

Permanent exclusion

Hearing that your child has been permanently excluded from school can be distressing for parents/carers and knowing what rights and responsibilities you have as a parent/carer can help.

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1. What is a permanent exclusion (PX)?

When a headteacher decides that, because of a pupil's behaviour, sometimes over a period of time, sometimes for a one-off serious incident he/she can no longer attend their present school, the pupil can be permanently excluded.

2. Do I as a parent/carer have any say in the matter?

The governors of the school must meet between 6 - 15 school days of the head's decision to consider whether they agree. Parent/carers have the right to go to this meeting and "make representations", ie tell the governors their views and those of their child. This is important if you

feel that the school has not offered your child adequate support around their behaviour and/or their Special Educational Needs or not treated him/her fairly.

3. What happens at the governors' meeting?

The governors will listen carefully to all information presented and will decide either to uphold the exclusion or overturn it.

4. If they uphold the decision to exclude, what happens to my child's education?

If it is the first time your child has been permanently excluded, then the Local Authority will work with you to find another school. An Exclusion and Reintegration Officer or a Special Educational Needs (SEN) Officer if your child has a statement, will talk to you about this. In some circumstances it may not be practicable to find another school, particularly if your child is in Year 11 or about to enter Year 11. In such cases, he/she may be placed in a Buckinghamshire Pupil Referral Unit or alternative provision for the last year of statutory schooling.

5. What happens to my child's education in the meantime before the governors meet?

For days 1-5 inclusive, the school will set work to be done at home. You as a parent/carer are responsible for keeping her/him out of public places during school time. If he/she is found in a public place, you may be liable to a penalty notice and a fine.

From day 6 the Local Authority is responsible for the provision of full time education for your child through a Buckinghamshire Pupil Referral Unit. Staff from the appropriate Pupil Referral Unit will be in touch with you to discuss this during days 1-5.

6. What can I do if the governors uphold the exclusion and I disagree?

You have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel (IAP). As the name suggests the people on the panel will have no connection with the school. You will be given details of how to appeal in your letter from the governors confirming the exclusion. Please take careful note of the time limit (15 school days after you receive the letter, taken as 2 days after it was posted) as once this date has passed you lose your right to appeal.

7. Can I bring a friend or supporter to the governors' meeting or the appeal?

You can bring a friend or supporter who may speak for you if you do not want to do so yourself, or can just be there to give you support.

8. Can my child attend either of the meetings?

Schools should always allow your child to attend and to speak if he/she is old enough and able to do so. Students over the age of 18 have the right to represent themselves.

9. If the exclusion is upheld how do I find another school?

An Exclusion and Reintegration Officer will discuss this with you. You can express a preference for a particular school but a place there cannot be guaranteed. The Local Authority has a Pupil Placement Panel that identifies school places for excluded pupils taking into consideration parental preference. If you want your child to go to a different school from the one offered, you may apply for a place at that school, but the Local Authority will not negotiate with the school on your behalf.

10. What happens if my child has to travel a distance to the new school?

If it is the school allocated by the Local Authority the Local Authority will provide/pay for transport if over the statutory walking distance of more than 2 miles (under 8 years) or 3 miles (over 8 years), usually a bus pass. If the school is one you chose outside the Local Authority's Pupil Placement Panel arrangements, you will be responsible for getting your child to and from the school.

11. How long will it take to get my child a new school?

The Local Authority will try to do this as quickly as possible. Generally it takes about 6-10 weeks, but that will depend on when the governors' committee and any Independent Appeal Panel can meet.

12. Is there someone at the Local Authority I can talk to about the exclusion?

You are welcome to discuss it with the Exclusion and Reintegration Officer for the school or the attached Special Educational Needs Officer (SEN) if your child has a Statement. The letter from the school should give you contact details.

13. Is there anyone else who might give me advice?

If your child has special educational needs, then the Parent Partnership Service on tel: 01296 383754 or email: parentp@buckscc.gov.uk can talk things through with you and give you advice. You could also contact ACE (Advisory Centre for Education) exclusions help line on tel: 0808 800 0327 or on their website: www.ace-ed.org.uk

14. My child has special educational needs (SEN), does that make a difference to how the school deals with excluding them?

Exclusions should be the last resort for a pupil with SEN. If the child has a statement of SEN, an emergency annual review should be held if the school is thinking of permanently excluding them. Under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) disabled children should not be excluded for reasons connected to their disability. E.g. a pupil with Tourette's Syndrome should not be excluded for swearing. For advice on DDA you can call Disability Rights Commission on tel: 08457 622 633.