

Behaviour and Discipline Policy

December 2024

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This Policy takes note and adheres to advice contained in the DfE document 'Behaviour and Discipline in Schools – Advice for Headteachers and School Staff – September 2022.

1. Rationale

Good behaviour at all schools within Mersey View Learning Trust (MVLТ) is a key priority, as a calm, orderly learning environment is crucial to the progress and well-being of staff and students.

A strong realistic behaviour policy is therefore essential in establishing a positive culture in the school that underpins the achievements and successes of all the students.

We simply promote and reward good behaviour and ensure that bad behaviour, bullying in any form and racism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia are not tolerated.

This policy has been written after consultation with Trustees, staff, students and parents and reflects the values and principles that we consider to be important for our schools.

The principles that underpin this policy are:

- Students, staff, parents, carers and governors should understand and accept the principles on which the behaviour policy is grounded.
- All members of the school community should be listened to and responded to. (The school community is pupils, staff, parents, carers and governors).
- Students, staff, parents, carers and governors are always considerate towards the learning needs of each individual member and supportive of the school as a learning community.
- Students and staff are entitled to learn and work in a safe and secure environment.
- All school staff and students should show respect for one another.
- Good behaviour should always be encouraged, and fair and consistent consequences should be applied for unacceptable behaviour.
- Appropriate action should be taken to reduce the risk of poor behaviour happening for all students, but especially vulnerable students.
- School staff should model positive behaviour and promote it through active development of students' social and emotional competencies.
- Students should be encouraged to act as ambassadors for the school. This includes school trips and holidays, work placements and journeys to and from school.

2. Links to other policies and documents

This policy should be viewed alongside the following documents and the Trust policies:

- Education and Inspections Act (2006).
- DfE guidance 'Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and school staff (2022)'.
- DfE guidance 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for Headteachers, School Staff and Governing Bodies (2023)'.
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement Guidance for maintained schools, academies, and pupil referral units in England September 2023.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.
- Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Physical Contact with Students Policy.
- Safeguarding Policy.
- Rewards Policy.
- Special Education Needs Policy.

Roles and responsibilities

The Trust Board is responsible for reviewing this behaviour policy in conjunction with the Headteacher, monitoring the policy's effectiveness and holding the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

The CEO is responsible for reviewing this behaviour policy in conjunction with the Trust Board approving this policy in conjunction with ensuring that the school environment encourages positive behaviour. Ensuring that staff deal effectively with poor behaviour by monitoring how staff implement this policy to ensure rewards and sanctions are applied consistently.

Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the behaviour policy consistently.
- Modelling positive behaviour.
- Celebrating positive behaviour with the agreed rewards iv. applying sanctions fairly and consistently and in line with this policy.
- Working with children to create and agree class rules.
- Having high expectations of pupils in terms of behaviour and striving to ensure that all children work to the best of their ability.
- Providing a personalised approach to the specific behavioural needs of particular pupils.
- Discussing any behavioural concerns with parents/carers promptly.
- Recording behaviour incidents on CPOMS.

Parents are responsible for:

- Fostering good relationships and co-operating with the school.
- Supporting their child in following school rules and adhering to the home school agreement.
- Informing the school of any changes in circumstances that may affect their child's behaviour.
- Discussing any behavioural concerns with the class teacher promptly.

3. Rights and responsibilities

The Trust aims to provide the highest quality education, maintaining a disciplined, safe, caring environment in which teachers can teach and pupils can learn.

Our code of behaviour rests on a set of shared values and common expectations:

Shared values (Rights)

- The right of all members of the school community to be treated with dignity and respect.
- The right of all members of the school community to work in a clean, well-resourced and well-cared for physical environment.
- The right of all members of the school community to be secure at all times from any threat to their personal well-being.
- The right of all members of the school community to participate in learning activities without disruption or distraction.

4. Common expectations (Responsibilities)

Staff:

- To treat pupils with respect.
- To know their students and know their names.
- To have high expectations of themselves and the students.
- To model good behaviour and challenge those who fail to meet behaviour responsibilities.
- To teach and promote social and emotional aspects of learning.
- To investigate incidents carefully and promptly listening to both sides.
- To ensure the classroom and other areas of the school provide a safe, clean and attractive environment which motivates individuals and stimulates learning.
- To ensure that the school safeguarding procedures are applied and that students feel safe.
- To follow the agreed 100% Classroom procedure.
- To prepare lessons carefully to meet the needs and abilities of all students.
- To apply BfL rewards and sanctions consistently and fairly.
- To work with Student Support, parents, carers and external agencies to ensure that each student's needs are met.

Students:

- To arrive at school and lessons on time.
- To always be in full uniform and have appropriate equipment (pen, pencil, ruler, rubber, dictionary, calculator and planner every day plus PE kit when timetabled).
- To treat adults and other students with respect.
- To work hard in class and allow others to work.
- To obey the agreed Clear Boundaries for Behaviour both in and out of class.
- To look after other students in the school.
- To report bullying or any accident or incident that concerns them.
- To look after school equipment and the school environment.

Parents/Carers:

- To ensure their child arrives in good time to school, with the correct uniform and equipment.
- To support regular school attendance and not take holidays in school time.
- To support students in completing their homework.
- To attend all meetings relevant to their son or daughter.
- To treat school staff and other school families with respect.
- To model good behaviour to their children particularly around the school site.
- To respect and support the school rules including uniform, jewellery and hair styles and colours. To notify the school of their son or daughter's needs as appropriate.

Rewards and Celebration

Commending students for their good conduct promotes a positive environment that is conducive to learning and personal development and encourages students to behave responsibly and respectfully. The overwhelming majority of students make a very positive contributions to the life of their schools and should be recognised for this. Students are rewarded for going 'above and beyond' minimum expectations in accordance with the criteria set out in the Rewards Policy.

It has been agreed that a system of rewards should be used in all the schools rewarding good behaviour, politeness and effort (see School, Rewards & Behaviour Policies). All staff are expected to participate in their school rewards system, and as a matter of course, all staff should actively seek opportunities to praise pupils and compliment pupils, for example, by showing work to members of the Senior Leadership Team or other member of staff.

Sanctions

Each school will have their own approach to how they sanction poor behaviour in their schools (See Schools Rewards & Behaviour policies). All staff should consistently deploy these.

The expectation for all sanctions is that these are formal not social occasions where all normal classroom expectations apply. Students are expected to work in silence. Any incident leading to a sanction should be logged on the appropriate MIS SIMS by the end of the same day and parents will be contacted by phone or school comms.

5. Behaviour Monitoring and Intervention

All behaviour incidents are monitored on a daily basis by Leaders, Student Support Staff. Key Stage or Phase staff.

Each School will produce a daily behaviour review sheet identifying any further action needed. This is then reviewed and agreed by the Senior Leadership Team. A range of further intervention strategies, outlined below, will then be used if necessary.

Minimum equipment for lessons

Every student is expected to attend school with the correct equipment. The equipment list appears within the School Planner. Form Tutors will use morning form period to check on equipment and planners. Continued failure to bring equipment to school will result in a sanction in line with the school individual rewards and behaviour policy. Repeated failure to be fully equipped for school will result in a further consequence and parents will be contacted. Equipment can be purchased from the Stationery Shop in school.

6. School uniform expectations

The Trust believes that school uniform should be worn with pride, and we have the highest expectations of our students. Each Trust school will publish a set of uniform requirements to ensure students and their parents clearly understand what is/is not acceptable. Where uniform expectations are repeatedly flouted, a consequence will be issued. Form tutors will use morning tutor period to ensure that students appear well-presented and are conforming to the uniform expectations. This time provides an opportunity for our students to take responsibility for their own uniform. A copy of the school's uniform expectations can be found on their website.

7. Moving around school

The Trust always encourage safe conduct around all of its schools and, in a busy school environment, courtesy and consideration are important. We encourage, for example, doors to be held open for others. Students should walk around the school following their schools processes and procedures for safe movement. For example, in large schools building on the left hand side of corridors and use the appropriate entrances / exits and staircases.

8. Dining halls and social areas

The Trust encourages a positive approach to our communal eating areas, ensuring food is consumed in a calm and orderly way, is important to the ethos of the Trust. We expect our students to develop healthy eating habits in the best environment we can provide. Food and drink are only to be consumed in the designated eating areas and no eating or drinking should take place in any other area of the school buildings or campus. Litter must not be dropped anywhere inside or outside the school building and all members of the school community should take care to keep the school clean and pleasant. Plenty of litter bins are provided for use and students are expected to take responsibility for picking up any litter in their immediate vicinity.

9. Behaviour in the wider community

Students are ambassadors of our Trust and are expected to represent the school well when out in the community and show due regard for the school's neighbours. Under section 89 (5) of the Education and Inspections Act (2006), teachers and all persons acting on behalf of the Headteacher have a statutory power to discipline students for misbehaving outside the school premises. The School reserves the right, therefore, to discipline a student for misbehaviour when:

- The student is taking part in any school related or organised activity.
- The student is travelling to and from the school.
- The student is wearing school uniform or can be identified as a student of the school.
- Misbehaviour could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school.
- Misbehaviour poses a threat to other students or members of the public.
- Misbehaviour adversely affects the reputation of the school.

The above includes any misbehaviour that may take place online (in accordance with the school's E-Safety Policy).

10. Addressing poor behaviour and consequences

When dealing with incidents of poor behaviour, the following principles will be applied:

- Disruptive behaviour during lessons will not be tolerated – every student has the right to an education and the school will not accept behaviour by a minority of students that prevents others from learning.
- Where appropriate, the school is committed to working with other agencies in order to support students to bring about improvements in their behaviour.
- Students who use technology such as the internet and mobile phones to cause harm, distress or humiliation to others will be dealt with very seriously. This also applies to such behaviour which takes place outside school.
- The school seeks to make all students aware of the consequences should they choose to misbehave. Understanding probable consequences is important in guiding students to make the right decisions and is intended to promote good behaviour.
- Where a student has misbehaved, the matter will be investigated and, if considered appropriate, a consequence will be imposed.
- A student may be taken out of circulation whilst a breach of the policy is investigated.
- In most cases, the most effective consequences are completed expeditiously and as soon after the event as possible.
- Students will be given the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour and demonstrate that they have learned from their experience and their impact on others.
- A consequence will never be humiliating or degrading and blanket punishments will not be imposed.
- When issuing a consequence, a student's prior conduct may be taken into consideration.

- Disciplinary action taken against a student will not be discriminatory and the school will promote equality at all times.
- Any consequences will be reasonable and proportionate and will consider the individual circumstances of the student.

11. Procedures and processes

Detentions

Schools have a statutory right (Education and Inspections Act 2006) to use detention as a sanction, both within the school day and out of normal school hours. The school believes detentions are a valuable tool in reinforcing behaviour expectations. Parents/carers will be given 24 hours' notice of a detention that takes place out of school hours. A student who misses a detention without good reason will be expected to serve the detention and may receive a further appropriate sanction, firstly lunch isolation the following day.

Suspension and Exclusions

The decision to exclude is not taken lightly and will only be used when serious breaches of the school's Behaviour Policy occur or when a student is persistently poorly behaved. The school would prefer to keep students in school and will consider imposing an internal exclusion before a suspension. In some circumstances, however, it may be necessary and appropriate to suspend a student for a fixed term. Where a student receives an internal exclusion, he/she will report to school at 8.30 am and will remain in school until 4:00pm and will work under supervision in isolation throughout the day.

A permanent exclusion is the ultimate sanction and will only be used where very serious breaches or persistent serious breaches of this Policy have occurred. The school follows the statutory guidance set out in. Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement Guidance for maintained schools, academies, and pupil referral units in England September 2022.

Where a student is excluded from school the Headteacher's decision may be reviewed by the Governing Body in accordance with the guidelines set out in the statutory guidance (Appendix 1).

This function will be delegated to the Governors' Disciplinary Committee. Where a permanent exclusion has been imposed, the Governors' Disciplinary Committee must meet to review the decision and has the power to reinstate. In the case of a permanent exclusion, if the Governors' Disciplinary Committee uphold the Headteacher's decision, the parents of the child have the right to make representations to an Independent Review Panel.

Suspension 'Good discipline in schools is essential to ensure that all pupils can benefit from the opportunities provided by education. The Government supports headteachers in using exclusion as a sanction where it is warranted. Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement Guidance for maintained schools, academies, and pupil referral units in England September 2022). All decisions to exclude are serious and only taken as a last resort or where the breach of the Academy rules is serious.

The following are examples:

- Failure to comply with a reasonable request from a senior member of staff.
- Failure to wear School uniform which has been provided (where possible) for a student who is in incorrect uniform is regarded as failure to comply with a reasonable request.
- Breaches of health and safety rules.
- Verbal abuse of staff, other adults or students.
- Possession of alcohol and/or alcohol related offences.

- Failure to comply with the requirements of the 'Consequence System' see section 2 above. ☐ Wilful damage to property.
- Homophobic or racist bullying.
- Bullying.
- Sexual misconduct.
- Theft.
- Making a false allegation against a member of staff.
- Behaviour which calls into question the good name of the Academy .
- Persistent defiance or disruption.
- Minor assaults or fighting that is not premeditated or planned.
- Other serious breaches of School rules.

Permanent Exclusion 'A decision to exclude a pupil permanently should 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 pupils or others in the school' (Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement Guidance for maintained schools, academies, and pupil referral units in England September 2023.

The following list is not exhaustive but indicates the severity of such offences and the fact that such behaviour can affect the discipline and well-being of the School community. The Headteacher may permanently exclude a student for:

- Persistent disruption and defiance including bullying (which would include racist or homophobic bullying) or possession and/or use of an illegal drug or drug paraphernalia on school premises; or
- An offence which is not listed but is, in the opinion of the Headteacher, so serious that it will have a detrimental effect on the discipline and well-being of the school community.

The following offences are considered so serious that a student may be permanently excluded for a first or one off offence:

- Possession of a knife, irrespective of length, constitutes an offense appropriate to permanently exclude a child for a first or 'one-off' offence.
- Serious actual or threatened physical assault against another student or a member of staff; ☐ sexual abuse or assault.
- Possession of an illegal drug.
- Possession of an illegal drug with intent to supply.
- Intent to use an illegal drug.
- Carrying an offensive weapon; In addition to knives; axes, BB guns, air guns, GATT guns, catapults, slings, etc., will also be deemed to be offensive weapons. Other types of offensive weapons will include lengths of pipe, bats, other blunt instruments, or items judged by the School to be carried with the intention to inflict injury on another individual – this would include blades removed from pencil sharpeners, etc.
- Deliberate activation of the fire alarm without good intent.
- Repeated or serious misuse of the School computers by hacking or other activities that compromise the integrity of the computer network.
- Repeated verbal abuse of staff.
- Persistent disruption and defiance that may or may not be directly linked to the Consequences system.

12. Governors' Discipline Committee

A student's conduct may place him / her at risk of permanent exclusion, either as a result of persistent poor behaviour or a one off serious breach of discipline. When this is the case, a student will be permanently excluded and invited to appear before the Governors' Discipline Committee. The purpose of such a measure is to give the student an opportunity to account for his / her actions to the Governors and to benefit from the guidance the Governors will provide. Where the Headteacher has issued a final warning, the Governors will determine whether to endorse that decision.

13. Role of Parents/Carers

On admission to school parents/carers, students and the Headteacher sign their School's Home School Agreement, clarifying the roles and responsibilities of all parties, and clarifying expectations. Where breaches of the Behaviour Policy have occurred, the school will seek to involve parents from the outset and will strive to provide them with accurate and timely information. Where there may have been a serious breach of the behaviour policy and it is necessary to interview a student, their parents/carers will be contacted and offered the opportunity to attend the interview. In such situations, a written record of the interview will be taken and those present will be requested to sign. On other occasions, it may also be necessary and appropriate for parents/carers to attend a meeting in school concerning their child's behaviour.

14. Confiscation of and Search for Inappropriate Items

Under Section 90 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and Part 2 of the Education Act 2011, the school has the right to confiscate, retain or dispose of a student's property and protect the school from liability of damage. The school reserves the right to search without consent for prohibited items. These include e-cigarettes, vapes, lighters, aerosols, cigarettes, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, weapons or any other item which the school deems could be considered harmful to a student. Sanctions will be imposed if a prohibited item is found, depending upon the judgement of the Headteacher. Refusal to comply with a search will be treated as a serious breach of this Policy.

15. New Psychoactive Substances are banned in school and will be treated as illegal drugs

The school also reserves the right to search for, and remove from students, the following: e cigarettes and vaping paraphernalia, and any other items which they believe may be sold for financial gain. All searches will be conducted in the presence of two members of staff, one of whom must be the same sex as the student being searched. Where a student has been searched, his / her parents will be informed. Where a member of staff finds an item which is banned under the school rules, they should take into account all relevant circumstances and use their professional judgement to decide whether to return it to its owner, retain it or dispose of it. Where any weapon or illegal drug is found on a student and this compromises the safety of all students and staff, this may result in the Headteacher imposing a permanent exclusion and the police may be informed (in accordance with DfE guidelines).

Smoking / Vaping

Any student caught smoking/vaping on the site or with smoking/vaping related paraphernalia will be isolated for the remainder of the day and will remain in school until 4pm pending a suspension. and parents will be informed. This includes smoking outside the school grounds, or on the way to and from school. Subsequent offences will result in more serious sanctions being issued.

16. Theft and Vandalism

Theft of school property or wilful destruction to school property will not be tolerated and consequences will be imposed depending on the seriousness of the incident based upon the judgement of the school.

17. Positive Handling

DFE guidelines state that “All school staff members have a legal power to use reasonable force to prevent pupils committing a criminal offence, injuring themselves or others or damaging property and to maintain good order and discipline.” Teachers and support staff may use reasonable force in the aforementioned circumstances. The school does not require parental consent to use reasonable force. Further information is contained in the Positive Handling Policy.

18. Students with an Educational Health Care Plan

Students with an Educational Health Care Plan or with identified educational needs are expected to follow the school’s Behaviour Policy and comply with all consequences. Where behaviour places a student at risk of exclusion, all appropriate support agencies will be contacted, and every reasonable step will be made to ensure the needs of the student are being supported and that ‘reasonable adjustments’ are set in place to support the student’s needs. It may still, however, be appropriate to impose an exclusion following the implementation of reasonable adjustments.

19. Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs

To help reduce the likelihood of behavioural issues related to SEMH needs, the school will create a safe and calm environment in which positive mental health and wellbeing are promoted and pupils are taught to be resilient. The schools will promote resilience as part of a whole-school approach using the following methods:

- **Culture, ethos and environment** – the health and wellbeing of pupils and staff is promoted through the informal curriculum, including leadership practice, policies, values and attitudes, alongside the social and physical environment.
- **Teaching** – the curriculum is used to develop pupils’ knowledge about health and wellbeing.
- **Community engagement** – the school proactively engages with parents, outside agencies and the wider community to promote consistent support for pupils’ health and wellbeing.

All staff will be made aware of how potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, including abuse and neglect, can impact on a pupil’s mental health, behaviour, and education. Where vulnerable pupils or groups are identified, provision will be made to support and promote their positive mental health. The school’s SEMH Policy outlines the specific procedures that will be used to assess these pupils for any SEMH-related difficulties that could affect their behaviour.

20. Looked After Children

Looked after Children are expected to follow their school’s Behaviour Policy and comply with all consequences. Where behaviour places a student at risk of exclusion, all appropriate support agencies will be contacted, and every reasonable step will be made to ensure the needs of the student are being supported.

21. Sexual Abuse and Harassment

The Trust will promote and enforce a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of sexual abuse and harassment, including sexual harassment, gender-based bullying and sexual violence. The school’s procedures for handling child-on-child sexual abuse and harassment are detailed in the Child-on-child Abuse Policy.

The Trust will respond promptly and appropriately to any sexual harassment complaints in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy; appropriate steps will be taken to stop the harassment and prevent any

reoccurrence. Disciplinary sanctions for incidents of sexual harassment will be determined based on the nature of the case, the ages of those involved and any previous related incidents.

Where the school is responding to a report of sexual violence, the school will take immediate steps to ensure the victim and other pupils are protected. The School's DSL and Trust's Safeguarding Lead will work closely with the police, and any other agencies as required, to ensure that any action the school takes, e.g. disciplinary sanctions, will not jeopardise the police investigation.

22. Loss of Personal Items on School Property

The school cannot take responsibility for any personal items lost within the grounds of the school property. This includes bicycles, electrical equipment, items of uniform (sporting and non-sporting) and money.

23. False Allegations against Members of Staff

Under the Education Act (2011), the school reserves the right to take disciplinary action against any student who, in the view of the Headteacher based on the evidence before him/her, has made a serious, malicious allegation against a member of staff, which is unproven. This may result in exclusion from school.

24. Complaints

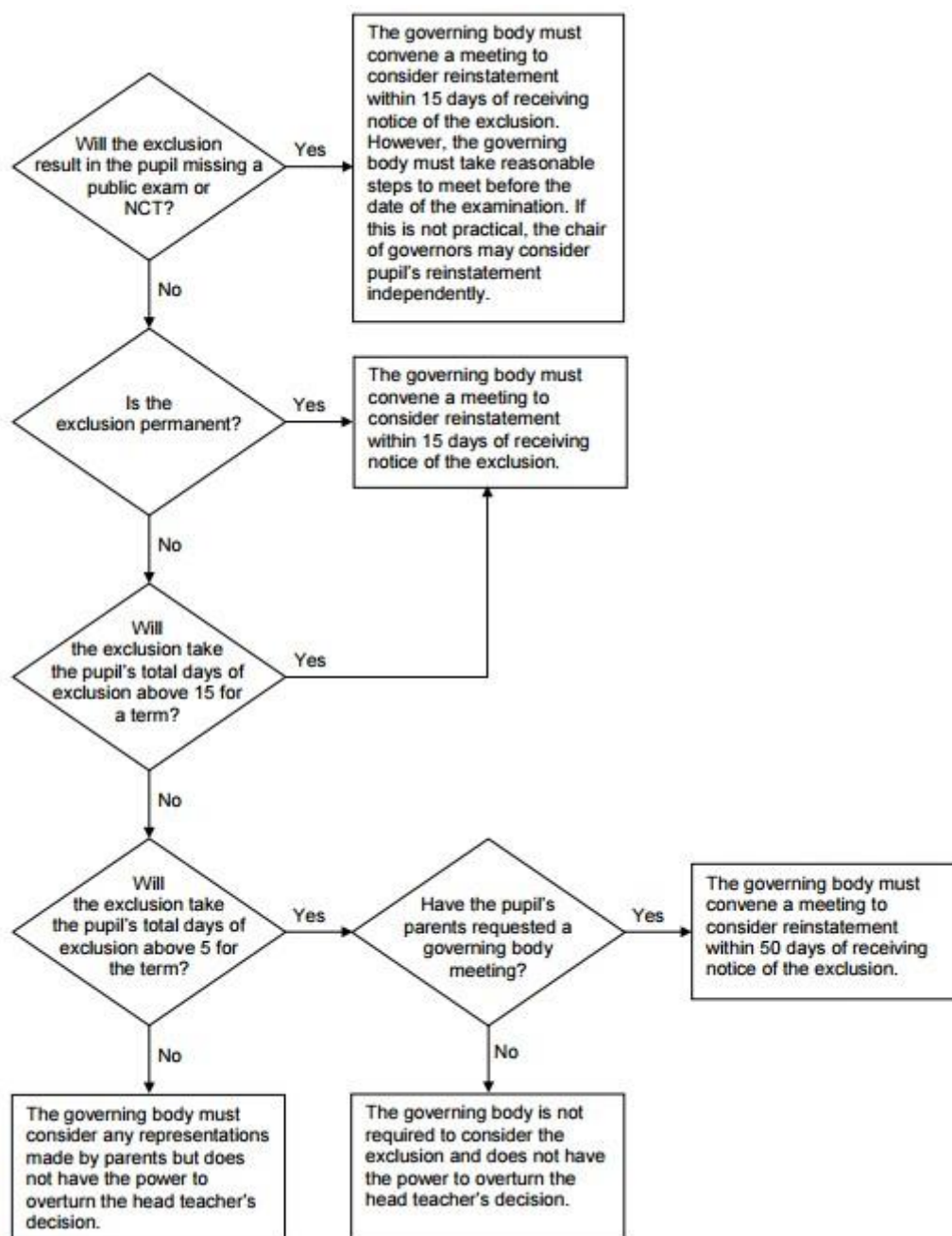
If a parent has a complaint about a disciplinary matter, he/she should follow the procedures laid down in the school's Complaints Policy.

Review

This policy is reviewed yearly by the Trust. We will monitor the application and outcomes of this policy to ensure it is working effectively.

Appendix 1

A Summary of the Governing Body's Duties to Review the Headteacher's Decision to Exclude a Student



Reference to 'days' means 'school days'.