



**Cornwall  
Education  
Learning Trust**

## **Suspensions and Exclusion Policy**

**Cornwall Education Learning Trust Policies**

Cornwall Education Learning Trust (CELT), Atlantic Centre, Trenance Leisure Park, Newquay, Cornwall TR7 2LZ

## Our Mission

At Cornwall Education Learning Trust (CELT), our mission is clear: to provide every learner with an **exceptional educational experience**. One that enables them to thrive, achieve and succeed in life. We believe in a **100%** mindset, that every learner, in every classroom, in every school, deserves the very best we can offer. For us, 100% means no compromise: no learner left behind, no community overlooked, and no opportunity wasted.

Our strategic goals reflect this ambition. We are committed to empowering and growing our people, building an ambitious all-through entitlement, forging exceptional relationships with our communities, transforming provision through meaningful partnerships, and leading an ethical, effective and innovative organisation. These are not just aspirations; they are promises that shape the way we work and the culture we are building together.



## Our Values

Our values are at the heart of everything we do. We believe in the power of **Collaboration**, building strong relationships and working together as one team to achieve our collective goals. We are committed to **Empowerment**, creating a culture where initiative, innovation and trust flourish, and where every individual feels valued, respected and motivated.

As a Trust, we are grounded in promoting **Leadership**, sharing a moral and ethical purpose to improve the lives of others and make a lasting difference for our learners and communities. And we embrace **Transformation**, approaching change positively so that we can all become our best selves and do our best work.

These values guide every decision we make and every action we take. They are the foundation of our Trust and the reason we can offer such exceptional opportunities for our learners and staff. If you choose to join CELT, you will be part of a values-driven organisation where people are supported to grow, contribute, and thrive.



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# 1. Policy Overview

## 1.1 Policy Purpose and Aims

Cornwall Education Learning Trust (CELT)'s exclusion policy aims to set out the process that will be followed and the additional considerations around suspensions and exclusions that CELT will apply. Good behaviour and self-discipline lead to effective learning and help prepare learners for life beyond the school gate.

Where CELT's approaches towards behaviour management have been exhausted, then suspensions and permanent exclusions will sometimes be necessary as a last resort. This is to ensure that other learners and teaching staff are protected from disruption and can learn in safe, calm, and supportive environments.

CELT will always have regard to the Statutory Guidance on Suspensions and Exclusions (August 2024) when making decisions on suspensions and exclusions and will follow the law, as set out in the relevant School Discipline (Learner Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulation 2012 (as amended).

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy and the SEND policy for the school.

## 1.2 Policy Approval and Review

<b>Policy Version Number:</b>	1.3
<b>Approved By:</b>	Quality of Education
<b>Approved On (Date):</b>	16.10.2025
<b>Review Period:</b>	Annually
<b>Policy Lead:</b>	Deputy Trust Lead

## 1.3 Policy Version History

Policy Version	Date Issued	Summary of Changes
1.0	30.11.2022	Original draft
1.2	29.08.2024	Annual review
1.3	19.08.2025	Learners Updated references to suspension and permanent exclusion guidance. Updated references to governance structure.



## 2. Application of Policy

This policy applies to all members of CELT community. Each school within CELT will apply suspensions and exclusions in accordance with this policy and ensure that its contents are relayed to all staff, parents, carers, learners.

## 3. Types of Exclusion

Suspensions and permanent exclusions are different:

### 3.1 Suspensions

Previously called fixed-term exclusions, are where a learner is prevented from attending the school for a fixed period. This should be the shortest time necessary to ensure minimal disruption to the learner's education, whilst mindful of the seriousness of the breach of policy. At the end of the period, they are expected to return to school following a reintegration meeting.

A learner may receive a maximum 45 days of suspension in an academic year before being permanently excluded.

### 3.2 Permanent Exclusions

Where, subject to a decision of the Trust board to reinstate the learner to the school, the learner is prevented from attending the school again. A decision to permanently exclude will only be taken in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy and if allowing the learner to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the learner or others such as staff or learners in the school. This is a very serious decision, and the headteacher will consult with the Trust Leader or Deputy Trust Leader as soon as possible in such case.

## 4. Roles and Responsibilities

All members of the CELT community are expected to follow this policy. Roles, responsibilities and expectations of each section of the CELT community are set out in detail below.

### 4.1 Headteacher

All decisions to suspend or permanently exclude a learner will be taken by the headteacher after considering all the circumstances. Every decision made will be proportionate to the seriousness of the behaviour with reference to the school's behaviour policy.

### 4.2 Trustees

The board of trustees is responsible for forming panels to review exclusions and suspensions when it is required to do so, it is requested by parents and carers, or it is, in its view, prudent to review an individual decision. In each case, the decision of the relevant panel will be to decide whether to uphold the exclusion or suspension, or instead to reinstate the learner to the school.



## 4.3 Parents and Carers

Parents and carers will be informed without delay of any suspension or exclusion and there is an ability to make representations in regard to any suspension or exclusion decision. Details will be provided on the rights parents and carers have with every letter that is sent from the headteacher.

## 4.4 Learners

All learners of CELT are expected to follow the expectations regarding their behaviour to ensure that all learners can learn and participate in school life effectively. Where those expectations are breached, the behaviour policy will apply.

# 5. CCTV, witness evidence and pupil views

CELT uses Close Circuit Television (CCTV) within its premises. This is to provide a safe and secure environment for pupils, staff and visitors. If behavioural incidents are recorded on CCTV, the footage may be viewed as part of the investigation and the content considered before imposing a sanction. If CCTV is relied upon for a decision on a suspension or exclusion, then it will be shown in some format (redacted as necessary) at any review meeting.

Where witness evidence is relied upon, whether that be from a pupil or a staff member, the statement(s) will be provided at any review meeting. All statements will be signed and dated unless the headteacher has good reason to protect the anonymity of the relevant witness. Reasons may include threats of reprisals.

Before taking a decision to suspend or exclude and where appropriate, the headteacher will take the learner's views into account, considering these in light of their age and understanding, and inform the learner about how their views have been factored into any decision made. Where relevant, the pupil will be given support to express their view, including through advocates such as parents or, if the learner has one, a social worker. The headteacher will also take account of any contributing factors identified after an incident of misbehaviour has occurred.

# 6. Trust-Directed Interventions

## 6.1 Internal Direction

Internal Direction - when a learner is formally directed away from the rest of the class and must work away from their class for a fixed period. An internal direction is a decision made by a member of the senior leadership team, where a learner's behaviour is escalating, and more serious measures need to be taken. Typically, a learner receiving a consequence of this level should be receiving additional support for their behaviour, intended to help them to avoid their behaviours.



## 6.2 Internal Direction

Off-site direction - CELT may require a learner to attend another education setting to improve their behaviour. These off-site directions are:

6.2.1 Trust direction is used, where appropriate, when a learner is directed from the school and must work in a partner school for a fixed period of time. This will be at the discretion of the headteacher or member of staff with delegated responsibility, working in co-ordination with the partner school. A Trust direction may be issued for a serious breach of the behaviour policy or for repeated behaviours over time. During a Trust direction the learner will have contact with an emotionally available adult and an intervention to prevent the behaviours from continuing. The duration of the Trust direction will be assessed on the severity of the incident but will be a maximum of 5 days. This should be the shortest time necessary to ensure minimal disruption to the learner's education, whilst mindful of the seriousness of the breach of policy.

6.2.2 Internal Trust Transfer - a headteacher will consider whether an off-site direction to attend another CELT school setting as part of a planned intervention should be used as a short-term measure as part of the school's behaviour management strategy to improve a learner's behaviour where in-school interventions and/or outreach have been unsuccessful or are deemed inappropriate. We will share relevant information with the new school and check that they have an integration strategy. While parental consent is not needed, discussions would take place with parents/carers. At the end of this off-site direction, the relevant parties (including the parents/carers) will review the placement before a decision is taken about whether the move becomes permanent or transition back to original school takes place.

6.2.3 Off-Site Direction – a headteacher will consider whether an off-site direction to attend another school or alternative provision setting as part of a planned intervention is to be used as a short-term measure as part of the school's behaviour management strategy to improve a learner's behaviour where in-school interventions, internal Trust transfer and/or outreach have been unsuccessful or are deemed inappropriate. We will share relevant information with the new school/ provision and check that they have an integration strategy. While parental consent is not needed, discussions would take place with parents and carers.

## 7. Guiding Principles

Learners who show signs of emotional and behavioural difficulties which are not resolved by the school's normal disciplinary procedures should move to the school-based stages of assessment and provision. Consideration of the learner's difficulties by means of these stages enables the school to draw on increasing levels of support within the school and from external agencies. The prompt recognition of a learner's difficulties combined with effective preventative work may avoid the need for suspension at a later date.

Only the headteachers have the legal power to suspend or permanently exclude a learner. If the headteacher is absent, the power rests with the most senior teacher who should make clear that



they are acting in the Headteacher's absence. The headteacher must be informed as soon as is reasonably possible.

CELT schools will take all reasonable steps to avoid suspending learners in line with the school's behaviour policy and individual schools' protocols/procedures and will implement appropriate intervention strategies to support them as individuals. These may include:

- identifying any special educational needs
- interviewing the child/young person and parent/carer
- negotiating agreements with learners and parent/carer
- restorative justice and mediation
- using the detention system
- removing the child/young person for a limited period from a specific activity
- individual work with the pastoral teams
- drawing up a co-regulation plan
- referral to the early help hub
- use of internal learning spaces
- involving other external agencies where appropriate

Suspensions serve to make a clearly understood statement that certain behaviour is not to be tolerated within CELT schools, and that learners, parents and carers are faced with their responsibilities and do respond to serious disciplinary issues.

Suspensions and/or permanent exclusion may be used for any of the following, all of which constitute examples of unacceptable conduct:

- verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against staff
- verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against learners
- physical assault on staff
- physical assault on learners
- bullying
- racist abuse
- sexual misconduct
- abuse against sexual orientation and gender reassignment
- abuse relating to disability
- damage
- drug and alcohol related incidents
- theft
- carrying an offensive weapon
- persistent disruptive behaviour
- inappropriate use of social media
- bringing the school into disrepute
- unacceptable behaviour which has previously been reported and for which the school sanctions and other interventions have not been successful in modifying the learner's behaviour
- This is not an exhaustive list and there may be other situations where the headteacher makes the judgement that exclusion is an appropriate sanction.



## 8. Decision to Suspend or Exclude

The decision to suspend and/or permanently exclude a learner should be taken only:

- in response to serious breaches or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy
- if allowing learners to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of them or others in the school

Suspensions/ permanent exclusions will not be imposed in the heat of the moment unless there is an immediate threat to the safety of others or to the learner themselves.

Before a decision is made to suspend and/or permanently exclude a learner, the headteacher will ensure that a thorough investigation has been carried out, consider all the evidence available to support the allegations, provide an opportunity for the learner to give their version of events, considering these in light of their age and understanding, and inform the learner about how their views have been factored into any decision made. Where relevant, the learner will be given support to express their view, including through advocates such as parents or, if the learner has one, a social worker. The headteacher will also take account of any contributing factors identified after an incident of misbehaviour has occurred.

Where witness evidence is relied upon, whether that be from a learner or a staff member, the statement(s) will be provided at any review meeting. All statements will be signed and dated unless the headteacher has good reason to protect the anonymity of the relevant witness.

Reasons may include threats of reprisals.

Check whether the incident may have been provoked e.g. by bullying or racial or sexual harassment, if necessary, consult others and keep a written record of the actions taken.

The standard of proof to be applied is the balance of probabilities. The more serious the allegation, the more convincing the evidence substantiating the allegation needs to be.

For behaviour outside school, the headteacher may suspend and/or permanently exclude a learner whose behaviour has brought the school into disrepute or if that learner's actions would jeopardise the maintenance of good behaviour and discipline amongst the learners.

During the period of suspension, the school will endeavour to set work for the learner to complete and arrange for it to be marked.

Where a learner is given a suspension of duration of six days or longer, the school has a duty to arrange suitable full-time educational provision from and including the sixth school day.

During the suspension, the learner is the responsibility of the parent/carer and may not enter the school buildings or grounds or be in the vicinity of the school for the duration of the suspension/exclusion, unless the Headteacher has given prior written permission (e.g., for a pre-arranged meeting).

During the first five school days of a suspension or exclusion, parents/carers are responsible for their child and must ensure the learner is not present in a public place during school hours unless there is a reasonable justification, as required by law. Failure to comply may result in a Penalty Notice issued by the Local Authority.



If a learner attends school during a suspension/exclusion or otherwise fails to comply with the sanction the following actions will be taken:

- Immediate instruction to leave. The learner will be instructed to leave the premises and parents/carers will be contacted.
- Police involvement. If the learner refuses to leave, or safety cannot be assured, the Police will be called.
- Safeguarding referral. The school will complete a MARU (Multi-Agency Referral Unit) referral where there are safeguarding concerns, to ensure the young person is sufficiently supported.
- Local Authority notification. The Local Authority will be contacted to consider issuing a Penalty Notice for failure to comply with the suspension/exclusion.

Trespass is generally a civil matter, not a criminal offence. Schools are not public places; entry is by permission of the Headteacher (who has day-to-day management of the site).

- Implied licence. Certain people (e.g., parents/carers, invited visitors) may have an implied licence to enter school premises for legitimate purposes. This licence can be withdrawn by the Headteacher.
- Excluded pupils. Registered pupils are permitted on site during school hours or by agreement of the Headteacher (e.g., after-school clubs). Pupils who have been suspended/excluded may be trespassers if they come onto the premises without permission.
- Right of way: A recognised public right of way across the site (if any) is not affected by this policy; however, the behaviour expectations of the school still apply.

Suspensions and/or permanent exclusions will be recorded on the learner's records.

## **9. Learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabled Learners (SEND)**

Other than in the most exceptional circumstances, the school will endeavour to avoid suspending or permanently excluding learners with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP).

The school will make every effort to avoid suspending or excluding learners who are being supported on School Support (K) under the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice, including those on pathway plans who are being assessed for an Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP).

The school will seek advice and support from the LA and other professional agencies as appropriate.

The school has a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 not to discriminate against disabled learners by suspending or excluding them from school because of behaviour related to their disability.



The school will take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled learners are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with their non-disabled peers. What constitutes a reasonable step will depend on the circumstances of each case.

## **10. Learners who have a social worker, including looked after children (LAC) and previously looked after children (PLAC)**

The school will proactively support and co-operate with social workers, foster carers and the local authority as a corporate parent in doing everything possible to avoid suspending or excluding a learner who has a social worker, LAC or PLAC.

Suspension and/or permanent exclusion of learners who have a social worker, including LAC and PLAC would only be considered as an absolute last resort.

No learner who has a social worker, LAC or PLAC will be suspended or permanently excluded without discussion with the Local Authority

Where a learner with a social worker, LAC or PLAC is suspended and/or permanently excluded, the school will attempt to arrange alternative provision from the first day of the suspension and/or permanent exclusion via the virtual school.

## **11. Reintegration strategy meetings following suspension or off-site direction**

Where a learner is suspended or is directed to be educated off-site, upon return to the school both the learner and parents will be invited to a reintegration strategy meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to:

- offer the learner a fresh start
- help them understand the impact of their behaviour on themselves and others
- teach them to how meet the high expectations of behaviour in line with the school culture
- foster a renewed sense of belonging within the school community
- build engagement with learning so that further suspensions are not needed

School staff will work with the learner to understand what led to the behaviour and to establish if any changes can be made or further support implemented from a pastoral or practical perspective that might reduce the chance of repeat behaviours. Previous behaviour is not seen as an obstacle to future success.

The school used various measures to support a learner's successful reintegration including:

- daily contact with a designated professional in-school



- use of a communication card with personalised targets leading to personalised rewards
- ensuring the learner receives academic support upon return to catch up on any lost progress
- planned pastoral interventions
- regular reviews with the learner and parents to praise progress being made and raise and address any concerns at an early stage
- informing the learner, parents and staff of potential external support

Whilst reintegration meetings are highly encouraged by the school, learners will not be prevented from being admitted to the school or being put in mainstream classes because a meeting has not taken place.

## 12. Reviewing Learners Trust Directions and Suspensions

CELT will review any learner that has received more than ten days of Trust Directions or Suspensions within an academic year. This is to review the provision and the needs of the learners are being addressed.

The Trustees will consider reinstatement within the statutory time limits as follows:

- More than 15 school days in a term (alone or in total): the panel must meet within 15 school days of being notified to consider reinstatement.
- Between 5 and 15 school days in a term (total): the panel must meet within 50 school days if requested by parents/carers to consider reinstatement.
- Where a public examination or national curriculum test would be missed: the panel will try to meet before the date of the examination/test and, in any case, must meet within 15 school days of being notified.

## 13. Cancelling a Suspension or Exclusion

A suspension or exclusion can be cancelled by the headteacher as long as the suspension or exclusion has not been considered by a panel. In relation to an exclusion, it cannot be cancelled if the total time the learner was excluded or suspended that academic year would be over 45 days at the point of the decision to cancel the exclusion.

Where a suspension or exclusion is cancelled, the relevant parties will be informed by the headteacher in accordance with the statutory guidance on suspensions and exclusions.



## 14. Suspensions before a Permanent Exclusion

In exceptional circumstances, learners may receive a suspension prior to a permanent exclusion. For each decision, the headteacher will send the relevant letter setting out the rights of parents and carers.

A suspension cannot be converted into a permanent exclusion and so any subsequent permanent exclusion would be a fresh decision due to commence immediately after the suspension had ended. Exceptional circumstances may include where further evidence has come to light or where the incident was serious and time is required to fully investigate the circumstances and consider alternatives.

## 15. Directing Off-Site and Managed Moves

Before taking any decision to permanently exclude a learner, the headteacher will consider whether a direction to attend alternative provision and/or a managed move as part of a planned intervention would be a reasonable alternative that should be considered.

For a managed move to take place there needs to be an agreement between the school, the parents and the new school that a managed move should occur. Before a managed move is agreed to, the learner will attend the new school for a fixed period as a direction off-site to ensure that the new school would be suitable for them. We will share relevant information with the new school and check that they have an integration strategy. At the end of this direction period, the relevant parties (including the parents and carers) will review the placement before a decision is taken about whether the move becomes permanent.

## 16. Safeguarding

Before a decision is taken to suspend or exclude a learner, senior leaders will consider the safety and wellbeing of the learner. Reasonable adjustments will be made to the sanctions as appropriate, and discussions will be held with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

The DSL will follow the safeguarding processes as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education – section 5 for cases that relate to rape or assault by penetration.

## 17. Independent Review Panels (IRPs)

CELT uses Cornwall local authority democratic services to arrange IRPs on its behalf. Requests where a permanent exclusion decision has been upheld should be made to [governance@celtrust.org](mailto:governance@celtrust.org) within 15 school days.

Further details on the role and powers of IRPs can be found in part 10 of the statutory guidance on exclusions and suspensions.



## 18. Reintegration by the Trust Board

Where an IRP either recommends reconsideration or quashes the initial decision of the panel appointed by the board of trustees, the decision will be considered within 10 school days. This may involve a rehearing with oral evidence given by the school and parents/carers or may be a reconsideration with only the panel members and the clerk present.

## 19. Remote Meetings

Any panel and/or an IRP meeting may be conducted remotely where the parents request for it to be conducted remotely and the meeting can be fairly held remotely, with all participants having access and are able to make representations. A meeting may also take place remotely where there is an extraordinary event or unforeseen circumstance that means it's not reasonably practicable to hold the meeting in person. Such events can include, but are not limited to, floods, fire, and an outbreak of an infectious disease.

In addition, where a child's social worker or the virtual school head are due to attend a meeting, they may join an in-person meeting remotely as long as it can be fairly accessed, the technology is available, and everyone would be able to make representations.

## 20. Complaints

If parents or carers have any concerns or complaints over the application or implementation of this policy, or feels that they are being pressured into a managed move, they should raise their concerns with a staff member or the headteacher in accordance with CELT's complaints policy. If the concern relates to an exclusion, the statutory procedure set out in the statutory guidance on exclusions and suspensions will be followed.

## 21. Equality Impact

CELT does all it can to ensure that its policies do not discriminate against learners or others, either directly or indirectly, in line with any Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics. This includes race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, and sex.

## 22. Monitoring Arrangements

The trustees review data on suspensions and exclusions to ensure that the use of suspensions and exclusions is appropriate.

The following are monitored by the trustees to ensure the processes and support for learners are appropriate:



- the interventions put in place for learners at risk of suspension and permanent exclusion
- the processes in place for determining and reviewing directions to alternative provision and that such placements are reviewed at sufficient intervals to assure that the education is achieving its objectives and that learners are benefiting from it

The full-time educational provision for learners of compulsory school age from the sixth consecutive school day of a suspension, in particular checking the provision is suitable and quality-assured to ensure that:

- any previous placements have been evaluated, including support for any applicable SEND
- there is a process in place to monitor the learner's attendance and behaviour at the provision
- the correct attendance code is being used
- the learner's child protection file and any other information relevant to the learner's safeguarding and welfare has been securely transferred to their new setting as early as possible

