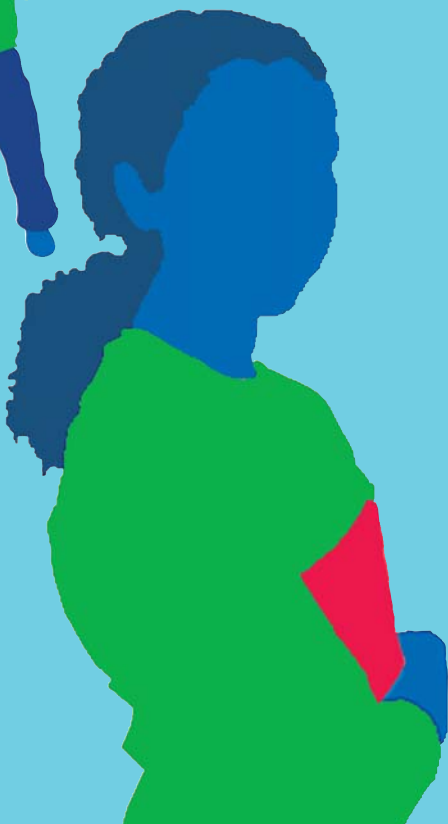




Children & Young People's Service **Exclusion from School**



Information for Parents and Carers

This booklet is about exclusion from school in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

You can find out about:

- the different sorts of exclusion
- why schools exclude children
- how you should be told if your child is excluded
- what will happen to your child's education during the exclusion
- what you can do if you don't agree with the exclusion
- where to get information and help.

Word list

Exclusion

This is when a headteacher decides to keep a child out of school for serious misbehaviour. The child is not allowed to go to that school.

Fixed term exclusion

This is when a child is kept out of school for a certain number of days. After this time, the child goes back to school.

These cannot be for more than 45 school days in a school year.

Permanent exclusion

- This means that the child can never go back to that school. This can happen in very serious cases
- If a headteacher decides to do this, the child can't go back to that school unless the school's governors or an appeal panel change this decision.

Appeal

This is when you have the right to say you disagree with what has been decided and ask for someone independent to look at it again.

Statement

This is something that you write to say what you think about the exclusion. It can be read by school governors or put on your child's school record.

Why are children excluded?

For very bad behaviour and because there would be serious problems for them or other people if they stayed in school. It might be for serious things like fighting or carrying a weapon.

Headteachers can also:

- make the exclusion shorter
- change a permanent exclusion to a fixed term
- stop an exclusion.

They must write to you to tell you about all decisions and about your rights. They must keep records of all exclusions.

What is an unofficial exclusion?

This is where the school sends your child home for bad behaviour without following the formal exclusions procedure. This might be:

- to "cool off"
- until you go to a meeting
- while you find another school.

You should not agree to this happening. However, if it does you should phone the Council's Exclusion Officer on 020 7364 5006 or the Parents Advice Centre 020 7364 6489 for advice.

How will you know if your child has been excluded?

You will be told straight away. The school should send you a letter within one school day. It will tell you:

- the type of exclusion and the reasons for it
- when your child must return to school (for fixed term exclusions)
- the number of lunchtimes your child is excluded (for lunchtime exclusions)
- how you can have your say to the governors
- how your child's education will carry on during the exclusion.

If you are not sent this letter - phone the Exclusions Officer on 020 7364 5006.

What will happen to your child's education?

For exclusions of 5 school days or less, the school will give your child work to do.

If the exclusion is for more than 5 school days, the school will set work for the first 5 days. Full-time education will be provided after 5 days.

In the first 5 days you must make sure your child is not in a public place in school hours without good reason or you could get a fine (£50).

After 5 days you must make sure your child attends whatever education facility the school has arranged.

How can you have your say?

You can tell the governors what you think about the exclusion:

- by writing a statement

- or by asking for a meeting to have your say. You can take a friend or legal person to the meeting
- your child can go to the meeting to speak if you both agree.

The exclusion letter will advise how you can contact the governors.

What will the Governors do?

There is a Pupil Discipline Committee, which looks at exclusions. This has 3 governors and a clerk to set up the meetings. You will be invited to be at the Committee meeting.

The Committee will listen to you and the Headteacher. They will decide if they think exclusion is the right thing to happen.

What does the Pupil Discipline Committee do?

For fixed term exclusions adding up to 5 school days or less in a term

The governors do not have to meet, but they will meet if you ask them. They must decide whether the exclusion was right. They cannot decide on an earlier date for your child to return to school.

For fixed term exclusions adding up to between 5¹/₂ and 15 school days in one term

Governors must meet if you write to them requesting a meeting. If your child is back in school when they meet, the governors must decide if the headteacher's decision was right.

For fixed term exclusions adding up to more than 15 school days in one term and permanent exclusions

Governors must meet within 15 school days of your child's exclusion.

For any exclusion which means your child misses taking a public exam

Governors must meet **before** the exam takes place. It is important that **you** let them know if this is the case.

If your child is permanently excluded or not back in school when it meets, the governors can:

- agree that the exclusion was right
- set an earlier date to return from a fixed term exclusion
- allow your child to take a public exam
- decide that your child should not be permanently excluded.

The governors cannot:

- make a fixed term exclusion longer or make it permanent
- add conditions to your child's return to school
- take out an exclusion from your child's record.

You can ask the governors to put a statement from you in your child's record. They will write to you within one school day to tell you what they have decided.

Can I Appeal?

Only if the governors agree with a permanent exclusion. The letter will say how to appeal to the Local Authority's Independent Appeal Panel.

Further advice about the appeal procedure can be obtained from the Exclusions Officer.

What does the Exclusions Officer do?

- tells schools about the right way to exclude a child
- goes to Pupil Discipline Committee meetings for

permanent exclusions to give advice and say how other Tower Hamlets schools might deal with similar problems

- goes to independent appeal hearings
- gives you information and advice about permanent exclusions
- makes sure education is set up for children who are permanently excluded.

More Information

If your child has special educational needs you can phone our Parents Advice Centre (PAC) for help on 020 7364 6489. The PAC can also give advice and information even if your child doesn't have special educational needs.

If your child has been excluded because of a disability and there has been discrimination, the PAC can help you.

- For fixed term exclusions, you can complain to:
SEN and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST)
Mowden Hall, Staindrop Road
Darlington DL3 9DN
Phone: 0870 606 5750
Website: www.sendist.gov.uk

- For permanent exclusions you can appeal to the Council's Independent Appeal Panel.

If you think your child has been racially discriminated against tell the Discipline Committee. To find out more go to the Commission for Racial Equality website at: www.cre.gov.uk.

Where can I get more help?

- **The Local Authority Exclusions Officer**
Tower Hamlets Children's Services
Phone: 020 7364 5006
Email: pupil.services@towerhamlets.gov.uk

- **The Parents Advice Centre (PAC)**
Information to Tower Hamlets parents and carers of excluded children
Phone: 020 7364 6489
Email: pac@towerhamlets.gov.uk

- **The Advisory Centre for Education**
Information on state education in England and Wales, including exclusion
Phone: 020 7704 9822
Website: www.ace-ed.org.uk

- **The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF)**
Improving Behaviour and Attendance:
'Guidance on Exclusion from Schools and Pupil Referral Units':
<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/exclusion/>

You can also get this leaflet in Bengali and Somali

This booklet is for Tower Hamlets schools and for anyone who has responsibility as a parent / carer. It is also for children themselves if they are 18 or older.

It was produced by Tower Hamlets Children's Services Pupil Services Team in September 2007.

Pupil Services

- **Tower Hamlets Children's Services**
Mulberry Place, 5 Clove Crescent,
London E14 2BG
Phone: 020 7364 5006
Fax: 020 7364 4311
www.towerhamlets.gov.uk

If you have any concerns about the Local Authority's procedures, you can complain to its Complaints Section:

Phone: 020 7364 2234

Fax: 020 7364 4976