

Exclusion & Suspension Policy

Policy reviewed and adopted by the Board of Trustees	Autumn 2023
Version	V2
Date of next review:	Autumn 2025
Responsible Committee:	Finance & Personnel
Monitoring:	Trust Board
Related Policies	Behaviour Policy SEND Policy
Where is this policy published?	School Websites

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1 Thrive Charter

Thrive Mission Statement

Inspiring pupils to thrive in life

Thrive Values¹

Thrive Co-operative Learning Trust **understands thriving to mean learning**, and *learning* to mean **growing in knowledge, self-reliance and in responsibility towards others**. Achieving this will allow pupils and staff to **develop a sense of agency and co-agency**, which is the awareness that we are powerful and can affect change, that life is something to be grasped rather than something that happens, and that we have maximum impact when **we work together for the common good**. This sense of agency plays out at three scales as it affects the future of **the individual, their community (local and national), and their planet**.

To thrive, pupils and staff need **environments that are safe, for equality to be promoted and diversity to be celebrated**, and for **wellbeing to be valued, nurtured and supported**.

- Because the service we provide is crucial to each pupil's future life chances, we ensure that **we give all pupils the opportunity to thrive**, whatever their background or perceived abilities.
- Because our task is challenging **we all strive to grow and develop**, and we support each other in this and in developing a good work-life balance.
- Because thriving happens best where adults provide pupils with a consistency of approach, **we need people who will play their part for the greater good of the team**.
- Because we serve our local communities **we act as partners in the process of assisting our children to thrive** and will work cooperatively to see this happen.
- Because leadership is a privilege **we exercise leadership in an ethical manner** and commit ourselves to upholding [The Seven Principles of Public Life](#).
- Because we are facing a climate crisis **we will work towards being an environmentally sustainable organisation** and will develop pupil and staff participation in achieving this.
- Because we are funded with public money we will ensure that **we focus our resources on pupils and enable them to thrive**.

2 Aims

The school aims to ensure ensure that:

- The process is applied fairly and consistently;
- The process is understood by governors, staff, parents and pupils;
- Pupils in school are safe and happy;
- Pupils do not become NEET (not in education, employment or training).

¹ Thrive's values are directly descended from the [Co-operative Values](#)

3 Legislation and Statutory Guidance

- 3.1 This policy is based on statutory guidance from the Department for Education - September 2022: [Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units \(PRUs\) in England](#).
- 3.2 It is based on the following legislation, which outline schools' powers to exclude pupils:
- Section 52 of the [Education Act 2002](#), as amended by the [Education Act 2011](#);
 - [The School Discipline \(Pupil Exclusions and Reviews\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#);
 - Sections 64-68 of the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#) In addition, the policy is based on:
 - Part 7, chapter 2 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#), which looks at 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](#);
- 3.3 This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

4 The Decision to Suspend/Exclude

- 4.1 Only the Headteacher, acting Headteacher or Head of School, can suspend or exclude a pupil from school. A permanent exclusion will always be taken as a last resort.
- 4.2 A decision to suspend/exclude a pupil will be taken only:
- In response to serious or persistent breaches of the school's Behaviour Policy **and**
 - If allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others
- 4.3 Before deciding whether to suspend/exclude a pupil, either for a fixed period (suspension) or permanently, the Headteacher will:
- Consider all the relevant facts and evidence, including whether the incident(s) leading to the incident were provoked
 - Allow the pupil to give their version of events where possible and relevant (e.g. CCTV may show all required details of an event clearly)
 - Consider if the pupil has special educational needs (SEN) and if these were a compounding factor.
- 4.4 The Headteacher/Head of School can cancel a decision to suspend/exclude a pupil and the pupil can return to school. This is prior to it being reviewed by the Governing Body. The number of cancelled suspensions/exclusions are reported to the Local Governing Body each term and parents/carers are offered the opportunity to discuss the circumstances of the cancelled suspension/exclusion.

5 Definition

For the purposes of suspensions, the school day is defined as any day on which there is a school session.

Therefore, staff training days do not count as a school day.

6 Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 The Headteacher/Head of School (HOS)

Informing Parents

6.1.1 The Headteacher will immediately provide the following information, in writing, to the parents of an excluded pupil:

- The reason(s) for the suspension/exclusion;
- The length of the suspension or for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent;
- Information about parents' right to make representations about the suspension/exclusion to the Governing Body and how the pupil may be involved in this;
- Where there is a legal requirement for the Governing Body to meet to consider the reinstatement of the pupil, and that parents have a right to attend a meeting, be represented at a meeting (at their own expense) and to bring a friend.

6.1.2 The Headteacher/Head of School will also notify parents by the end of the afternoon session on the day their child is suspended that for the first 5 school days of a suspension, or until the start date of any alternative provision where this is earlier, parents are legally required to ensure that their child 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.

6.1.3 If alternative provision is being arranged, the following information will be included when notifying parents of a suspension:

- The start date for any provision of full-time education that has been arranged;
- (If known at this stage) the start and finish times of any such provision, including the times for morning and afternoon sessions, where relevant;
- The address at which the provision will take place;
- Any information required by the pupil to identify the person they should report to on the first day.

6.1.4 Where this information on alternative provision cannot be ascertained by the end of the afternoon session, it may be provided in a subsequent notice, yet it will be provided no later than 48 hours before the provision is due to start. The only exception to this is where alternative provision is to be provided before the sixth day of an exclusion, in which case the information can be provided with less than 48 hours' notice with parents' consent.

Informing the Governing Body and Local Authority

6.1.5 The Headteacher/Head of School will immediately notify the Governing Body and the local authority (LA) of:

- A permanent exclusion, including when a suspension is made permanent;
- Suspensions which would result in the pupil being suspended for more than 5 school days (or more than 10 lunchtimes) in a term;
- Suspensions which would result in the pupil missing a public examination.

6.1.6 For a permanent exclusion, if the pupil lives outside the LA in which the school is located, the

Headteacher/Head of School will also immediately inform the pupil's 'home authority' of the exclusion and the reason(s) for it without delay.

6.1.7 For suspensions, the Headteacher/Head of School will notify the LGB, the Thrive and LA once a term.

6.2 The Local Governing Body

6.2.1 Responsibilities regarding suspensions and exclusions are delegated to the Local Governing Body who will form an Exclusions Panel consisting of at least three governors including Trustees where applicable.

6.2.2 The Panel has a duty to consider the reinstatement of an excluded pupil (see Section 6). Within 14 days of receipt of a request, the Governing Body will provide the Secretary of State with information about any exclusions in the last 12 months.

6.2.3 For a suspension of more than five school days, the Governing Body will arrange suitable full-time education for the pupil. This provision will begin no later than the sixth day of the exclusion.

6.3 The Local Authority

For permanent exclusions, the LA is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education to begin no later than the sixth day of the exclusion.

7 Considering the Reinstatement of a Pupil

7.1 The Governing Body will consider the reinstatement of an excluded pupil within 15 school days of receiving the notice of the exclusion if:

- The exclusion is permanent;
- It is a suspension which would bring the pupil's total number of school days of suspension to more than 15 in a term;
- It would result in a pupil missing a public examination.

7.2 If requested to do so by parents, the Exclusions Panel will consider the reinstatement of an excluded pupil within 50 school days of receiving notice of the exclusion, if the pupil would be excluded from school for more than five school days, but less than 15, in a single term. The Governing Body can unilaterally consider a suspension, even when a parent has not requested them to do so and can direct reinstatement.

7.3 Where an exclusion would result in a pupil missing a public examination, the Local Governing Body will consider the reinstatement of the pupil before the date of the examination. If this is not practicable, the Chair of the Governing Body (or the Vice-Chair where the Chair is unable to make this consideration) will consider the exclusion independently and decide whether or not to reinstate the pupil.

7.4 The Local Governing Body can either:

- Decline to reinstate the pupil, or;
- Direct the reinstatement of the pupil immediately, or on a particular date.

7.5 In reaching a decision, the Local Governing Body, will consider whether the exclusion was lawful,

reasonable and procedurally fair and whether the Headteacher followed their legal duties. They will decide whether or not a fact is true 'on the balance of probabilities', which differs from the criminal standard of 'beyond reasonable doubt', as well as any evidence that was presented in relation to the decision to exclude.

- 7.6 Minutes will be taken of the meeting and a record of evidence considered kept. The outcome will also be recorded on the pupil's educational record.
- 7.7 The Local Governing Body will notify, in writing, the Headteacher, parents and the LA of its decision, along with reasons for the decision, without delay.
- 7.8 Where an exclusion is permanent, the Local Governing Body's decision will also include the following:
- The fact that it is permanent
 - Notice of parents' right to ask for the decision to be reviewed by an Independent Review Panel and:
 - The date by which an application for an independent review must be made;
 - The name and address to whom an application for a review should be submitted;
 - That any application should set out the grounds on which it is being made and that, where appropriate, reference to how the pupil's SEND are considered to be relevant to the exclusion
 - That, regardless of whether the excluded pupil has recognised SEND, parents have a right to require Thrive Trust to appoint an SEND expert to attend the review;
 - Details of the role of the SEND expert and that there would be no cost to parents for this appointment;
 - That parents must make clear if they wish for an SEND expert to be appointed in any application for a review;
 - That parents may, at their own expense, appoint someone to make written and/or oral representations to the panel, and parents may also bring a friend to the review.
 - That if parents believe that the exclusion has occurred as a result of discrimination, 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. A claim of discrimination made under these routes should be lodged within 6 months of the date on which the discrimination is alleged to have taken place.

8 An Independent Review

- 8.1 If parents apply for an independent review, Thrive Trust will arrange for an Independent Panel to review the decision of the Governing Body not to reinstate an excluded pupil.
- 8.2 Applications for an independent review must be made within 15 school days of notice being given to the parents of its decision to not reinstate a pupil.
- 8.3 A panel of three or five members will be constituted with representatives from each of the categories below. Where a five-member panel is constituted, two members will come from the school governors category and two members will come from the Headteacher category.

- A lay member to Chair the Panel who has not worked in any school in a paid capacity, disregarding any experience as a school governor or volunteer;
- School governors who have served as a governor for at least 12 consecutive months in the last five years, provided they have not been teachers or Headteachers during this time;
- Headteachers or individuals who have been a Headteacher within the last five years .

8.4 A person may not serve as a member of a review panel if they:

- Are a member of the academy trust or Local Governing Body of the excluding school;
- Are the Headteacher of the excluding school or have held this position in the last five years;
- Are an employee of the academy trust, or Local Governing Body, of the excluding school (unless they are employed as a Headteacher at another school);
- Have, or at any time have had, any connection with the academy trust, school, Governing Body, parents or pupil, or the incident leading to the exclusion, which might reasonably be taken to raise doubts about their impartially;
- Have not had the required training within the last two years (see appendix 1 for what training must cover) A clerk will be appointed to the panel.

8.6 The Independent Review Panel will decide one of the following:

- Uphold the Governing Body'd decision;
- Recommend that the Governing Body reconsiders reinstatement;
- Quash the Governing Body's decision and direct that they reconsider reinstatement (only when the decision is judged to be flawed).

8.7 The panel's decision can be decided by a majority vote. In the case of a tied decision, the Chair has the casting vote.

9 School Registers

9.1 A pupil's name will be removed from the school admissions register if:

- 15 school days have passed since the parents were notified of the exclusion panel's decision to not reinstate the pupil 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.

9.2 Where an application for an independent review has been made, the local governing board will wait until that review has concluded before removing a pupil's name from the register.

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

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

10 Returning from a Suspension

- 10.1 Following a suspension, a reintegration meeting will be held involving the pupil, parents/carers, a member of senior staff and other staff, where appropriate.
- 10.2 The following measures may be implemented when a pupil returns from a suspension: The points below are suggestions only and should be adapted to your school's specific circumstances:
- Agreeing a behaviour contract;
 - Putting a pupil 'on report';
 - Internal isolation.

11 Monitoring Arrangements

Thrive Trust monitors the number of suspensions every term and reports back to the school. Thrive Trust also liaises with the Local Authority to ensure suitable full-time education for excluded pupils. This policy will be reviewed every year. At every review, the policy will be shared with the Local Governing Body.

12 Links With Other Policies

This policy is linked to our

- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy

13 Public Sector Equality Duty

- 13.1 The Equality Act 2010 replaced and unified all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, the Disability Discrimination Act and the Sex Discrimination Act. It aims to ensure that people have equality of opportunity in accessing and experiencing public services. When carrying out their day to day work, schools should have regard to the following:
- Eliminating discrimination;
 - Advancing equality of opportunity and;
 - Fostering good relations across all characteristics.
- 13.2 Schools cannot discriminate against pupils because of their disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Protection is extended to pupils who are pregnant or undergoing gender reassignment. This means it is unlawful to discriminate against a transgender pupil, a pupil who is pregnant or has recently had a baby.
- 13.3 This policy was reviewed and updated with reference to this duty. The author/s of this document considered this policy in the light of these requirements to ensure adherence to these statutory regulations.

Appendix 1: Independent Review Panel Training

The Trust must ensure that all members of an Independent Review Panel and clerks have received training within two years prior to the date of the review.

Training must have covered:

- The requirements of the primary legislation, regulations and statutory guidance governing exclusions, which would include an understanding of how the principles applicable in an application for judicial review relate to the Panel's decision making;
- The need for the Panel to observe procedural fairness and the rules of natural justice;
- The role of the Chair and the Clerk of a Review Panel;
- The duties of Headteachers, governing bodies and the Panel under the Equality Act 2010;
- The effect of section 6 of the Human Rights Act 1998 (acts of public authorities unlawful if not compatible with certain human rights) and the need to act in a manner compatible with human rights protected by that Act.