



SUSPENSION AND PERMANENT EXCLUSION POLICY

This policy was agreed by the Management Committee: Summer 2025

This policy will be reviewed: Summer 2026

Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy

Rationale

This policy should be followed in conjunction with the PRU's Behaviour Policy. It deals with the policy and practice which informs the PRU's use of suspension or permanent exclusion. We recognise that good discipline is essential to ensure that the pupils we support have the best opportunity to succeed academically and behaviourally.

The support we provide is holistic in nature and we work closely with families and other professionals to help ensure the best possible outcomes for the pupils we support. All members of the PRU community are committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all, and to maintain an appropriate educational environment in which all can learn and succeed. The PRU will follow both local and national (DfE) guidance in making decisions about whether suspension or permanent exclusion is the most appropriate action, or if alternatives steps are required.

The Buckinghamshire Council Schoolsweb has links to the most up to date national guidance and also includes local guidance. Local guidance provides clear advice and instructions for both suspensions and permanent exclusions. There are also resources available to support decision making. These documents must be referred to prior to taking any action.

<https://schoolsweb.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/behaviour-wellbeing/exclusions-procedures/>

The DfE statutory guidance (August 2024) can also be found on the Gov UK website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>

A copy is also held with the PRU suspension and exclusion policy in the shared drives.

The PRU will consult with other professionals involved in the care of the child to ensure that any decision taken is appropriate and proportionate for the circumstances. In addition, because of the nature and rationale for placements at the PRU, the PRU will also consult, as appropriate, with teams such as the Attendance team, the Exclusions and Reintegration team, iSEND and the GRT team as part of the decision-making process.

Introduction

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

- In response to a serious breach of the PRU's Behaviour Policy

- If allowing the pupil to remain in the PRU would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the PRU.

Suspensions and permanent exclusions are an extreme sanction and can only be authorised by the Executive Headteacher (or, in the absence of the Executive Headteacher, the member of the Senior Leadership Team who is acting in that role).

Fixed term suspension or permanent exclusion may be used for any of the following, all of which constitute examples of unacceptable conduct and are infringements of the Behaviour Policy:

- Unacceptable behaviour which has previously been reported and for which PRU sanctions and other interventions have not been successful in modifying the pupil's behaviour
- Verbal or physical abuse of other pupils or PRU staff
- Aggression towards other pupils leading to the possibility of physical or emotional harm
- Indecent behaviour

This is not an exhaustive list and there may be other situations where the Executive Headteacher makes the judgment that a suspension or permanent exclusion is an appropriate sanction.

Suspensions and permanent exclusion

Suspensions are of a fixed term nature and are of short duration. Prior to taking a decision to suspend a pupil, the PRU will have worked closely with the parents and pupil to put in place strategies to impact positively on the behaviour of the child. If all such strategies have failed to have the necessary impact, and the incident is serious, then a suspension will be considered. Parents will be informed and a letter will be sent, warning them that their child's behaviour is placing them at risk of suspension; and seeking their support by emphasising the seriousness of the situation.

In extreme or very difficult cases where all strategies tried by the PRU staff have failed to have a positive impact, then a suspension would be used to enable PRU staff to consult with other professional agencies (e.g. Educational Psychologists, CAMHs etc.) and parents in order to formulate the best way to support the child and address their needs.

In the event that the incident places the child, other pupils or staff at significant risk of injury, significant damage to property or the incident has already caused injury or damage, then the Executive Headteacher (or in their absence someone authorised to act in their place) may decide to proceed straight to suspension, without issuing an "at risk" letter, if that is in the best interests of the wider PRU community. Such decisions are not taken lightly and the matter will be discussed with other professionals before taking action.

The ultimate sanction of permanently excluding a pupil would only be used in the most extreme circumstances when every other strategy had failed or when the safety of others in the PRU were at risk. The decision would be made by the Executive Headteacher in consultation with other staff and other professionals involved in the care of the pupil, including the Exclusions and Reintegration team.

The DfE regulations allow the Executive Headteacher to suspend a pupil for one or more fixed periods not exceeding 45 school days in any one school year. Decisions and/or advice will be discussed with the Exclusions and Reintegration team, so that the most appropriate decision can be made; taking into account the circumstances of incident, the needs of pupil and the needs of the PRU as a whole.

The members of the Management Committee have established arrangements to review promptly all permanent exclusions from the PRU and all suspensions that would lead to a pupil being excluded for over 15 days in a school term or missing a public examination (the PRU has adopted the Buckinghamshire Council guidelines).

The members of the Management Committee have established arrangements to review suspensions which would lead to a pupil being suspended for over five days but not over 15 days in a school term where a parent has expressed a wish to make representations.

Following a decision to suspend a pupil, parents/carers are contacted immediately where possible. A letter will be sent by post or handed directly to the parent/carer giving details of the suspension and the date the suspension ends. Parents/carers have a right to make representations to the Management Committee and the LA as directed in the letter. Parents will be signposted to the help that is available to them to support them through the process.

A reintegration meeting will be held following the expiry of the suspension and this will involve a member of the Senior Leadership Team and other staff and/or professionals where appropriate.

During the course of a suspension where the pupil is to be at home, parents/carers are advised that the pupil is not allowed on the PRU premises, and that daytime supervision is their responsibility, as parents/carers.

Work will be provided by the class teacher.

Permanent Exclusion

The decision to exclude a pupil permanently is a serious one. There are two main types of situation in which permanent exclusion may be considered:

1. The final, formal step in a concerted process for dealing with disciplinary offences following the use of a wide range of other strategies, which have been used without success. It is an acknowledgement that all available strategies have been exhausted and is used as a last resort. This would include persistent and defiant misbehaviour including bullying (which would include racist or homophobic bullying).

2. When a serious criminal act has been committed, the PRU will involve the police in any such offence.

General factors the PRU considers before making a decision to suspend or permanently exclude:

Suspension will not be imposed instantly unless there is an immediate threat to the safety of others in the PRU or the pupil concerned. Before deciding whether to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil, the Executive Headteacher will:

- Ensure that all appropriate steps and support have been put in place to minimise the need for taking such a serious action
- Ensure appropriate investigations have been carried out
- Consider all the evidence available to support the allegations, taking into account the PRU's policies
- Allow the pupil to give his/her version of events
- Check whether the incident may have been provoked.

If the Executive Headteacher is satisfied that, on the balance of probabilities, the pupil did what he or she is alleged to have done, suspension or permanent exclusion will be the outcome.

It is the role of the Management Committee to determine whether a permanently excluded pupil should be reinstated. This involves reviewing the decision of the Executive Headteacher and considering the outcome of an independent review panel hearing.

Signed:
(Chair of the Management Committee)

Dated:



Signed:
(Executive Headteacher)

Dated: 30th April 2025