



OASIS COMMUNITY LEARNING EXCLUSIONS POLICY

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At a glance

In developing a policy for exclusions, it is vital that we hold tight to the Oasis vision - for community – a place where everyone is included, making a contribution and reaching their God-given potential. Our ethos is a statement of who we are and it is an expression of our character. Rooted in the story and beliefs of Oasis, we describe our ethos through a particular set of values that inform and provide the lens on everything we do.

- A passion to include.
- A desire to treat people equally, respecting differences.
- A commitment to healthy, open relationships.
- A deep sense of hope that things can change and be transformed.
- A sense of perseverance to keep going for the long haul.

It is these ethos values that we want to be known for and live by. It is these ethos values that also shape our policies. They are the organisational values we aspire to and must be the lens on all our work. We are committed to a model of inclusion, equality, healthy relationships, hope and perseverance throughout all the aspects of the life and culture of every Oasis Hub and community.

Therefore, right at the heart of Oasis is this deep-rooted commitment to inclusion and equality. This is inescapable and must be core to our delivery of this exclusions policy. We recognise that one size does not fit all and that through our actions we can enable all of our community to participate and achieve.

We also recognise that some of our students will need more, or different, from us. We aim for and work for equity - adjusting and supporting to facilitate access, and ultimately, we look to our own systems and structures to move towards justice, where our everyday 'norm' is accessible to all without the need for anyone to feel like an outsider.

Therefore:

- We believe all our students are precious; we prioritise social inclusion and integration in all we do.
- We model and set high aspirations and expectations for every student and member of staff.
- We provide opportunities and experiences for all of our students, as well as their wider families, giving advantage to the disadvantaged.

Checklist

- ☐ Our approach to exclusions is underpinned by the Oasis Ethos and 9 Habits. To create and maintain healthy, open relationships and to ensure we remain committed to treating people equally, we seek to intentionally focus on being patient, honest, humble and forgiving. For instance, in the process of hearing an exclusion, we will need to act humbly and honestly, particularly when explaining a student's behaviour to parents or carers. Equally, it is our intention that being forgiving will form a central part of the way in which we listen to, discuss and deal with exclusions together.
- ☐ We will see exclusion as a last resort and ensure we are proactive in our care and support for all, following the graduated response approach to ensure we are intervening as early and as effectively as possible.
- ☐ Our proactive approach to understanding and responding to behaviour to ensure that exclusion is a last resort will be guided by the trauma informed, relational and restorative principles of The Oasis Way for Inclusive Practice.
- ☐ We will be open and supportive in the way we deal with exclusions and act fairly and proportionately.
- ☐ We will convene an exclusion panel within 15 school days to review any permanent exclusion; any suspension which would bring the pupil's total number of school days out of school to more than 15 in a term; or any suspension or exclusion which would result in a pupil missing a public examination or national curriculum test.
- ☐ We will convene an exclusion panel within 50 school days to review any suspension lasting more than five but less than 16 school days, where the parents or carers request this.
- ☐ We will ensure that Regional Directors and local authorities are notified of all suspensions and exclusions.
- ☐ We will consider the mental health assessment needs of any pupil facing permanent exclusion.
- ☐ We will listen to all parties in an exclusion review meeting to understand what happened and explore the support that was put in place to support a student prior to the event that has triggered the exclusion.
- ☐ Exclusions will follow the process outlined below in line with DfE guidance.

- ❑ We will monitor exclusions so that we can learn from them and make improvements to our support and intervention for students, systems and processes.

In brief

The Oasis Way for Inclusive Practice

The Oasis Way for Inclusive Practice outlines our framework for Behaviour and Pastoral Care, SEND and Personal Development. This is the proactive foundation for responding to all behavioural communication and needs in our academies.

The Oasis Way aspires to redress educational inequality through a transformational approach that rewrites the story of what a truly inclusive education should look like in the 21st century. We seek to provide a trauma-responsive and attachment-aware education system that delivers relational and restorative practice through our three principles of practice: relational culture, reflective practice and the 9 Habits. Details of how The Oasis Way is enacted can be found in The Oasis Way Behaviour and Pastoral Care and SEND policies.

Introduction

This policy outlines our approach to exclusions across OCL. The policy explains how OCL complies with DfE statutory guidance in relation to exclusions. The policy makes links to other guidance in areas such as The Oasis Way for Inclusive Practice for our approach to behaviour and pastoral care and SEND, and equality.

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

Where OCL'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.

OCL will always have regard to the Statutory Guidance on Suspensions and Exclusions (August 2024) [<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion#full-publication-update-history>] when making decisions on suspensions and exclusions and will follow the law, as set out in the relevant School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulation 2012 (as amended).

This policy should be read in conjunction with the academy's behaviour policy and the SEND policy that explains 'The Oasis Way' and how it is enacted.

Application of policy

This policy applies to all members of OCL's community. Each academy within OCL will apply suspensions and exclusions in accordance with this policy and ensure that its contents are relayed to all staff, parents and pupils.

Types of exclusion

Suspensions and permanent exclusions are different:

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.

Permanent exclusions are where, subject to a decision of the exclusion panel to reinstate the pupil to the school, the pupil is prevented from attending the academy again. A decision to permanently exclude will only be taken in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the academy's behaviour policy; and where allowing the pupil to remain in the academy would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others such as staff or pupils in the academy.

CCTV, witness evidence and pupil views

OCL uses Close Circuit Television (CCTV) within its academies. This is to provide a safe and secure environment for pupils, staff and visitors. If behavioural incidents are recorded on CCTV, the footage may be viewed as part of the investigation and the content considered before imposing a sanction. If CCTV is relied upon for a decision on a suspension or exclusion, then it will be shown in some format (redacted as necessary) at an exclusion panel review meeting.

Where witness evidence is relied upon, whether that be from a pupil or a staff member, the statement(s) will be provided at any exclusion panel review meeting. All statements will be signed and dated unless the principal has good reason to protect the anonymity of the relevant witness. Reasons may include threats of reprisals.

Before taking a decision to suspend or exclude and where appropriate, the principal 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 principal will also take account of any contributing factors identified after an incident of misbehaviour has occurred.

Reintegration strategy meetings following suspension or off-site direction

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:

- offer the pupil a fresh start;
- help them understand the impact of their behaviour on themselves and others;
- teach them to how meet the high expectations of behaviour in line with the school culture;
- foster a renewed sense of belonging within the academy community; and
- build engagement with learning.

So that further suspensions are not needed, 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 of practical perspective that might reduce the chance of repeat behaviours. Previous behaviour is not seen as an obstacle to future success.

- The academy uses various measures, informed by 'The Oasis Way' to support a pupil's successful reintegration that may include:
 - daily contact with a designated pastoral professional;
 - use of a report card with personalised targets leading to personalised rewards;
 - ensuring the pupil receives academic support upon return to catch up on any lost progress;
 - planned pastoral interventions;
 - mentoring by a trusted adult or a local mentoring charity;
 - regular reviews with the pupil and parents to praise progress being made and raise and address any concerns at an early stage; and
 - informing the pupil, parents and staff of potential external support.

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

Cancelling a suspension or exclusion

A suspension or exclusion can be cancelled by the principal as long as the suspension or exclusion has not been considered by the exclusion panel. 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.

Where a suspension or exclusion is cancelled, the relevant parties will be informed by the principal in accordance with the DfE Statutory Guidance on Suspensions and Exclusions.

Suspensions before a permanent exclusion

In exceptional circumstances, pupils may receive a suspension prior to a permanent exclusion. For each decision, the principal 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.

Directing off-site and managed moves

Before taking any decision to permanently exclude a pupil, the principal 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 that should be considered.

In the case of directing a pupil off-site to alternative provision, the aim of any direction is for it to be used as a short-term measure as part of the academy's behaviour management strategy to improve a pupil's behaviour where in-academy interventions and/or outreach have been unsuccessful or are deemed inappropriate. While parental consent is not needed, discussions would take place with parents to feed in their views about the options.

For a managed move to take place there needs to be agreement between the academy, the parents and the new school that a managed move should occur. A managed move is where a pupil moves permanently from one school to another. We will share information with the new school, including data on prior and current

attainment, academic potential, a risk assessment and advice on effective risk management strategies to help inform the pupil's integration.

Independent Review Panels (IRPs)

OCL arranges its own IRPs when a parent/carers appeals the decision of the exclusion panel to uphold the principal's decision to exclude a pupil. Details of who parents should contact to request an IRP are provided on the exclusion panel's outcome letter.

Further details on the role and powers of IRPs can be found in Part Ten of the Statutory DfE Guidance on Exclusions and Suspensions.

Reconsideration by the Exclusion Panel

Where an IRP either recommends reconsideration or quashes the initial decision of the exclusion panel, the decision will be considered within 10 school days. This may involve a rehearing with oral evidence given by the academy and parents or may be a reconsideration with only the exclusion panel members and the clerk present.

Remote meetings

Any exclusion panel meeting and/or an IRP meeting may be conducted remotely where the parents request for it to be conducted remotely and the meeting can be fairly held remotely, with all participants having access and are able to make representations. A meeting may also take place remotely where there is an extraordinary event or unforeseen circumstance that means it's not reasonably practicable to hold the meeting in person. Such events can include, but are not limited to, floods, fire, and an outbreak of an infectious disease.

In addition, where a child's social worker or the virtual school head are due to attend a meeting, they may join an in-person meeting remotely as long as it can be fairly accessed, the technology is available, and everyone would be able to make representations.

Complaints

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

Equality impact

OCL 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.

Monitoring arrangements

Each academy's regional director and the regional director with responsibility for exclusions reviews data on suspensions and exclusions to ensure that the use of suspensions and exclusions is appropriate. The following are monitored to ensure processes and support for pupils are in place:

- 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:
 - any previous placements have been evaluated, including support for any applicable SEND;
 - there is a process in place to monitor the pupil's attendance and behaviour at the provision;
 - the correct attendance code is being used;
 - 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.
- whether there is any variation within the year on suspensions and permanent exclusions and the characteristics of pupils;
- 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;
- whether the school register and absence codes have been recorded correctly;
- how the behaviour policy is applied and specifically its consistency;

- the circumstances in which pupils receive repeat suspensions; and
- whether Personal Education Plans for looked after children have been reviewed on a termly basis.

Responsibilities

All members of OCL's community are expected to follow this policy. Roles, responsibilities and expectations of each section of OCL's community are set out in detail below.

The Principal

- Whenever a principal is considering a permanent exclusion, they should take account of all relevant circumstances and in doing so consider whether it is appropriate to contact the national lead for student inclusion. The academy leader should then discuss the case with their regional director who will, in turn, discuss the case with the relevant national director prior to a final decision. Ultimately, all decisions to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil will be taken **by the principal**. Every decision will be proportionate to the seriousness of the behaviour with reference to the academy's behaviour policy.

The Regional Director with responsibility for exclusions

- The OCL board of Trustees delegates responsibility for forming exclusion panels to the regional director with responsibility for exclusions. Exclusion panels are formed in accordance with OCL's scheme of delegation. Exclusion panel meetings will review exclusions and suspensions when required to do so, if it is requested by parents in line with statutory DfE guidance, or it is, in its view, prudent to review an individual decision. In each case, the decision of the exclusion panel will be to decide whether to uphold the exclusion or suspension, or instead to reinstate the pupil to the academy. Should an exclusion panel be chaired by an Oasis Community Learning Regional Director, it will be a Regional Director drawn from a different region to the excluding academy who has had no prior involvement with the case.

Parents

- Parents will be informed without delay of any suspension or exclusion and there is an ability to make representations in regard to any suspension or exclusion decision. Details will be provided on the rights parents have with every letter that is sent from the principal.

Pupils

- All pupils of the academies in OCL are expected to follow the expectations regarding their behaviour to ensure that all can learn and participate in school

life effectively. Where those expectations are breached, the behaviour policy will apply.

Training requirements

All stakeholders involved in Exclusion processes must attend mandatory annual training sessions, both with Browne Jacobson (OCL's appointed legal partners) and internal 'Exclusions through an Oasis Lens' training.

Statutory requirements

This policy complies with the Department for Education statutory guidance around exclusions and suspensions, **'Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement'** (August 2024).

RACI Matrix

[Please write “R” for anyone who is “Responsible” for a task listed in the policy, an “A” for anyone who is “Accountable”, a “C” for anyone who must be “Consulted” under the policy and “I” for anyone who must be “Informed” about aspects of the policy.]

Policy Element		Leadership			Academy		Services		Teams	
		Board	OCL CEO	OCL Cedo	Regional Director	Academy Principal		Governance Lead		Regional EA
Avoiding illegal exclusions	A	A				R				
Policy is kept up to date with DfE guidance		A							R	
Implementing preventative measures					C	R				
Agreeing a suspension					I	R				
Agreeing a PEX					C	R				
Formation of the Exclusions panel					I	R				R
Preparing evidence for the Exclusion panel					I	R				C
Organisation of IRP					I	C			R	I
Removal of student from academy register					I	R				
Monitoring of policy								R	C	

Resources to support the suspension and exclusion processes

All resources can be found on the OasisZone under the SharePoint site for Exclusions, available to Oasis Community Learning staff.

[OCL National Exclusions and Suspensions Portal - Home](#)

Document Control

Changes History

Version	Date	Owned and amended by	Recipients	Purpose
1.0	30th October 2017	Chris Chamberlain	All OCL Principals	Updated legislation
1.1	5th March 2018	Chris Chamberlain	All OCL Principals	Additional detail
1.2	8th March 2019	Chris Chamberlain	All OCL Principals	Additional detail
1.3	31st August 2019	Chris Chamberlain	All OCL Principals	Additional detail
1.4	5th October 2020	Chris Chamberlain	All OCL Principals	Additional detail
1.5	27th April 2021	Chris Chamberlain	All OCL Principals	Additional detail
1.6	January 2022	Chris Chamberlain	All OCL Principals	Additional detail
1.7	July 2022	Chris Chamberlain	All OCL Principals	DfE Consultation
1.8	August 2022	Chris Chamberlain	All OCL principals	New DfE guidance
1.9	September 2023	Adam Browne	All OCL principals	Updated DfE guidance and additional detail
2.0	November 2024	Adam Browne	Compliance, Policy and Legal Directorate	Policy review
2.0	January 2025	Adam Browne	Compliance, Policy and Legal Directorate	For upload

Policy Tier

- ☒ Tier 1
- ☐ Tier 2
- ☐ Tier 3
- ☐ Tier 4

Owner

[Adam Browne, Regional Director, London and Southeast Primary]

Contact in case of query

[Adam Browne, Regional Director, London and Southeast Primary, adam.browne@oasisuk.org]

Approvals

This document requires the following approvals.

Name	Position	Date Approved	Version
John Murphy	CEO, OCL	30th October 2017	1.0
John Murphy	CEO, OCL	5th March 2018	1.1
John Murphy	CEO, OCL	8th March 2019	1.2
John Murphy	CEO, OCL	8th September 2019	1.3
National Education Team	NET	September 2019	1.4
John Murphy	CEO, OCL	5th October	1.5
Directors' group	Directors	May 2021	1.6
Directors' group	Directors	Jan 2022	1.7
Directors' group	Directors	July 2022	1.8
Directors' Group	Directors	August 2023	1.9
Directors' Group	Directors	September 2024	2.0

Position with the Unions

Does the policy or changes to the policy require consultation with the National Unions under our recognition agreement?

- ☐ Yes
☒ No

If yes, the policy status is:

- ☐ Consulted with Unions and Approved
☐ Fully consulted (completed) but not agreed with Unions but Approved by OCL
☐ Currently under Consultation with Unions
☐ Awaiting Consultation with Unions

Date & Record of Next Union Review

Not applicable

Location

Cross all that apply:

- ☒ OCL website
☒ Academy website
☒ Policy portal

Customisation

- ☒ OCL policy
- ☐ OCL with an attachment for each academy to complete regarding local arrangements
- ☐ Academy policy
- ☒ Policy is included in principals' annual compliance declaration

Distribution

Annually to all OCL Directors and Principals.

This document has been distributed to:

Name	Position	Date	Version
All OCL Principals	Principal	1st September 2019	1.3
All OCL Principals	Principal	5th October 2020	1.4
All OCL Principals	Principal	May 2021	1.5
All OCL Principals	Principal	January 2022	1.6
All OCL Principals	Principal	July 2022	1.7
All OCL Principals	Principal	July 2023	1.8
All OCL Principals	Principal	Oct 2023	1.9
All OCL Principals	Principal	December 2024	2.0