

Exclusion Policy – Covid Addendum

Article 3: *All adults should do what is best for you. When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children.*



**Grange
Academy**

Belong • Believe • Achieve

Reviewer: Catherine Assink – Head of School

Reviewed: February 2021

Due for review: February 2022

COVID -19 Addendum to Behaviour and Exclusion

Intent

In light of the current circumstances with regard to the phased reopening of schools, schools must revise their current behaviour policies making appropriate changes in response to the current situation. It is recommended that schools create an addendum to their current policy outlining what changes have been made. The addendum must reflect the new protective measures that have been issued by the government, as well as, your school's new routines, structures and expectations.

Our practice

We believe that at the heart of every behaviour policy should be the opportunity for pupils to learn about and reflect upon their behaviour(s). Before we move to issuing sanctions, we will ensure that sufficient time is given to supporting our pupils resettle into school; helping them understand behaviour expectations. We will also consider the possible affect lockdown and the virus has had on our pupils before reaching a decision on a level of sanction. This will include:

- A review of the full breadth of behaviours displayed by a pupil both before and after lockdown
- A careful review of instances where a pupil has wilfully refused to adhere to the school's management of social distancing or deliberately cough, bite and spit at others
- Discussion about the difference between wilful acts versus those carried out unintentionally or by pupils who have specific additional needs
- A surety that all pupils who are likely to breach the school's behavior policy will have a risk assessment in place that has been written by the parents and school
- We will consider what reasonable adjustments should be made, taking into account the needs of your pupils including those needs arising from possible trauma and challenges experienced during closure.

Reasonable adjustment and support for vulnerable pupils

"We know that for some of the pupils returning to school will be a challenge. This is likely to be even more challenging for any pupil who might struggle to adjust to new routines, structures and expectations, particularly, but not limited to SEND pupils."

The Government has issued guidance on supporting children with SEND as schools prepare for wider opening, which can be found [here](#). Schools must think carefully about their pupils and make reasonable adjustments to support their transitions back to school."

At Grange we hope that all children will look forward to returning to school and being with their teachers and friends but for those pupils who may be experiencing anxiety or uncertainty we will:

- Talk about a phased return for the pupil with their family and any supporting professionals
- If needed, hold transition meeting with families and a key member of staff, providing the opportunity to discuss and familiarise themselves with the new physical environment, routines and expectations
- Consider the size and type of teaching group and make any amendments if needed

- Take time to build up strong and positive relationships to support pupils who have been in isolation for a long period of time
- Allocate additional wellbeing sessions to address the revised rules and routines, as well as their daily wellbeing
- Hold reflective sessions to support behaviour
- Write behaviour support plans and risk assessments that will outline strategies and approaches to support a pupil's behavioural response to the current situation.

New Exclusions Guidance On Friday 29 May 2020, the government published statutory guidance on changes to the exclusion process during the coronavirus outbreak. Whilst Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England 2017 remains the key statutory document for schools, the DfE have issued interim guidance during the coronavirus outbreak. The Government's new guidance on exclusions can be found at: [Changes to the school exclusion process during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/changes-to-the-school-exclusion-process-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak)

This section summarises the key changes in the new guidance and what adaptations we will make at Grange.

- Timeframes for governor review panels and Independent Review Panels (IRPs) have been extended.
- Remote panels may be convened via telephone or video conference if reasonably practicable and with a set of conditions that must be met (see section 2.3 below).
- All other arrangements and procedures under the existing statutory guidance and Grange Behavior policy continue to apply.
- Extended timeframes Statutory timeframes for panel review meetings and parent applications for an IRP have been extended in response to the exceptional circumstances that schools are now operating under due to the coronavirus pandemic.
- Whilst the guidance does specify new timeframes, see table below, it also notes that if they cannot be met then the meeting should happen as soon as 'reasonably practicable' to do so. We will make every effort to meet the new timeframes and accommodate parental engagement in the exclusions process wherever possible, although staff, pupil and parent safety remains paramount.

Type of panel/ deadline	Standard timeframe from date of exclusion	New guidance (until 24th Sep)
PEX and 15+FTE governor review panel	15 school days	25 school days
6 to 15-day FTE governor review panel	50 school days	60 school days
Application for IRP following a governor panel	15 school days	25 school days*
Independent Review Panel	15 school days	25 school days

Schools must wait **25 school days from the date the panel decision was communicated to parents before removing the pupil from the school roll.*

- Remote panels Exclusion Panels and IRPs can be convened by telephone or video conference under the new guidance, providing the following key conditions are met; all participants agree to holding the panel meeting remotely*
- All participants have access to the relevant technology necessary and will be able to fully engage and participate through this medium
- All participants are able to express their views and fulfill their functions
- The meeting will be fair and transparent via the remote access. (If a parent/carer requests or agrees to a remote panel, the other attendees should agree to go ahead if possible.)
- If the Head Teacher does not wish to go ahead they should discuss the reasons with their Regional Director and/or LAB.
- If these conditions cannot be met through a remote panel then it should be deferred until a later date when the panel can physically meet, or the remote panel conditions can be met.

In addition to these key conditions, the guidance sets out some requirements for schools to adhere to when arranging a remote panel meeting.

- Grange Academy must fulfil their duties under equality legislations, particularly with regards to fair and equal participation from those with EAL, disabilities etc.
- Grange Academy must make it clear to parents what form of technology is being used (e.g. Microsoft Teams) and that they do not have to agree to a remote meeting if they do not want to.
- Parents must be made aware that if they do not agree to a remote panel the timeframe for the meeting will most likely be delayed.
- If a remote meeting starts but for some reason cannot proceed (e.g. loss of connection) then the meeting must be deferred.
- Written representation may be considered as part of the meeting but an entirely written 'meeting' is not lawful.
- Grange Academy may consider holding a blend of remote and physical meeting, providing it meets government guidelines on safety and social distancing and that the four key conditions outlined above are met
- Normal procedural and admin requirements for panel meeting still apply (e.g. panel paperwork, parents being accompanied by a friend and requests for SEND experts at IRP etc.)
- The new guidance is statutory and applies to all schools, as does the ongoing government advice on health, safety and social distancing during the pandemic.

Blended meetings

The new guidance states that schools may offer blended meetings if practicable. However, considering the additional risks involved in bringing parents on-site for exclusion meetings, Grange Academy will not provide this option in order to maintain the integrity of the established bubbles onsite.