

Learning Accord Multi Academy Trust

Suspension and Exclusions Policy



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Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Related Policies	3
3. Reasons for Suspension/Exclusion	3
4. Types of Suspension/Exclusion	4
5. The Decision to Suspend/Exclude.....	4
6. Safeguarding	5
7. Behaviour Outside the Academy.....	5
8. Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabled Pupils	5
9. Marking Attendance Registers following Suspension/Exclusion.....	5
10. Managed Move	5
11. Removal from the Academy for Other Reasons	6
12. Procedure for Appeal	6

1. Introduction

Learning Accord Multi Academy Trust (LAMAT) and its member academies are committed to valuing diversity and to equality of opportunity. We aim to create and promote an environment in which pupils, parents/carers and staff are treated fairly and with respect, and feel able to contribute to the best of their abilities.

The Academy Trust, its member academies and local governing bodies recognise that it is unlawful to take into account anyone's gender, marital status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, religious beliefs, age, or sexual orientation when considering a suspension or exclusion.

The Trust aims to include, not exclude, and approaches all challenging behaviour in a supportive and positive way. The Trust recognises that such behaviour can sometimes be symptomatic of a real, deeper need for support and understanding. All children can go through times of inappropriate behaviour, and our approach is to never "give up" easily on a child as we recognise that each person has a unique contribution to make to school life and we want to support them to achieve this.

A decision to exclude a pupil, either for a fixed period or permanently is seen as a last resort. The physical and emotional health of our children and staff is our primary concern, and we therefore accept that in some rare situations, exclusion may be necessary, if all other strategies have been exhausted.

2. Related Policies

The Academy Trust and its member academies are responsible for communicating to pupils, parents/carers and staff its expectations of standards of conduct. A range of policies and procedures are in place to promote good behaviour and appropriate conduct.

These are:

- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

No suspension or exclusion will be initiated without first exhausting other strategies or, in the case of a serious single incident, a thorough investigation.

3. Reasons for Suspension/Exclusion

- Total defiance (cumulative)
- Intentional physical harm to another pupil / adult
- Extreme, threatening behaviour to another pupil / adult
- Children at risk

Any exclusion will be at the decision of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and/or Director of Academy Improvement and headteachers of the respective academies must contact the CEO or the DoAI prior to making an exclusion.

4. Types of Suspension/Exclusion

4.1 Temporary Suspension

A temporary exclusion should be for the shortest time necessary. Ofsted evidence suggests that 1-3 days is usually enough to secure benefits without adverse educational consequences.

4.2 Persistent or cumulative problems

Suspension for a period of time from half a day to 5 days for persistent or cumulative problems would be imposed only when the academy had already offered and implemented a range of support and management strategies.

4.3 Single Incident

Temporary Suspension may be used in response to a serious breach of academy rules and policies or a disciplinary offence. In such cases the Headteacher of the respective academy in which the incident has occurred will investigate the incident thoroughly and consider all evidence to support the allegation, taking account of the academy's policies. The pupil will be encouraged to give his/her version of events and the Headteacher will check whether the incident may have been provoked, for example by bullying or racial harassment. If necessary, the Headteacher will consult the CEO and/or the DoAI.

4.4 Permanent Exclusion

A permanent exclusion is a very serious decision and the Headteacher will consult with the CEO and/or the AIO before enforcing it.

As with a Temporary Suspension, it will follow a range of strategies and be seen as a last resort, or it will be in response to a very serious breach of academy rules and policies or a disciplinary offence such as:

- Serious actual or threatened violence against another pupil or a member of staff
- Failure to follow school rules - defiance
- Possession or use of an illegal drug on school premises
- Persistent bullying
- Persistent racial harassment

5. The Decision to Suspend or Exclude

If the CEO and/or the DoAI decides to support the Headteachers request to exclude a pupil, the Headteacher will:

- Ensure that there is sufficient recorded evidence to support the decision
- Explain the decision to the pupil
- Contact the parents/carers, explain the decision and ask that the child be collected
- Send a letter to the parents/carers confirming the reasons for the suspension/exclusion, whether it is a temporary suspension or permanent exclusion
- The length of the suspension/exclusion and any terms or conditions agreed for the pupil's return
- In cases of more than a day's suspension, ensure that appropriate work is set and that arrangements are in place for it to be marked

- Plan how to address the pupil's needs and integration back into their class on his/her return
- Plan a reintegration meeting with parents/carers and pupil on his/her return

6. Safeguarding

An exclusion will not be enforced if doing so may put the safety of the pupil at risk. In cases where parents/carers will not comply by, for example, refusing to collect the child, the child's welfare is the priority. In this situation, depending on the reason for suspension/exclusion, the academy may consider an internal suspension until the end of the day, implementing the original suspension/exclusion decision from the time the child is collected from the academy. In more severe circumstances the academy may contact Social Services and/or the Police to safely take the pupil off site.

7. Behaviour Outside the Academy

Pupils' behaviour outside the academy on academy business e.g. on educational visits, at sports events, is subject to the academy's behaviour policy. Unacceptable behaviour in such circumstances will be dealt with as if it had taken place within the academy.

8. Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabled Pupils

The academy trust must take account of any special educational needs when considering whether or not to suspend or exclude a pupil.

We have a legal duty under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 as amended not to discriminate against disabled pupils by excluding them from the academy for behaviour related to their disability. The Executive Headteacher/Headteacher should ensure that reasonable steps have been taken by the academy to respond to a pupil's disability so the pupil is not treated less favourably for reasons related to the disability.

9. Marking Attendance Registers following Exclusion

When a pupil is suspended temporarily, he/she should be marked as absent using Code E on Integris.

10. Managed Move

In cases where the CEO/Headteacher/AIO and parents/carers agree that the progress of the pupil has been unsatisfactory and the pupil is unwilling or unable to profit from the educational opportunities offered, or if a parent has treated Learning Accord Multi Academy Trust, a member academy or a member of staff unreasonably the Headteacher may require the parents/carers to remove the pupil at the end of a term. This is not deemed an exclusion and in such cases; the Headteacher may assist the parents/carers in placing the pupil in another school/academy.

11. Removal from the Academy for Other Reasons

The Headteacher may send a pupil home, after consultation with CEO/DoAI and the pupil's parents/carer and a health professional as appropriate; if the pupil poses an immediate and serious risk to the health and safety of other pupils and staff (for example because of a

diagnosed illness such as a notifiable disease). This is not a suspension and should be for the shortest possible time.

12. Procedure for Appeal

If parents/carers wish to appeal the decision to suspend or exclude, the matter will be referred to the governing body of the academy to which the incident relates and will be handled through Learning Accord Multi Academy Trust appeal procedure.