Model Letter 6: from the Clerk to the Governing Body/Academy Trust Inviting Parents to the Permanent Exclusion Meeting (including cases where the total days of suspension are above 45 days in an academic year)

**SCHOOL LETTER HEAD (containing Clerk to the Governing Body’s Name and School Address)**

Dear **[Parent’s Name]**

**PUPIL NAME: [ENTER NAME] D.O.B: 00.00.00**

I am writing to inform you that a meeting of school **[Governing body/Academy Trust]** will take place on **[date]** at **[time]** to consider the head teacher's decision to exclude permanently **[pupil’s name]** from school.

You and your child are encouraged to attend and contribute to the meeting. You are welcome to bring a friend, advocate or legal advisor with you should you wish. Please let me know if you have a disability or special needs which would affect your ability to attend or take part in the meeting or if it would be helpful for you to have an interpreter at the meeting.

If you are unable to attend on the date or at the time of this meeting, please contact me at the earliest opportunity.

**You may add a paragraph at this point to identify the steps you will take to enable and encourage the excluded pupil to attend the meeting and speak on his/her own behalf, taking into account the pupil’s age and understanding, or how the excluded pupil may feed in his/her views by other means if attending the exclusion meeting is not possible.**

The **[Governing body/Academy Trust]** committee has the power to reinstate your child immediately or from a specified date; or, alternatively, decline to reinstate your child in which case you may request a review of the decision by an Independent Review Panel.

The Department for Education exclusion guidance states:

*In reaching a decision on whether a pupil should be reinstated, the governing board should consider whether the decision to suspend or permanently exclude the pupil was lawful, reasonable, and procedurally fair. This should consider the welfare and safeguarding of the pupil and their peers, the headteacher’s legal duties, and any evidence that was presented to the governing board in relation to the decision to exclude.* *(Paragraph 122)*.

The school will provide a pack of evidence about the exclusion which is circulated to all parties invited to the meeting. You should receive the pack of evidence at least 5 school days in advance of this meeting. If you have written evidence that you would like to submit to the meeting, please send this to me at the earliest opportunity so it can be circulated to all parties.

[Unless the exclusion results in the child missing a public examination or national curriculum test]

The Meeting will consist of at least 3 Governors, the Chairperson will briefly explain the procedure the Meeting will follow and the order in which each party will have the opportunity to put their case to the panel of governors and ask questions. The head teacher will present the reasons for the exclusion and witnesses may be called if appropriate. You and/or your legal representative/friend/advocate can present your case and/or give a written account. You will also have the opportunity to question the head teacher.

At the close of the Meeting, the **[Governing body/Academy Trust]** will ask all parties to leave the room so they can discuss the evidence presented by all parties and make a decision on whether they will offer to reinstate your child immediately or on a particular date, or if they will not offer to reinstate your child.

Where reinstatement would make no practical difference because for example, you make clear you do not want your child reinstated, the governing body must still consider whether your child should be officially reinstated. If it decides against reinstatement of your child following the permanent exclusion, you can request an independent review.

**[Use if a maintained school]**

The Local Authority will be invited to send a representative to attend the meeting to advise on procedural matters. You may wish to contact Sarah Rogers, Managed Transfers and Exclusions Manager, if you have any questions about the exclusion procedures on 01744 676210 or by email sarahrogers@sthelens.gov.uk

**[Use if an academy]**

The Academy or yourself may request that the Local Authority attend the Meeting of the Academy’s Governing Body as an observer and that representative may only make representations with the Governing Body’s consent. If you would like a Local Authority representative to attend, please inform the Clerk of this and contact Sarah Rogers, Managed Transfers and Exclusions Manager at the Local Authority, on 01744 676210 or by email sarahrogers@sthelens.gov.uk.

You may also find it useful to contact the following services for free and impartial information:

St Helens IASS (formerly Parent Partnership) offers impartial information, advice and support to parents of children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities. IASS can be contacted on 01744 673428.

Coram’s Child Law Advice service which can be accessed through the website <https://childlawadvice.org.uk/information-pages/school-exclusion> or by contacting by telephone on 0300 330 5485 from Monday to Friday, 8am – 6pm

ACE (Advisory Centre for Education) can be contacted on 0300 0115 142 from Monday to Wednesday from 10am to 1pm during term time. Information can also be found on the website <http://www.ace-ed.org.uk/>

Independent Provider of Special Education Advice (known as IPSEA – [www.ipsea.org.uk](http://www.ipsea.org.uk) ) is a registered charity. It offers free and independent information, advice and support to help get the right education for children and young people with all kinds of special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities

The statutory exclusions guidance ‘Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England including pupil movement May 2023’ can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>

Along with information and advice for parents:

 <https://www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/exclusions>

Please contact me [**insert telephone, email and address details**] and let me know the following:

* if you will be attending this meeting
* if your child will be attending this meeting
* if you will be bringing a friend, representative or advocate
* if there is any support that we could offer to assist you or your child to attend and contribute to this meeting
* if you wish to call any witnesses – their name and contact details
* if you have any written/documented evidence that you would like to provide ahead of the meeting

**[Use if an academy]**

* if you would like a local authority representative to be invited to the meeting

Please find enclosed an order of proceedings for the meeting.

Yours sincerely

**[Name]**

**Clerk to the [Governing Body/Academy Trust]**

Cc Headteacher

Sarah Rogers, Managed Transfers and Exclusions Manager

**Governing Body Meeting to Consider Exclusion**

**PLEASE NOTE: The Governing Body will not have discussed the exclusion with any party prior to the start of the meeting.**

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| The Clerk meets with the Governing Body and explains the process, answers questions and seeks nominations for a Chair if one is not already appointed.The Clerk leads in the parent(s), head teacher and any others attending the Meeting.The head teacher, parents and all others attending will enter and leave the Meeting at the same time. The Chair makes introductions, explains the purpose and the order of the Meeting before handing over to the Chair.Order of the Meeting:* The head teacher explains the reason(s) for the exclusion and presents evidence.
* Parent(s) may question the head teacher about the evidence which has been presented.
* The members of the Governing Body question the head teacher.
* Parent(s) will be invited to put their case forward.
* The head teacher may ask questions of the parent(s) about their case.
* The members of the Governing Body may ask questions of the parent(s) about their case.
* The Local Authority representative makes a statement.
* The members of the Governing Body question the LA representative.
* The head teacher sums up his/her case.
* Parent(s) sum up their case.
* The Chair will close the Meeting and clarify how parties will be informed of their decision.
* Members of the Committee will then discuss the case in private and come to a decision.
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