BARNSLEY
Metropolitan Borough Council

Schools and Education settings: Access to Education Guidance

Guidance to support inclusion

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Access to Education: Inclusion guidance

1. introduction

a. This guide has been produced in partnership between schools and the local authority (LA) to support schools, academies and other professionals working with children, young people and their families. Its aim is to promote Barnsley's ethos on inclusive practice and to meet the objective of Every child in school Everyday Plan. It supports users in navigating the inclusion service available.

b. This guidance has been devised in line with the Barnsley Alliance Strategy, the local Early Help offer Every child in School Everyday plan, Inclusion Charter and DfE statutory guidance; Suspension and Permanent exclusion from maintained schools and academies August 2024. This takes learning from the Timpson review of school exclusion, May 2019, which has a focus on keeping children safe in education.

c. References are made throughout the text to the relevant guidance. Readers will be directed to government and local websites for the most up to date information and guidance.

d. Included in this guidance are the suspension and permanent exclusion flow charts and the paperwork to support the suspension and exclusion process, to support schools and academies in managing the suspension and exclusions process so that pupils continue to receive their education and can return to school as swiftly as possible.

2. Inclusion

a. Barnsley Council promotes inclusion and supports schools to develop and embed policy and practice to reflect an inclusive culture. This includes valuing all individuals and giving equal access and opportunity to all, removing discrimination and other barriers to inclusion

b. Through the Barnsley School Alliance and in partnership with the Multi Academy trusts that operate in the Barnsley borough we have created the Every child in school every day plan, an action plan which aims to, reduce suspension and exclusion, reduce the number of children who are Electively home Educated and reduce the number of children who are not in full time education, which in turn will increase the attendance and outcomes of children who attend Barnsley schools.

c. Every pupil, regardless of their characteristics, needs or the type of school they attend, deserves a high-quality education that allows them to flourish paving the way to a successful future.

d. Teachers should set high expectations for every pupil. They should plan stretching work for pupils whose attainment is significantly above the expected standard. They have an even greater obligation to plan lessons for pupils who have low levels of prior attainment or come from disadvantaged backgrounds.[1]

e. The Equality Act 2010, provides a framework for Barnsley council and schools to work within to commit to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality, fostering good relationships between partners and stakeholders and tackling the issues of disadvantage and underachievement.

[1] National Curriculum Framework

f. All pupils of statutory school age, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. We are committed to a promoting high-quality education in schools that are welcoming and respectful and where every pupil has the opportunity to succeed.

3. Context

a. The use of suspensions and exclusions has risen nationally and within our borough particularly in relation to our most vulnerable groups, in Barnsley we that we have a responsibility to work together to change this trajectory we are committed through our Inclusion Charter that the attendance and inclusion of children in school is the responsibility of everybody.

b. The Barnsley Alliance partnership promotes a culture of inclusion across our schools and academies and measures its success through Every Child in School Everyday plan against a reduction in suspensions and permanent exclusion from primary and secondary schools and a narrowing of the gap in attainment and progress of vulnerable groups.

c. Barnsley schools, behaviour policies promote positive behaviour with a consistent approach to implementation. Polices and practice are monitored and reviewed with all staff to ensure a culture of inclusive practice (Barnsley Alliance Strategy).

d. Barnsley Schools are committed to providing high quality first teaching, where staff have a good understanding of developing classrooms, that promote a positive learning environment that maximise emotional resilience.

e. Barnsley School Alliance has committed to ongoing professional development across the sector at no cost to ensure consistency in practice, quality first teaching and inclusive practice

f. The local authority has developed an offer to schools and families that works in partnership with families and agencies to assess and review the needs of children within the context of their families to ensure they receive the right support at the right time (Barnsley Early Help Strategy).

g. With all these components in place we aim to work together so that schools and the council are better equipped to act early and provide the right support for our vulnerable pupils and those at risk of suspension and exclusion.

4. Vulnerable groups

a. We acknowledge that suspension and exclusion are an important component of effective behaviour management in schools, however this must be balanced with the research and evidence that indicates the outcomes of suspended and excluded pupils are often poor. It is therefore right that head teachers carefully consider when suspension and exclusion is the right choice once they have exhausted other, more effective ways to address the underlying causes of behaviour.

b. Analysis of those reaching the end of Key Stage 4 in 2015/16 shows that, nationally, just 7% of children who were permanently excluded and 18% of children who received multiple suspensions went on to achieve good passes in English and Maths GCSEs; qualifications that are essential to succeeding in adult life (Timpson report May 2019).

c. Suspension and exclusion are also known markers for being at risk of becoming a victim or perpetrator of crime. Recent research can be found here regarding the

impact of suspension and exclusion in relation to outcomes into adult life Early adult outcomes for suspended pupils - Education Policy Institute

d. Pupils with SEMH as their primary SEN are more likely to be suspended and excluded than children with other primary SEN, those who have been supported by social care or are disadvantaged are all consistently more likely to be suspended and excluded from school than those without these characteristics. The data is clear that there are certain groups of children who may already be facing significant challenges in their lives outside of school, who are most likely to be suspended or excluded

e. Pupils who have autism are particularly vulnerable to being suspended or excluded from school. Sometimes behaviour associated with this hidden disability can be confused with non-compliance because of a lack of awareness of the condition. For example, a child or young person with autism trying to cope with the unstructured social aspects of school life can feel overwhelmed and become anxious, stressed, and aggressive, resulting in a meltdown. Head teachers may then feel that suspension and exclusion is the only solution to maintain the safety and well-being of other pupils. Further information regarding Barnsley's All age Autism Strategy can be found here Barnsley's All-Age Autism Strategy 2025- 2030 :: South Yorkshire I.C.B

f. Disruptive behaviour can be an indication of unmet needs and schools have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to policies and practices to ensure that pupils with autism feel safe, confident, and able to experience learning and social opportunities successfully.

g. Socio-economic disadvantage is another identified risk factor for mental health, suspension, exclusions, and poor outcomes. It is also a proxy indicator of SEND.

h. Barnsley schools will consider how their policies impact differently on pupils depending on their protected characteristics and will consider the use of exclusion to promote fair treatment of pupils from groups who are vulnerable to exclusion.

i. In Barnsley, we acknowledge the importance of identifying vulnerable pupils or groups within schools and that provision is made to support and promote their positive mental health and inclusion.

5. Mental health and emotional wellbeing indicators

a. According to the latest research commissioned by NHS digital, mental health problems affect one in eight pupils between the ages of 5 and 19, with numbers rising during teenage years with around 17 per cent of 17- to 19-year-olds experiencing diagnosable mental health problems[2]. Yet only a quarter of school-age pupils with a diagnosable problem receive any intervention at all, despite most parents of these children seeking professional advice.

b. The DfE 'Mental Health and Behaviours in Schools' document sets out how schools can support pupils whose mental health issues can manifest themselves through behaviour. Barnsley schools understand the important role they play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils by developing whole school approaches tailored to need, as well as considering the needs of individual pupils.

c. Research informs us that there is a complex interplay between the risk factors and protective factors in children's lives. Risk factors are cumulative and likely to impact on behaviour and manifest themselves as behaviours which can be barriers to learning whilst protective factors build resilience to mental health problems.

[2] NHS Digital, 2018, Mental health of children and young people in England, 2017

d. As social disadvantage and the number of stressful life events accumulate for children, more protective factors are needed to act as a counterbalance. The key protective and risk factors to mental health problems in the school, in the family and in the pupil are identified in 3.10 table 1 of the DfE March 2016, advice 'Mental Health and behaviours. Schools can utilise this table to inform policy and practice to promote resilience of their pupils

e. Social, emotional, and mental health is one of the four areas of SEND identified within the SEND Code of Practice 0-25, 2015. A school's approach to mental health and behaviour should be part of a consistent whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing. This should involve providing a structured school environment with clear expectations of behaviour, well-communicated social norms, and routines, which are reinforced with highly consistent consequence systems. This should be paired with an individualised, graduated response when the behavioural issues might be a result of educational, mental health, other needs, or vulnerabilities.

6. Understanding needs in context

a. Barnsley schools will show best practice around inclusion with a flexible, graduated approach to meeting the needs of children and young people. Positive behaviours for learning and behaviours that are barriers to learning happen in different contexts and are influenced by a range of factors. The context in which the behaviour happens is key to informing practice and provision and supports schools in developing a culture that maximises positive behaviours for learning. Schools will work closely with parents/carers and other agencies to develop a clear understanding of the behaviours to support the pupil and to promote practice that develops positive behaviours.

b. Schools will refer to the DfE advice 'Getting the simple things right: Charlie Taylor's behaviour checklists' to review and develop guidance and practice that embeds quality first teaching in promoting positive behaviour in classrooms (Getting the Simple Things Right).

c. A wide range of pupils have special educational needs, many of whom also have disabilities. Lessons should be planned to ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving. In many cases, such planning will mean that these pupils will be able to study the full national curriculum. The special educational needs and disability code of practice includes advice on approaches to identification of need which can support this. A minority of pupils will need access to specialist equipment and different approaches. The SEN and disability code of practice is clear about what should be done to meet their needs.

d. Promoting a culture of inclusion in line with SEND code of practice, head teachers will carefully consider if there are other, more effective, ways to address the underlying causes of any behaviours and put in place the support a pupil may need to develop positive behaviours for learning, without the need to exclude.

7. Ethos, policy, and impact

a. Barnsley schools play a central role in communities and school staff are skilled professionals who make a difference in the lives of children and young people. School ethos and practice informed by school policy are key to promoting inclusion and developing a consistent approach to promoting positive behaviours for learning.

b. All Barnsley schools have a behaviour policy to promote positive behaviours and respect. Best practice is that schools will follow the learning from, the review of behaviours in schools by Tom Bennett, which highlights making behaviour policies a continual focus in every aspect of school strategy and planning and a focus by senior staff on supporting the most challenging students appropriately.

8. Assessment

a. In some instances, pupils will not respond to the use of school's behaviour policy and it's at this point we need to consider any issues that may be impacting on the pupils social, emotional, and mental wellbeing as any imbalance in this may present itself through behaviours. To understand this, we need to capture the voice of the pupil. Schools are best placed to build positive working relationships with pupils providing pupil voice and advocacy, utilising pupil voice alongside observation tools and data collection to gain more detailed information about the behaviours and triggers.

b. Leadership and practitioners must reflect on on practice, using inclusion meetings and peer supervision to consider the impact of adaptions to practice, the use of different learning environments and individual learning and SEND and Inclusion plans. This approach will support practitioners in managing behaviour and wellbeing. Practitioners are encouraged to utilise the support and expertise of the SENCo, who can also access support through the LA SEND and Inclusion team.

c. Early identification of need and a consistent approach across all practitioners, embedded into schools' culture and ethos will support all pupils to be included in quality learning.

d. Working with parents and carers and drawing on the support of other agencies is vital to be able to understand the needs of the pupil within its context and respond appropriately. Schools are not expected to address and understand the complex underlying needs that some pupils have without the support of other professionals and the family (Timpson report).

e. An Early Help Assessment and Team around the family approach will ensure that child and the family receive the right support at the right time. Advice and guidance on how to engage families in the Early help process can be found Early Help Tool kit for Practitioners. early-help-for-families/early-help-toolkit-for-practitioners

f. In exceptional circumstances, and where pupils can be categorised, as vulnerable, specific actions around inclusion and support may also need to be considered, relating to the statutory guidance for specific areas of need. This may relate to vulnerable groups including:

   i. Those who have an education, health and care plan (EHCP).

   ii. Looked after children (LAC).

   iii. Children with additional health needs.

g. Keeping in mind that schools are not expected to address and understand the complex, underlying needs of pupils in isolation. In situations where they are looked after, have an EHCP or SEND, the designated school lead or SENCo, should communicate with external agencies such as the virtual head teacher, the EHC Team or Early Help or with their link Education Welfare Officer links with these services will ensure that inclusion plans are in place that reflect the needs of the pupil. Help with this can be found on Barnsley's local offer website. Barnsley Local Offer

9. Planning and delivering support

a. Developing a differentiated approach to meet pupil's needs is paramount to ensuring their inclusion. Working together the SENCo, external agencies, and behaviour leads will establish with the pupil and parent/carer, interventions to promote positive behaviours for learning through an inclusion support plan, this plan will consider access to the additional support that is available in school such as learning mentors, small group work regular contact with pastoral support staff, alongside CPD for teaching staff.

b. Where a multi-agency response is required, there will be a strong link between inclusion support planning, the early help assessment, and the family network. This will create a consistent approach and enable practitioners to consider any specialist involvement requests for targeted support, through the targeted early help offer.

c. If early help assessment is in place and feels stuck support will be gained through the early help surgeries more information regarding these surgeries can be found early-help-for-families/early-help-toolkit-for-practitioners

d. The council provides ongoing professional development opportunities for staff in respect of the early help process and safeguarding, further information regarding this can be found.early-help-for-families/early-help-toolkit-for-practitioners.

e. Training regarding inclusion support can be delivered to individual schools by contacting the educational phycology service and the SEND and Inclusion team.

10. Intervention and review

a. The fluid nature of pupils and their family's lives means that inclusion and early help plans will be regularly reviewed to monitor progress, celebrate success, and consider any adjustments to the intervention being delivered. The Family Network approach and the signs of wellbeing supports professionals in measuring the impact of interventions against agreed outcomes in partnership with the child and family, schools will also embed robust assess, plan do and review cycles into the SEND and Inclusion support plan and share this with any external agencies working with the family.

b. Additional targeted intervention support will be sourced as required through consultation with agencies such as those in the education inclusion service, including social communication and interaction specialist teachers, educational psychologists, EHC coordinators and SENCo support an Education Welfare Offices will also support schools in navigating coordinating and implementing targeted intervention.

c. The Education Welfare Service has linked Area Managers and Officers to schools, if a pupil is receiving multiple suspensions schools are encouraged to communicate with their linked manager or officer to seek advice and guidance, alternatively an email can be sent to exclusions@barnsley.gov.uk requesting contact for support.

d. When engagement with parents is a barrier, other agencies will be able to support with this. Education Welfare service and Targeted Early Help Support Practitioners may have a relationship with the family or be able to support you in establishing a relationship. The early help surgery can also be utilised to review and revise plans and interventions.

e. Secondary schools and academies are encouraged to seek support and intervention via the early intervention panel; these panels are held half termly are led by a secondary headteacher and made up of behaviour leads from secondary settings and professional from the multi-agency. Resource and intervention that support children and their families can be allocated to the child and family through this panel

f. These focused panels provide an opportunity for reflection of practice, review of current plans and an opportunity to consider all appropriate interventions available. Whilst the primary focus of the panel is to understand the needs of the child and family an allocate resource and intervention. The panel also provides an opportunity for

g. professional in attendance to receive peer support and mentoring, in the challenging context of behaviour management. Terms of reference and referral paperwork can be found in the appendices.

11. Reduced Provision/timetables

a. DfE statutory guidance on the use of part-time timetable and exclusions is very clear: In very exceptional circumstances, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a pupil's individual need. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part time package is considered as part of a reintegration package. A part-time timetable must not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement must have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision.

b. 'Informal' or 'unofficial' suspensions, such as sending pupils home 'to cool off', are unlawful, regardless of whether they occur with the agreement of parents or carers. Any suspensions of a pupil, even for a short period of time, must be formally recorded.

c. A reduced timetable should only be considered in exceptional circumstances, where every other avenue to ensure a pupil receives their full-time education has been exhausted and when a whole family assessment of need has been undertaken.

d. Where a pupil has a short-term medical condition that prevents full time attendance for a time limited period. (In these cases, a Medical Care Plan would be developed in partnership with school health).

e. Where there are behavioural difficulties, and the school is trying a reduced timetable as an intervention to try and avoid exclusion as part of an inclusion plan or a planned reintegration package, in these circumstances all other forms of intervention should have been explored, and assessment of the needs of the child and family should be in place this should include a team around the family and regular review meetings.

f. A reduced timetable can only be used for a pupil with an Education, Health & Care Plan in very limited circumstances. A pupil must not be put on a reduced timetable because of their special educational need as this may constitute discrimination. In some cases, a special educational need may also be a

disability and therefore constitute a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

g. A reduced timetable for a pupil with an Education, Health & Care Plan must not be implemented without written agreement of parents and the EHC Coordinator must be informed prior to implementing the change in provision.

h. Looked After Children are amongst some of our most vulnerable pupils. Therefore, a reduction in provision should only be used when all other inventions have been implemented, any reduction in provision must be included in the child's personal education plan and have the agreement of the virtual headteacher.

I. If a child has a social worker or there are known safeguarding concerns consideration must be given to the increased risked of reducing the time a child spends in school. Any decisions to reduce provision for children where safeguarding is a factor must be made in the multi-agency arena, to ensure that the child isn't placed a great risk by being out of education.

j. Principals/Headteachers must complete termly returns to the Education Welfare Service regarding all pupils not in receipt of 25 hours of education.

12 Suspensions and Exclusions

a. Principals/Head teachers, teachers in charge of other settings must by law have regard to the guidance on suspension and exclusions when making decisions and administering the suspension and exclusion procedure.

b. The decision to suspend or exclude should only be taken when there is a serious breach of the behaviour policy and where the behaviour of the child put themselves or their peers at risk.

c. When a suspension has been implemented there should be a strategy in place for reintegrating pupils, and for managing their future, which includes parents/carers, is informed by an assessment of need, and has a planned and reviewed response through collaborative working. In cases where parents are unable or refuse to attend meetings in school, home visits or telephone meetings can take place. Where other agencies are working with the family, school are encouraged to request their support to engage the parent in the reintegration process and remove any barriers to collaborative working. In instances where parents are unable to attend reintegration meetings, the school must ensure that the child is able to return to school and classroom education as soon as the period of suspension ends.

d. The right to an education remains when a child is suspended therefore schools and academies should take reasonable steps to set and mark work for pupils during the first five school days of suspension, alternative provision is arranged by the Local Authority on the 6th day

e. Schools must take the necessary steps to ensure exclusion from school does not mean exclusion from education. For the first five days of suspension, attendance should be coded as E once the sixth day provision is in place the school should check attendance with the agreed provider, If attendance is established, the pupil's attendance can be coded as D.

f. When suspension and exclusion is unavoidable, schools should follow the statutory guidance (appendix I) and Barnsley's exclusion procedure and documentation for suspension and permeant exclusion.

g. In all cases, local authorities have a duty to arrange suitable, full-time education for pupils of compulsory school age who would not otherwise receive education, including from the sixth day of a permanent exclusion and schools have a duty to arrange suitable, full-time education from the sixth day of suspension. Suitable education means efficient education suitable to a child's age, ability, and aptitude and to any SEN the child may have. In order to meet this responsibility head teachers must inform exclusions@barnsley.gov.uk on the day of their decision to permanently exclude the pupil.

h. If permanent exclusion is the most appropriate action, the focus should remain on ensuring that the pupil is reengaged in education. Barnsley's fair access process supports pupils return to education and ongoing communication with external agencies will ensure they continue to receive support.

i. In line with statutory guidance, head teachers should, as far as possible, avoid suspending or excluding any looked-after child. Where a school has concerns about a looked-after child's behaviour, the head teacher should inform the virtual school at the earliest opportunity. Virtual school staff will work collaboratively with the school to explore what needs to be put in place to support the child to improve their behaviour and avoid exclusion being necessary.

j.

k. As part of their regular processes' schools should routinely inform the virtual school if a child receives a suspension this should include the details of what prompted the suspension, how long the suspension is for and any reintegration arrangements.

l. If a looked-after child becomes at risk of permanent exclusion the Virtual School Head should be informed immediately.

12. Summary

a. In Barnsley we foster a local system that is characterised by:

   i. Strong self-reflective partnerships with clear accountability and governance structure.

   ii. Trusting relationships between a diverse set of providers, partners and stakeholders that enables effective problem solving, reflection and meaningful dialogue about what needs to improve to ensure children and young people are included.

   iii. Promotion of good mental health for all children and young people through an early intervention and prevention approach.

   iv. Development of the children's workforce so that support for inclusion is everyone's responsibility.

b. The above enables us to provide for our pupils to ensure they meet their outcomes and achieve their aspirations to enable them to become fully active members of our local community.

13. Appendix: list of key statutory guidance

a. Alternative provision: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-provision
b. Behaviour and discipline in schools: guide for governors: Behaviour and discipline in schools: guide for governing bodies - GOV.UK
c. Children missing education: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education
d. Working Together to Improve Attendance: Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK
e. Exclusion: School suspensions and permanent exclusions - GOV.UK
f. SEND Code of Practice, 0-25: SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf

14. Appendix Local procedures and support

a. Early Intervention Panel Terms of Reference
b. Early Intervention Panel Referral Form
c. Barnsley Suspension and Exclusion Documents



Education Welfare Service

Quick Reference Overview of the Suspensions Process

This is intended as a brief reference to the suspensions process, which should be read in conjunction with Barnsley MBC's full guidance and the DfE's Exclusions Guidance 2017

Was the incident a serious breach of the school discipline policy?

Would allowing the pupil to remain in school seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school?

→ YES →

If the parent can be contacted, the pupil can be suspended with immediate effect. If not, the pupil should be suspended at the end of the day.

Who should be informed?

- The parent/carer
- exclusion@barnsley.gov.uk
- Chair of the Pupil Discipline Committee (if more than 5 days or missing public exam)
- Any agencies working with the student/family

When and how should the parties be informed?

The parent/carer should be contacted immediately by phone and all parties should be informed in writing within one school day.

Responsibility for schoolwork

During the first 5 days work should be set and marked on its return. Parents should also be informed of their duty to ensure that their child is not found unsupervised during the first 5 days of the suspension without reasonable justification otherwise the Local Authority might issue a fixed penalty fine. School is responsible for providing full time education from the 6th day of suspension

When should the Pupil Discipline Committee take place?

- Suspensions 6-15 school days: meeting to take place between 6 and 50 school days following the first day of suspension ***if parents request a meeting***.
- Suspensions 16-45 days: meeting to take place between 6 and 15 days following the first day of suspension.

The meeting should, as far as possible, be at a time convenient to all parties, and follow the LA model procedures and guidance.

Who should be invited?

- The parent/carer
- The governors responsible for reviewing suspensions

The outcome of the meeting

Pupil reinstated
Pupil returns to school

Suspension upheld
Pupil returns to school on date specified on the suspension papers

If the pupil has returned to school before the meeting, place copies of the decision with the school record.

After the meeting

Clerk writes to the parents and the LA within one school day informing them of the decision.

Quick Reference Overview of the Permanent Exclusion Process

This is intended as a brief reference to the Permanent Exclusion process, which should be read in conjunction with the DfE Exclusions Guidance 2017

Incident occurs which leads the Head Teacher/Principal (or acting) to consider permanent exclusion. Investigate thoroughly, consider safeguarding, contact Virtual School if pupil is LAC, contact SEN if pupil has EHCP (including pending), seek advice from LA Exclusions Officer

It may be appropriate to impose a suspension in the first instance, pending a decision about permanent exclusion to allow time to check the guidance, assess the evidence, give the pupil the opportunity to state their case, seek advice and explore alternatives. Model letters are provided in our guidance to schools

Head teacher (or acting head) takes the decision to permanently exclude a pupil

Model letters are provided in our guidance to schools

School must inform Governors/Academy Trust and the Local Authority without delay (also notify the pupil's home Local Authority if different from Barnsley). Email a copy of the letter and exclusion form (that goes to parents) to

exclusion@barnsley.gov.uk

Schools to complete the required 'permanent exclusion template' with detailed background information of the student and to return asap to the above email address.

School must provide work for the pupil to undertake at home for the first 5 days. From the 6th day of the permanent

Education Welfare Service makes contact with the family to discuss the permanent exclusion process, the alternative provision from the 6th day and the process for identifying the pupil's next school/placement

The Governing Body/Academy Trust must convene a meeting (Discipline Committee) to review the Head teacher's decision by the 15th school day after the exclusion was made. The parent and Head teacher must be invited, maintained schools must invite the Local Authority. The clerk should send a copy of the letter inviting parents to the Discipline Committee meeting to

exclusions@barnsley.gov.uk

All parties should receive the Head teacher's written evidence 5 school days before the Discipline Committee meeting

Governors consider evidence on the balance of probabilities and whether the Head teacher's decision was lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair. Governors must take the decision to uphold or overturn the exclusion alone; all parties should withdraw before the Governors deliberate; the clerk may remain

No party should enter the meeting without the other parties, including the Head teacher. Governors and clerk may sit together but no other person should be on their own with the Governors

Governors should inform parents of the decision in writing without delay. A copy must also be sent to Julie Snowball. NB- parents have 15 school days from receipt of the decision letter to apply for an Independent Review

The parent should where possible be telephoned by the clerk on the same day of the hearing with the decision