

Paddington Academy

Exclusion Policy

2019-20

Hard work | Integrity | Excellence

Statutory guidance

The Academy Exclusion policy is written in line with the following areas of legislation and guidance: Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England (September 2017).

Paddington Academy ethos

Paddington Academy believes that every student has the right to learn in disruption free classrooms every minute of every lesson. Our aim is to instil the values of hard work, excellence and integrity into students so that they are equipped with the skills that they need to live a happy and fulfilled life and attend university if they wish to. We believe that learning is the most important reason for being at the Academy and that nothing should stop learning. In order to support learning and to create a community that all students and staff want to be a part of, it may in some circumstances be necessary to consider exclusion as a consequence for behaviour.

We have a positive and proactive approach to behaviour management at Paddington Academy. Staff at Paddington Academy will always try to de-escalate a situation and encourage the student to make the right choices. We communicate our expectations of students clearly and consistently in order to ensure that they are always doing the right thing. Rules and routines are explicitly taught and deliberately practiced so that all students are meeting our expectations.

The decision to exclude

The decision to exclude a student must be reasonable, lawful and fair. In order to avoid exclusion, where possible, students are sanctioned by being placed in our internal isolation room. A fixed term exclusion will only be used for more serious matters or whether other alternatives have not been successful. Furthermore, we will always try to identify any causal factors or unmet needs and provide appropriate support to students to address their needs and reduce the likelihood of exclusion.

The decision to exclude is made solely by one of the Principals of the school, Mr Jones or Ms Gillam or by proxy.

Before a decision to exclude is taken, the Principal will:

- ensure that a thorough investigation has been carried out
- consider all the evidence available to support the allegations along with any aggravating or mitigating factors
- allow and encourage the student to give their version of events
- keep a written record of the actions taken including the signed statements of witnesses

The standard of proof applied when deciding to exclude is on the balance of probabilities so it is more likely than not that a fact is true. The more serious the allegation, the more convincing the evidence substantiating the allegation needs to be.

The circumstances where a student may be excluded are listed below.

1) Failure in the isolation room

Students are sent to the isolation room if they receive three warnings in a lesson, if they miss a detention or if they are involved in an incident in school. If while they are in the isolation room, they fail to meet expectations and receive three warnings (thus a total of six warnings), then they will normally be excluded from school for a period of 24 hours. When the student returns from their exclusion, they will return to the isolation room where they will successfully complete 24 hours in the isolation room before returning to lessons.

2) Paddington Academy 'red lines'

A red line at Paddington Academy is a behaviour that undermines the good order and safety of the school. A student will normally be excluded from school if they:

- Refuse to go to the Isolation Room when sent by a member of staff
- Swear at a member of staff
- Defy a member of staff by walking away from them when being spoken to
- Physically attack another student

3) Banned items

A student will be excluded from school if they bring a weapon into school. This includes any object that has been modified with the intention of causing injury. The Academy adopts a very strict approach to the carrying of weapons due to the seriousness of the impact on the Academy. This is communicated clearly to students in the student planner, assemblies and the home school agreement.

This is not an exhaustive list and there may be other examples of behaviour where the Principal judges that an exclusion is an appropriate sanction.

Permanent exclusion

Permanent exclusion is only used as a very last resort at Paddington Academy and we always try to avoid using it where possible. This is because we recognise the detrimental effect that exclusion can have on a student and their family, particularly in terms of the student accessing education in the future. Before considering a permanent exclusion we will exhaust all other possible methods of managing student behaviour. These include alternatives such as managed moves, alternative provision, increased SEN support and time spent in our internal isolation room.

We pride ourselves on our low permanent exclusion rate and the fact that we admit many students who have been excluded from other schools to give them another chance.

The decision to permanently exclude will only be taken:

- in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the of the Academy behaviour policy;
and
- if allowing the student to remain at the Academy would seriously harm the education or welfare of the student or others at the Academy

There may be exceptional circumstances where it is appropriate to permanently exclude a student for a first or 'one off' offence. These might include:

- a) Violence against a member of staff or student
- b) Carrying a weapon or illegal drug
- c) Sexual abuse or assault

The Principal will meet with the parents and student before reaching a decision to permanently exclude a student. Under normal circumstances, a student will be excluded for a fixed-term before the decision is made to permanently exclude.

The process of exclusion

The Principal may exclude a student for one or more fixed periods which do not exceed a total of 45 school days in any one school year. Most exclusions are of a fixed term nature and are of a short duration (usually between 1 and 3 days).

During a fixed term exclusion of 5 or fewer days, work will be set by the Academy for the student to complete at home. This work should be returned completed at the end of the exclusion for marking along with the Paddington Academy exclusion reflection sheet. In addition, students are expected to write a letter of apology addressed to Mr Jones.

During the first five days of any exclusion, the parents of an excluded student must ensure that their child is not present in a public place during normal school hours without reasonable justification, whether with or without a parent. A failure to comply with this is an offence for which a fixed penalty notice can be issued.

For an exclusion of longer than 5 days, the Academy will arrange full-time educational provision from the sixth day of exclusion. This will usually involve the student attending the Westminster Education Centre until the exclusion is completed.

Once the decision has been made to exclude parents are contacted immediately where possible. Parents and students will be encouraged to be involved in the exclusions process in order to ensure the best possible resolution and a greater chance of success when the student is reintegrated into school. Parents will be informed as to the length of exclusion and when the student is expected back in school. A student will only be sent home once contact has been made with parent and where it is clear that the student will be returning to a place of safety.

Before the end of any fixed-term exclusion, parents will be invited to attend a reintegration meeting at the Academy with their child. The purpose of the meeting is to ensure that the child understands the reason for the exclusion and is committed to preventing the behaviour that led to the exclusion from being repeated. The Academy will consider all further support needed to support the student. The student's Head of Year will present strategies including referrals to external agencies and in school support in order to help the student to improve their behaviour. The student will also be set three targets to meet as part of the reintegration process.

Appeals

The Academy has a Local Governing Body (LGB) which has responsibility for supporting the Principal in making decisions and reviewing them in relation to exclusions. The Behaviour Committee consists of at least 3 members of the LGB, including the Chair of the LGB.

The Behaviour Committee of the Governing Body will review any exclusion which results in a student being excluded for more than 15 school days in any one term, or any permanent exclusion. This review will take place whether or not the parent requests it. The Behaviour Committee will decide whether to reinstate the student, if appropriate, or whether the Principal's decision to exclude was justified and appropriate.

Parents have the right to appeal the decision to exclude their child. The process is common across United Learning Schools and is different for different levels of exclusion:

Level 1 exclusion (less than 15 days)

A parent may request that the Behaviour Committee review the process

Level 2 exclusion (more than 15 days fixed-term)

A parent may request that the Behaviour Committee review the process
Case discussed with Behaviour Committee by Principal

Behaviour Committee decide whether to uphold the decision

Level 3 exclusion (permanent)

Case discussed with Behaviour Committee by Principal

Behaviour Committee decide whether to uphold the decision

Parents may appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel

An Independent Appeals Panel will consist of 3 people and will be chaired by a lay member and two other independent members, one with governance experience; the other with Headship experience. This panel will decide whether to uphold the decision to exclude a student

The Independent Appeals Panel can either uphold the decision to exclude the student or recommend that the Academy reconsiders the matter. They cannot, however, direct the reinstatement of the student.