body's decision should demonstrate how they have addressed the concerns raised by the independent review panel; this should be communicated in standard English for all parties to understand.

17. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

- 17.1 A Vice Principal monitors the number of exclusions every term and reports a summary back to the governing body. They also liaise with the local authority to ensure suitable full-time education for excluded students.
- 17.2 This policy will be reviewed by a senior leader every year and approved by the Trust. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing body who are responsible, with the Head of School, for its implementation.