Exclusion Policy

Reviewed September 2026

The Stour Academy Trust

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This policy was approved by the board/trustees on 1st September 2026

This policy will be reviewed annually on or before 1st September 2027

Exclusion policy
Sturry C.E. Primary school

1 Introduction

1.1 Sturry C.E. Primary school's exclusion policy aims to set out the process that will be followed and the additional considerations around suspensions and exclusions that Sturry CE Primary school will apply. Good behaviour and self-discipline lead to effective learning and help prepare children and young people for life beyond the school gate.

1.2 Where Sturry C.E. Primary school's approaches towards behaviour management have been exhausted, then suspensions and permanent exclusions will sometimes be necessary as a last resort. This is to ensure that other pupils and teaching staff are protected from disruption and can learn in safe, calm, and supportive environments.

1.3 Sturry C.E. Primary school will always have regard to the current DfE statutory guidance on suspensions and permanent exclusions.

1.4 This policy should be read in conjunction with the behaviour policy and the SEND policy for Sturry C.E. Primary school.

2 Application of policy

2.1 This policy applies to all members of the Sturry C.E. Primary school community. Sturry CE Primary school will apply suspensions and exclusions in accordance with this policy and ensure that its contents are relayed to all staff, parents and pupils.

3 Types of exclusion

Suspensions and permanent exclusions are different:

3.1 Suspensions (previously called fixed-term exclusions) are where a pupil is prevented from attending the school for a fixed period. At the end of the period, they are expected to return to school following a reintegration meeting. A pupil may receive a maximum 45 days of suspension in an academic year before being permanently excluded.

3.2 Permanent exclusions are where, subject to a decision of the governing board to reinstate the pupil to the school, the pupil is prevented from attending the school again. A decision to permanently exclude 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 such as staff or pupils in the school.

4 Roles and responsibilities

All members of Sturry C.E. Primary school community are expected to follow this policy. Roles, responsibilities and expectations of Sturry C.E. Primary school community are set out in detail below.

The headteacher

4.1 All decisions to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil will be taken by the headteacher after considering all the circumstances. Every decision made will be proportionate to the seriousness of the behaviour with reference to the school's behaviour policy.

4.2 Ensure parents are notified without delay of any suspension or permanent exclusion, including their rights to make representations and seek a review where appropriate.

4.3 Notify the Board of Trustees, Local Authority, the child's social worker (where applicable) and the Virtual School Head for looked-after and previously looked-after children within statutory timescales.

4.4 Arrange suitable full-time education from the sixth consecutive school day of any suspension exceeding five school days and from the sixth school day following a permanent exclusion.

4.5 Ensure all suspensions and exclusions are accurately recorded, including use of the correct DfE attendance codes and maintenance of exclusion records.

4.6 Consider alternatives to exclusion including pastoral support, alternative provision, off-site direction and managed moves where appropriate.

The trustees

4.7 The board of trustees is responsible for forming committees to review exclusions and suspensions when it is required to do so, it is requested by parents, or it is, in its view, prudent to review an individual decision. In each case, the decision of the relevant committee formed by the board of trustees will be to decide whether to uphold the exclusion or suspension, or instead to reinstate the pupil to the school.

a. The Trustees will consider the reinstatement of a pupil within 15 school days of receiving notice of a permanent exclusion, a suspension that would bring the pupil's total number of school days out of school to more than 15 in a term, or where a suspension or exclusion would result in the pupil missing a public examination or national curriculum test.

b. For suspensions totalling more than 5 but not more than 15 school days in a term, the Trustees will consider any representations made by parents and may arrange a meeting where requested, provided this can be held within 50 school days of receiving notice of the suspension.

c. For suspensions of 5 school days or fewer in a term, the Trustees will consider any representations made by parents but are not required to arrange a meeting and cannot direct reinstatement.

Parents

4.8 Parents will be informed without delay of any suspension or permanent exclusion. Notification will be made in writing and will include the reasons for the suspension or permanent exclusion, the length of any suspension, details of any alternative educational provision where applicable, and information about parents' rights to make representations and request a review in accordance with statutory guidance.

4.9 Where a pupil has a Social Worker, the Headteacher will notify the Social Worker without delay. Where the pupil is looked after or previously looked after, the Virtual School Head will also be informed in accordance with statutory guidance.

4.10 Parents are expected to work in partnership with the school to support reintegration following a suspension and to engage with meetings and support arrangements designed to promote positive outcomes for their child.

4.11 Parents may make representations to the Trustees regarding any suspension or permanent exclusion. The rights available and any requirement for a Trustees' meeting will be determined in accordance with the length and nature of the suspension or exclusion and current statutory guidance.

Pupils

4.12 All pupils of the school are expected to follow the expectations regarding their behaviour to ensure that all pupils can learn and participate in school life effectively. Where those expectations are breached, the behaviour policy will apply.

5 CCTV, witness evidence and pupil views

5.1 The Headteacher may consider relevant evidence including CCTV recordings, written witness statements and other available information when investigating incidents. Witness statements should normally be signed and dated. Where there is a safeguarding concern or risk of reprisal, anonymity may be preserved.

5.2 Where witness evidence is relied upon, whether that be from a pupil or a staff member, the statement(s) will be provided at any trustees review meeting.

5.3 Before taking a decision to suspend or exclude and where appropriate, the headteacher will take the pupil's views into account, considering these in light of their age and understanding, and inform the pupil about how their views have been factored into any decision made. Where relevant, the pupil will be given support to express their view, including through advocates such as parents or, if the pupil has one, a social worker. The headteacher will also take account of any contributing factors identified after an incident of misbehaviour has occurred.

6 Reintegration strategy meetings following suspension or off-site direction

6.1 Where a pupil is suspended or is directed to be educated off-site, upon return to the school both the pupil and parents will be invited to a reintegration strategy meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to:

a. offer the pupil a fresh start,

b. help them understand the impact of their behaviour on themselves and others,

c. teach them to how to meet the high expectations of behaviour in line with the school culture,

d. foster a renewed sense of belonging within the school community; and

e. build engagement with learning

so that further suspensions are not needed. School staff will work with the pupil to understand what led to the behaviour and to establish if any changes can be made or further support implemented from a pastoral

or practical perspective that might reduce the chance of repeat behaviours. Previous behaviour is not seen as an obstacle to future success.

6.2 The school uses various measures to support a pupil's successful reintegration, including but not limited to the examples below.

a. daily contact with a designated pastoral professional in-school;

b. ensuring the pupil receives academic support upon return to catch up on any lost progress;

c. planned pastoral interventions;

d. regular reviews with the pupil and parents to praise progress being made and raise and address any concerns at an early stage; and

e. informing the pupil, parents and staff of potential external support and making referrals where necessary

f. Support from the school's inclusion base

g. Flexible learning plans where appropriate

6.3 Whilst reintegration meetings are highly encouraged by the school, pupils will not be prevented from being admitted to the school or being put in mainstream classes because a meeting has not taken place.

7 Cancelling a suspension or exclusion

7.1 A suspension or exclusion can be cancelled by the headteacher as long as the suspension or exclusion has not been considered by the trustees. In relation to an exclusion, it cannot be cancelled if the total time the pupil was excluded or suspended that academic year would be over 45 days at the point of the decision to cancel the exclusion.

7.2 Where a suspension or exclusion is cancelled, the relevant parties including parents, trustees and the Local Authority will be informed by the headteacher without delay and records amended accordingly, in accordance with the Statutory Guidance on Suspensions and Exclusions.

8 Suspensions before a permanent exclusion

8.1 In exceptional circumstances, pupils may receive a suspension prior to a permanent exclusion. For each decision, the headteacher will send the relevant letter setting out the rights of parents. A suspension cannot be converted into a permanent exclusion and so any subsequent permanent exclusion would be a fresh decision due to commence immediately after the suspension had ended. Exceptional circumstances may include where further evidence has come to light or where the incident was serious and time is required to fully investigate the circumstances and consider alternatives.

9 Directing off-site and managed moves

9.1 Before taking any decision to permanently exclude a pupil, the headteacher will consider whether a direction to attend alternative provision and/or a managed move as part of a planned intervention would be a reasonable alternative. The headteacher will consider the individual circumstances of the pupil,

including any SEND, safeguarding factors, the views of the pupil (where appropriate) and the views of parents.

9.2 A direction off-site to alternative provision may be used as a short-term intervention as part of the school's behaviour management strategy where in-school support, intervention and outreach have been unsuccessful or are not considered appropriate. The school will remain responsible for the pupil, who will remain on roll throughout the placement. The placement will be monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains suitable, supports positive behaviour and meets the pupil's educational, safeguarding and welfare needs. While parental consent is not required, parents will be consulted and their views considered before any decision is made.

9.3 For a managed move to take place there needs to be agreement between the school, the parents and the new school that a managed move should occur. Before a managed move is agreed to, the pupil will often attend the new school as part of a direction off-site. We will share relevant information with the new school and check that they have an integration strategy. At the end of the off-site direction, the relevant parties (including the parents) will review how it has gone before a decision is taken about whether it becomes a permanent managed move.

10 Independent review panels (IRPs)

10.1 Where the Trustees' Review Panel has upheld a decision to permanently exclude a pupil, parents have the right to request an Independent Review Panel (IRP). Requests for an Independent Review must be submitted within 15 school days of the date on which parents are deemed to have received written notification of the Trustees' decision.

10.2 Requests for an Independent Review should be made in writing and should set out the reasons why the review is being sought. Where relevant, parents should explain how any special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) may be relevant to the exclusion decision.

10.3 Parents have the right to request that a SEN Expert attends the Independent Review Panel hearing. This right applies whether or not the pupil has an identified special educational need. Any request for a SEN Expert should be made at the same time as the request for an Independent Review.

10.4 The Stour Academy Trust is responsible for arranging Independent Review Panels in accordance with statutory requirements. Parents should normally submit requests for an Independent Review through the Clerk to the Trustees unless alternative arrangements have been communicated by the Trust.

10.5 Where applicable, the child's Social Worker and/or Virtual School Head may participate in the review process in accordance with statutory guidance.

10.6 The Independent Review Panel may:

a. Uphold the decision to permanently exclude the pupil;

b. Recommend that the Trustees reconsider their decision; or

c. Quash the Trustees' decision and direct the Trustees to reconsider the exclusion.

10.7 Any reconsideration by the Trustees following a recommendation or direction from an Independent Review Panel will take place within the statutory timescales.

10.8 Where permitted by statutory guidance, an Independent Review Panel meeting may be conducted remotely where this allows the proceedings to be conducted fairly and all participants can fully engage in the process.

10.9 Further information regarding the role and powers of Independent Review Panels can be found in Part 10 of the Department for Education Statutory Guidance: Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from Maintained Schools, Academies and Pupil Referral Units in England, including Pupil Movement (July 2026).

10.10 Requests for an Independent Review should be submitted to:

Clerk to the Trustees
The Stour Academy Trust
Email: clerk@stouracademytrust.org.uk

Alternatively, where the Trust commissions Kent County Council to administer the Independent Review process, details of the appointed clerk and submission arrangements will be provided within the Trustees' decision letter.

11 Reconsideration by the board of trustees

Where an Independent Review Panel either recommends that the Trustees reconsider their decision or quashes the decision and directs reconsideration, the Trustees will reconsider the exclusion within 10 school days of being notified of the Independent Review Panel's decision.

12 Remote Meetings

12.1 Where permitted by statutory guidance, meetings of the Trustees' Review Panel and Independent Review Panels may be conducted remotely where this allows the meeting to be held fairly and all participants are able to fully engage in the proceedings.

12.2 Remote meetings may be used where requested by parents, where attendance in person is not reasonably practicable, or where conducting the meeting remotely would avoid unnecessary delay whilst ensuring a fair process for all parties.

12.3 Where a child's Social Worker or Virtual School Head is entitled to attend a meeting, they may participate remotely where appropriate and where the technology allows effective participation.

13 Complaints

If parents have any concerns or complaints over the application or implementation of this policy or feel that they are being pressured into a managed move, they should raise their concerns with a staff member or the headteacher in accordance with the Trust's complaints policy. If the concern relates to an exclusion, the statutory procedure set out in the Statutory Guidance on Exclusions and Suspensions will be followed.

14 Equality impact

The school does all it can to ensure that its policies do not discriminate against pupils or others, either directly or indirectly, in line with any Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics. This includes race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, and sex.

15 Monitoring arrangements

The trustees review data on suspensions and exclusions to ensure that the use of suspensions and exclusions is appropriate. The following are monitored by the trustees to ensure the processes and support for pupils are appropriate:

- the interventions put in place for pupils at risk of suspension and permanent exclusion

- the processes in place for determining and reviewing directions to alternative provision and that such placements are reviewed at sufficient intervals to assure that the education is achieving its objectives and that pupils are benefiting from it
- full-time educational provision for pupils of compulsory school age from the sixth consecutive school day of a suspension, in particular checking the provision is suitable and quality-assured to ensure that:

    (a) any previous placements have been evaluated, including support for any applicable SEND;

    (b) there is a process in place to monitor the pupil's attendance and behaviour at the provision

    (c) the correct attendance code is being used

    (d) the pupil's child protection file and any other information relevant to the pupil's safeguarding and welfare has been securely transferred to their new setting as early as possible

    (e) whether there is any variation within the year on suspensions and permanent exclusions and the characteristics of pupils

    (f) the cost implications of directing children to be educated off-site in alternative provision and whether there are any patterns to the reasons or timing of moves

    (g) whether the school register and absence codes have been recorded correctly

    (h) how the behaviour policy is applied and specifically its consistency

    (i) the circumstances in which pupils receive repeat suspensions

    (j) whether Personal Education Plans for looked after children have been reviewed on a termly basis

Template letters

SAT - 1 Template Letter suspending a pupil for 5 days or less (01.09.2026).docx
SAT - 2 Template Letter suspending a pupil where total number of days suspended is more than 15 in a term (01.09.2026).docx
SAT - 3 Template Letter permanently excluding a pupil (01.09.2026).docx
SAT - 4 Template Letter setting out details of Alternative Provision (01.09.2026).docx
SAT - 5 Template Letter cancelling a suspension exclusion (01.09.2026).docx
SAT - 6 Template letter directing pupil to be educated offsite to improve behaviour (01.09.2026).docx