

Exclusion policy: coronavirus addendum

Eastern Multi-Academy Trust



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1. Scope

This addendum applies for the duration of time that the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [temporary changes to exclusions during COVID-19](#) is in place.

It sets out temporary changes to our normal exclusion policy. Pupils, parents and staff should continue to follow our normal exclusion policy with respect to anything not covered in this addendum.

We may need to amend or add to this addendum as circumstances or official guidance changes. We will communicate any changes to staff, parents and pupils.

2. Remote panel meetings

For exclusions occurring between **1 June 2020 and 24 March 2021**, any meeting of a governing board exclusion panel or an independent review panel (IRP) will be held via remote access if:

- It is not reasonably practicable for the meeting to take place in person, within the usual timescales, due to coronavirus
- Our governing board (or the arranging authority, if the meeting is an IRP) is satisfied that:
 - All participants agree to the use of remote access
 - All participants have access to the technology which will allow them to hear and speak throughout the meeting, and (if a live video link is used) to see the other participants and be seen by them
 - All participants will be able to put across their point of view or fulfil their function
 - The meeting can be held fairly and transparently via remote access

During remote meetings, procedural requirements will remain as normal. For example, parents can still have a friend or representative join the meeting.

2.1 Responsibilities of the governing board or arranging authority

Our governing board (or the arranging authority in the case of an IRP meeting) will make sure the conditions above are met before a meeting takes place. When determining this, they will assess:

- The facts of the individual case
- The circumstances in which a meeting in person could be expected to take place
- The needs of the participants (as far as this is possible)
- The latest public health guidance

Ahead of the meeting, our governing board (or the arranging authority) will:

- Explain to participants what technology they propose to use

- Explain that participants do not have to agree to a remote meeting if they do not want to, though this will likely result in the meeting being delayed
- Take reasonable steps to facilitate participants' access to the technology required

If, once the meeting starts, it cannot proceed fairly (for example, because a participant cannot access the meeting), our governing board or the IRP will adjourn the meeting.

3. Applications for an independent review

For exclusions occurring between **1 June 2020 and 24 March 2021**, applications for an independent review must be made within **25 school days** (as opposed to 15 school days as outlined in our normal policy) of notice being given to the parents by our governing board of its decision to not reinstate a pupil.

The school will wait for 25 school days to pass without an application having been made before deleting the name of a permanently excluded pupil from the admissions register.

4. Timescales for holding panel meetings

4.1 Exclusions between 25 September 2020 and 24 March 2021

Our governing board will follow our normal timescales for holding meetings. However, where this is not reasonably practicable due to coronavirus or due to the conditions for a remote access meeting, the board will hold them as soon as it is safe to meet in person or practical to do so via remote access.

4.2 Exclusions between 1 June 2020 and 24 September 2020

Fixed-period exclusions resulting in the pupil missing between 6 and 15 school days in a term

Where a parent/carer or a pupil aged 18 or above over chooses to make representations about the exclusion, the governing board will hold a meeting to discuss the pupil's reinstatement within **60 school days**, or as soon as possible after that, if:

- Due to coronavirus it has not been reasonably practicable for the governing board to meet face-to-face within our normal timeframe of 50 school days
- It has not been reasonably practicable for the governing board to meet remotely due to the conditions for a remote meeting

Permanent exclusions, and fixed-period exclusions resulting in the pupil missing more than 15 school days in a term

The governing board will meet to discuss the pupil's reinstatement within **25 school days**, or as soon as possible after that, if:

- Due to coronavirus it has not been reasonably practicable for the governing board to meet face-to-face within our normal timeframe of 15 school days
- It has not been reasonably practicable for the governing board to meet remotely for a reason relating to the conditions for a remote access meeting

IRPs to consider permanent exclusions

The timescale for the IRP meeting will be extended to **25 school days** (from the usual 15 school days), or as long as reasonably necessary, if it has not been reasonably practicable for the review panel to meet:

- Face-to-face within 15 school days due to coronavirus
- Remotely for a reason relating to the conditions for a remote access meeting

5. Monitoring arrangements

We will review this policy as guidance from the DfE is updated, and as a minimum before the 24th March 2021. At every review, it will be approved by the Board of Trustees.

6. Links with other policies

This addendum links to the following policies and procedures:

- Exclusion policy
- Behaviour policy