



Brent Exclusions Guide for Parents and Carers

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Introduction

Welcome to the Brent Parents' Guide on School Exclusions

This guide is designed to help you understand what happens if your child is suspended or permanently excluded from school, what your rights are, and what support is available.

We understand that this can be a stressful and uncertain time for families. Our aim is to explain the process clearly and ensure that your child continues to receive appropriate education and support.

Key points to remember:

- Exclusions must be **lawful, reasonable, and fair (proportionate)** in line with statutory guidance
- Schools cannot exclude a child for non-disciplinary reasons (such as unmet SEND needs or disputes with parents)
- Your child's **education must continue** during and after an exclusion

Who can help?

- **Brent Inclusion Support Team** – can provide information about the exclusion process, help you understand what will happen next, and signpost you to appropriate sources of independent advice
Email: schoolexclusions@brent.gov.uk
- **SENDIASS** – provides independent information, advice and support for families of children with special educational needs and disabilities
- **Independent advice services**, including:
 - [Coram Children's Legal Centre](#)
 - [ACE Education](#)

Important information about support

The Inclusion Support Team can help you understand the process and access support, but it **does not provide legal advice or representation**.

If you require advice about challenging a decision, you are encouraged to contact an **independent advice service**.

How this guide fits with Brent's approach

Brent's approach to school exclusions is part of a wider system designed to:

- Support children and young people as early as possible
- Ensure that decisions are fair and consistent
- Make sure that every child continues to receive education and support

This approach is explained across several documents:

- The **Inclusion Support Team Partnership Framework**, which sets out how schools and services work together to support children early
- The **Brent Exclusions Protocol**, which explains the legal rules schools must follow
- The **Brent Exclusions Toolkit**, which provides guidance for schools on how to apply these rules
- This **Parent and Carer Guide**, which explains what the process means for you and your child

You do not need to read all of these documents, but together they ensure that the process is clear, consistent, and fair.

This guide explains what the process means for you and your child. Schools will use the Protocol and Toolkit to guide their decision-making.

Understanding Exclusions

Schools can exclude a pupil in two ways: **suspension** or **permanent exclusion**. Both are serious decisions and must follow strict legal requirements.

What is a Suspension?

- A suspension (previously called a fixed-term exclusion) means your child is not allowed to attend school for a set number of days
- It can be for one or more periods, but **cannot exceed 45 school days in a single academic year**

During a suspension:

- The school will provide work for your child to complete at home for the first five school days
- If the suspension lasts more than five school days, the school must arrange suitable full-time education from the sixth school day

What is a Permanent Exclusion?

- A permanent exclusion means your child will not return to the school unless the governing board decides to reinstate them

This decision should only be made:

- 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 pupil or others

After a permanent exclusion:

- The school will send you a letter explaining the decision
- Brent Council will arrange suitable full-time education (this is a legal duty under the Education Act)
- Your child may attend a pupil referral unit (PRU) or another form of alternative provision

- You have the right to attend a governing board meeting and, if necessary, request an Independent Review Panel (IRP)

Important Legal Points

- Exclusions must be **lawful, reasonable, and fair**
- Schools **cannot exclude for non-disciplinary reasons**, such as:
 - Special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) that the school feels unable to meet
 - A breakdown in the relationship with parents
 - Failure to attend a reintegration meeting
- Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), or who are looked after, should only be permanently excluded in **exceptional circumstances**
- These processes are set out in national statutory guidance for schools on suspension and permanent exclusion and cannot be based on local requirements alone.

Education After Exclusion

Your child has the right to continue receiving education during and after an exclusion.

- During the first five school days, work will be provided by the school
- From the sixth school day:
 - The school (for suspensions) or
 - Brent Council (for permanent exclusions) must arrange suitable full-time education

If your child is placed in a pupil referral unit or alternative provision, this placement is intended to provide continued education and support.

If a placement cannot continue, **Brent Council will arrange alternative education.** Your child should **not be left without suitable full-time education.**

What Happens After an Exclusion?

The steps following an exclusion are time-sensitive.

The information below explains what you can expect.

Day 1: Notification

- You will receive a letter from the school explaining:
 - The reason for the exclusion
 - The length of the suspension, or confirmation of a permanent exclusion
 - Your right to make representations to the governing board
- The school will provide work for your child to complete at home for the first five school days
- **Important:**
Your child must not be in a public place during school hours for the first five school days unless there is a good reason.
You may receive a penalty notice if this requirement is not followed.

Day 6: Education Arrangements

If the exclusion continues beyond five school days:

- For a **suspension**, the school must arrange suitable full-time education from the sixth school day
- For a **permanent exclusion**, Brent Council must arrange suitable full-time education from the sixth school day

For looked-after children, education provision should begin as soon as possible.

Governing Board Meeting

In some cases, a governing board meeting will be held to review the decision.

- This applies to:
 - Permanent exclusions

- Suspensions of more than 15 school days in a term
- Suspensions of 6 to 15 days, if you request a meeting
- For permanent exclusions and longer suspensions, the governing board must meet within **15 school days**

You have the right to:

- Attend the meeting
- Make representations
- Bring a friend or representative
- Request that the meeting is held remotely

After the Governing Board Decision

- If your child is **reinstated**, they will return to school and a reintegration meeting will usually be arranged
- If a **permanent exclusion is upheld**, you can request an **Independent Review Panel (IRP)** within **15 school days** of receiving the decision letter

The panel will review whether the decision was lawful, reasonable, and fair.

Education After a Permanent Exclusion

After a permanent exclusion, your child will continue their education in a different setting.

- This may be a **pupil referral unit (PRU)** or another form of **alternative provision**
- These placements are intended to support your child's learning and future progress

An Inclusion Support Officer may contact you to explain the next steps and available options.

If a Placement Changes or Cannot Continue

Sometimes, a placement in a PRU or alternative provision may change or may not be able to continue.

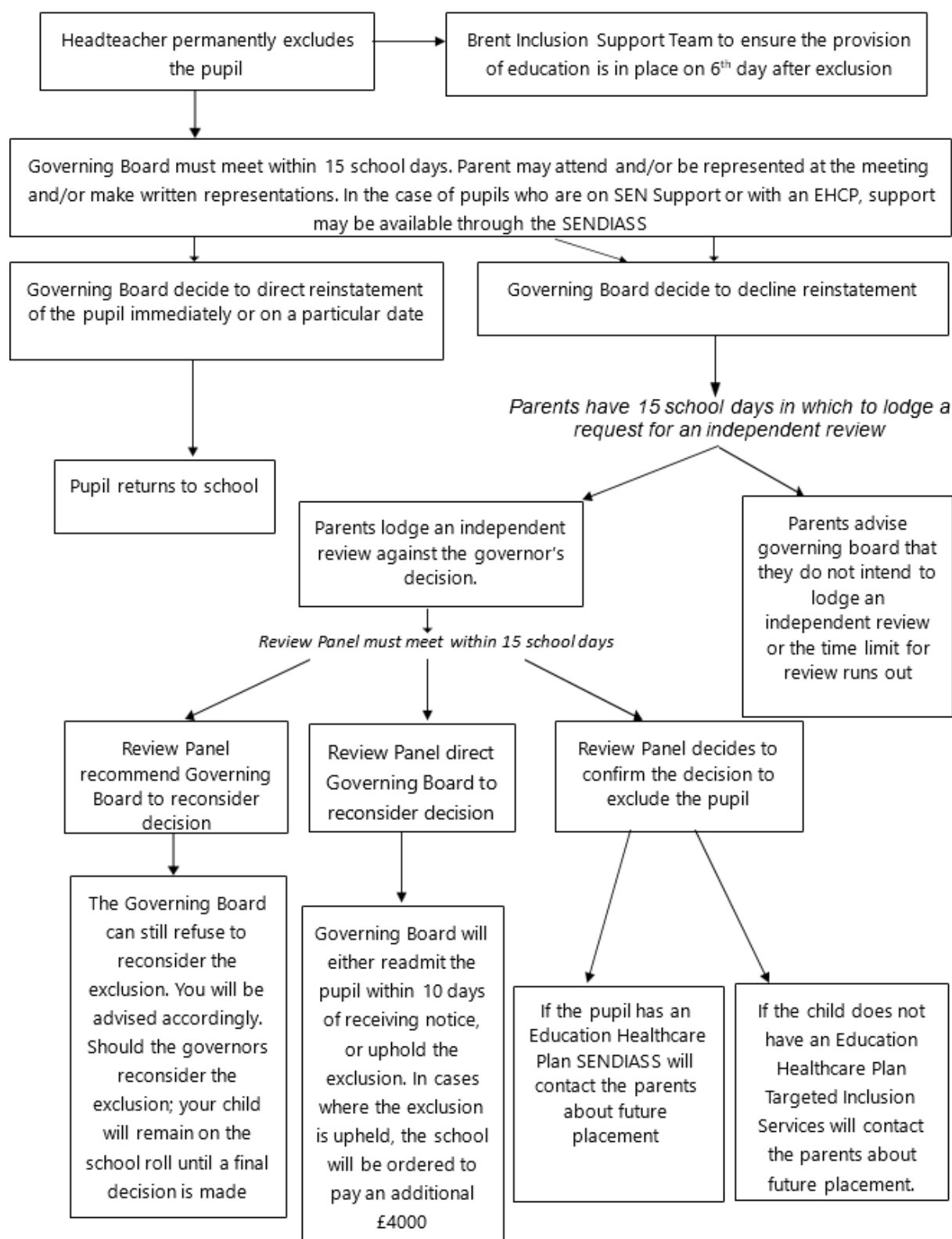
If this happens:

- Brent Council remains responsible for ensuring your child receives suitable full-time education
- A new placement will be arranged where necessary

Your child should not be left without suitable full-time education.

If you have concerns about your child's education at any point, you should contact Brent Council using the details provided in this guide.

Timeline of permanent exclusion process:



Your Rights and Responsibilities

As a parent or carer, you have important rights during the exclusion process, as well as responsibilities to support your child's education and welfare.

Your Rights

- **To be informed**
 - You must receive a written letter from the school explaining the reason for the exclusion, the length (or confirmation of permanent exclusion), and what will happen next
- **To make representations**
 - You can share your views with the governing board about the exclusion decision
- **To attend meetings**
 - You have the right to attend governing board meetings and bring a friend or representative
 - You can request that meetings are held remotely, where this can be arranged fairly
- **To request an Independent Review Panel (IRP)**
 - If the governing board upholds a permanent exclusion, you can request an IRP within **15 school days** of receiving the decision letter
 - The IRP will review whether the decision was **lawful, reasonable, and fair**
- **To access information and support**
 - Brent Inclusion Support Team: **schoolexclusions@brent.gov.uk**
 - SENDIASS and independent advice services such as Coram Children's Legal Centre and ACE Education
- **To see your child's school record**
 - You can request a copy of your child's school record in writing (schools may charge for photocopying)

Your Responsibilities

- **Ensure your child is not in a public place during school hours**
 - This applies during the first five school days of an exclusion unless there is a good reason
 - Failure to comply may result in a penalty notice
- **Support your child's education**
 - Ensure that work provided during the first five school days is completed and returned
- **Engage with meetings and support**
 - Attend reintegration meetings following a suspension where possible
 - Work with the school and other services to support your child
- **Stay engaged with arrangements after exclusion**
 - Keep in contact with the school or Brent Council regarding education arrangements
 - Raise any concerns if your child is not receiving suitable full-time education

Support and Advice

The Brent Inclusion Support Team can provide **information about the exclusion process**, help you understand what will happen next, and **signpost you to appropriate sources of independent advice**.

The Inclusion Support Team **does not provide legal advice or representation**.

If you need advice about challenging a decision, you are encouraged to contact an **independent advice service**, such as SENDIASS, Coram Children's Legal Centre, or ACE Education.

Support Available

We understand that exclusions can be challenging for families. Brent provides a range of services to help you and your child during this time.

Brent Inclusion Support Team

- Provides **information about the exclusion process** and helps you understand what will happen next
- Can help you understand the different stages of the process and what to expect
- Can **signpost you to appropriate support services and independent sources of advice**

SENDIASS

(Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service)

- Offers **independent and impartial advice** for parents of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- Helps you understand your rights and options under the SEND Code of Practice

Independent Advice Services

- **Coram Children's Legal Centre**
Provides free legal advice on education law
- **ACE Education**
Offers advice on school exclusions and education-related issues

Other Support Options

- **Pastoral Support Plans (PSPs)**
A structured plan agreed between the school, parents, and the child to support behaviour and reduce the risk of exclusion

- **Managed Moves**

A voluntary agreement between schools and parents to allow a child to move to another school for a fresh start

- **Alternative Provision**

Short-term or longer-term placements in a different setting to support your child's education and engagement

Important Information About Support

The Brent Inclusion Support Team can help you understand the exclusion process and access support, but it **does not provide legal advice or representation**.

If you need advice about challenging a decision, you are encouraged to contact an **independent advice service**.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. Can my child be excluded for non-disciplinary reasons?

No. Schools cannot exclude a child because of:

- Special educational needs or disabilities (SEND)
- A breakdown in the relationship with parents
- Failure to attend a reintegration meeting

Exclusions must be for **serious breaches of the school's behaviour policy**.

2. What is the difference between a suspension and a permanent exclusion?

- **Suspension:**
A fixed period during which your child cannot attend school.
Suspensions cannot exceed **45 school days in a single academic year**
- **Permanent exclusion:**
Your child will not return to the school unless reinstated by the governing board

3. What happens after my child is excluded?

- **Day 1:**
You receive a letter explaining the reason and next steps
- **Day 1–5:**
Work is provided by the school
- **From Day 6:**
Full-time education is arranged by:
 - The school (for suspensions), or
 - Brent Council (for permanent exclusions)

- **Governing Board:**

A meeting may take place depending on the type and length of exclusion

- **After the decision:**

You may request an **Independent Review Panel (IRP)** within **15 school days** where applicable

4. What are my rights as a parent or carer?

You have the right to:

- Attend governing board and IRP meetings (in person or remotely)
- Make representations about the exclusion decision
- Request an IRP if a permanent exclusion is upheld
- Access independent advice and support
- Request a copy of your child's school record

5. What happens after a permanent exclusion?

Your child will continue their education in another setting, such as:

- A **pupil referral unit (PRU)**, or
- Another form of **alternative provision**

Brent Council is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education from the sixth school day.

6. What happens if my child's placement cannot continue?

If your child is attending a pupil referral unit or alternative provision and the placement cannot continue:

- Brent Council remains responsible for ensuring your child receives suitable full-time education
- A new placement will be arranged where necessary

Your child should not be left without education.

If you have concerns about your child's education at any point, you should contact Brent Council using the details in this guide.

7. What does dual registration mean?

If your child attends alternative provision or is directed off-site:

- The main school remains the **primary register**
- The other setting may hold a **subsidiary registration**

Attendance codes may include:

- **B** – Education off-site
- **D** – Dual registration
- **E** – Absent (for example, during a period of suspension where no alternative provision has yet started)

Schools are responsible for ensuring that attendance is recorded accurately in line with Department for Education guidance.

8. What is a managed move and how is it different from off-site direction?

- **Managed Move:**
A voluntary agreement between schools and parents for a child to move permanently to another school
- **Off-Site Direction:**
A temporary placement at another setting to support behaviour or engagement
The pupil remains on roll at their school

9. What if my child has an EHCP or is looked after?

Permanent exclusion should only be used in **exceptional circumstances**.

Additional safeguards apply, and Brent Council will work closely with you and other professionals to ensure appropriate support is in place.

10. Where can I get support?

- Brent Inclusion Support Team: schoolexclusions@brent.gov.uk
- [SENDIASS \(for SEND advice\)](#)
- [Coram Children's Legal Centre](#) and [ACE Education](#) (for independent advice)

The Inclusion Support Team can provide **information about the process and signpost you to support**, but does not provide legal advice or representation.

11. Can the school reduce my child's timetable instead of excluding?

Schools should not use reduced timetables as an alternative to exclusion or in a way that limits access to education without a clear plan and your agreement.