

Governors' Suggested Questions at the Exclusion Review Meeting

Safeguarding concerns

- Do any of the facts relating to the incident or the pupil raise safeguarding concerns? E.g. physical abuse; sexual abuse; emotional and psychological abuse; neglect; county lines; radicalisation; FGM; Children Missing in Education; sexually active under 18; trafficking; child sexual exploitation; online safety; fostering and guardianship issues.
- If so, how has the school addressed these concerns? Has the pupil/family been assessed using the Common Assessment Framework (CAF)? If so, has a subsequent Team Around the Child (TAC) or Team Around the Family (TAF) meeting been held?
- Is the Local Authority or any other external agency involved?
- Is the pupil identified as a Child In Need (CIN)?
- Have concerns been raised at CP conferences/core groups/CIN or multi-agency meetings?
- Is the pupil known to social care /early help? Is there a pending Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) referral?
-
- If social worker involved, were they invited to attend the meeting?
- Is the pupil on your vulnerable/at risk list and being monitored at school or as part of a Team Around the Child (TAC)?
- Has the pupil made an allegation against a professional with Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) involvement?
- If aware that pupil is living with someone other than parents, has the school explored possible private fostering or guardianship? Has the Local Authority been informed?

The facts

To the school

- Is the behaviour policy well-publicised and clear about the behaviour involved and the potential sanction?

- If persistent breaches, was the Headteacher confident that staff had applied the behaviour policy consistently?
- If persistent breaches, what was the tipping point that led to permanent exclusion? Why now?
- If one-off incident, could the incident have been foreseen and, if so, what did the school do to prevent it?
- Was the school aware of any events at school that affected the pupil's behaviour (e.g. bullying, teasing, threats, inability to access the curriculum)?
- Was the school aware of any events outside of school that may have affected the pupil's behaviour (e.g. family breakup, bereavement, neighbourhood disputes)?
- Did the incident occur in front of other pupils?
- Was there harm to staff during the incident? Was it intentional or negligent?
- Did the pupil show remorse? If not, is the school sure the pupil can properly express emotion and does not have flat affect issues (inability to express emotion due to trauma or mental health)?

To the parent/pupil

- Why did the pupil engage in this behaviour?
- Did the pupil understand the consequences of the behaviour?
- Was the pupil provoked?
- Did the pupil intend the outcome?
- If pupil admits incident(s), was the pupil sorry for what happened? What have they learned?
- Were there any events or circumstances the school was not aware of that affected the pupil's behaviour, both in and out of school?
- If persistent breaches, was the parent aware of pupil's behaviour and were they notified of/involved in interventions to improve behaviour?

The process

To the school

- If not indicated in the evidence bundle, when did school send out invitation and paperwork?
- Were there any indications the parents might not be able to access the evidence (e.g. English as an Additional Language (EAL) or illiteracy)?
- If indications of illiteracy, did the school offer to sit down with the parent and explain the evidence?
- If EAL, did the school ask the parent to bring someone to the meeting who could translate?
- If no statement from the pupil, why?
- If statements not signed and dated, why?
- If statements obtained more than a few days after the incident, why?
- Has the school provided work for the first five days of the exclusion and had it marked?
- Has the Local Authority been advised of the permanent exclusion?
- If Local Authority has declined to attend, have they provided written input on the exclusion?
- Where is the pupil currently being educated?

To the parent/pupil

- Did the pupil and his/her family feel they had been properly notified of the exclusion and the hearing?
- When did they receive the invitation and paperwork?
- Were they able to read and understand the paperwork?

- Is the pupil regularly attending at the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) and how is it going?
- Do you feel that reinstatement would provide no meaningful opportunity for your child to improve his behaviour and avoid further exclusion?
- At the end of the meeting, do they feel they had an adequate opportunity to represent themselves and be heard?

Discrimination, interventions and mitigating factors

To the school

- In a case of persistent breaches, has the school attempted to identify underlying causes for the impulsive or disruptive behaviour?
- Did there appear to be a need for an Educational Psychologist assessment? If needed, was this done? If not, why?
- Has the school properly considered whether the child has other Special Educational Needs, including social emotional mental health needs?
- Has the school adequately addressed these needs through interventions and support?
- Were these interventions tracked for effectiveness?
- Has there been a referral to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)? What came of that?
- If pupil has an EHCP, did the school make reasonable adjustments to meet the pupil's needs?
- If pupil has an EHCP, did the school conduct an emergency annual review?
- If pupil has an EHCP, does the school ultimately feel it can meet the pupil's needs?
- If pupil is a Looked-After Child, has the school properly directed the funding and accessed all the resources available from the council?
- If pupil has persistence absence (15%), what steps did the school take to improve attendance?
- If pupil is low attaining, how has this been addressed? Could it impact the pupil's behaviour in class?

- If Year 7 pupil, did school receive behaviour history from primary school and pay heed to the need for interventions? Has school allowed sufficient time for interventions to take effect?
- If persistent breaches and pupil is in Years 10 or 11, why exclude now?

To the parent/pupil

- Does the pupil have any issues with sleeping, eating, etc? (e.g. to tease out any mitigating factors at home)
- Does the pupil have siblings in school and what is their relationship?
- How did the pupil behave at home? Was it consistent with in-school behaviour? If not, why?

The headteacher's decision

To the school

- Were you satisfied the investigation was thorough and evidence was accurate?
- Did you hold a meeting with the family prior to making your decision?
- What alternatives to permanent exclusion did you consider and why did you reject them?
- Why did you reject the idea of a managed move?
- Would it have been sufficient to direct the pupil offsite to an alternative provision for a period of time? Was this an option and why was it rejected?
- Without revealing any details or identities, can you tell us if the other pupils involved have been sanctioned? (This should be asked carefully, so as to avoid eliciting detail about the other pupil. But it is very relevant to proportionality, fairness and possibly discrimination.)

Considering reinstatement

To the parent

- If reinstated, do you feel this would provide your child with a meaningful opportunity to improve his behaviour and avoid further exclusion?

To the school

- How strongly do you feel the pupil will do this again and why?
- What impact would it have on pupils and staff at the school to have the pupil back?
- What impact will the exclusion have on the pupil (e.g. Year 11, will they be able to take their GCSEs)?
- Was the pupil progressing at the school?
- To the Local Authority, if present (to understand the full impact of the exclusion on the pupil, esp in Y11, and to give parents more information about what may happen if the pupil is not reinstated)
- Are most pupils ultimately placed in another mainstream school?
- If Years 10 or 11, how many GCSEs does the local PRU offer?