Internal Exclusion Guidance

Introduction

This guidance on internal exclusion is aimed at all schools and offers advice and good practice that schools may find helpful. There is no requirement for schools to follow this guidance, it should be used as a guide as to what internal exclusion should look like.

Internal exclusion is an internal process within the school and is used when the objective is to remove the pupil from class, not from the school site, for disciplinary reasons. It may be a formal process within the school but it is not a legal exclusion so exclusions legislation and the department's guidance on exclusion from school does not apply. Sending a pupil off site for behavioural reasons is a legal exclusion and has to be dealt with and recorded as such.

There is not a prescribed model for the use of internal exclusion. This advice is intended to support schools to consider best practice in relation to their own setting and individual circumstances. Internal exclusion can form part of a whole school approach to promoting positive behaviour. Many schools operate behaviour management systems which involve the use of internal exclusion.

Internal exclusion may serve a number of different purposes, although its primary function is as a sanction to accommodate those pupils who have been removed from a lesson at very short notice for poor behaviour. It is mainly a feature of secondary provision. In a primary school the facility may more commonly be the head teacher's room or other teaching area, while in secondary schools there may be a designated 'remove room'. Internal exclusion or remove rooms are often supervised by senior staff, although not exclusively so.

Remove rooms are a separate resource from a Learning Support Unit which provides short-term teaching and support programmes tailored to the needs of pupils who need help in improving their behaviour, attendance or attitude to learning. Advice on establishing and maintaining a Learning Support Unit can be found at www.teachernet.gov.uk/learningsupportunits/.

It is not advisable to use the term **'internal seclusion'** as the word **'seclusion'** legally means forcing a child to spend time alone against their will, whereas the aim of internal exclusion should be to provide appropriately supervised education not simply as a punishment but to secure improvements in the pupil's behaviour. It is also inappropriate to use the term **'inclusion room'.** In this guidance we refer simply to a **'remove room'.**

Effective Practice

As part of a whole school approach to behaviour and attendance, internal exclusion usually offers immediate, short-term provision in order that learning and teaching for the majority of pupils can continue uninterrupted. Any period of internal exclusion should be for the shortest time possible. It is good practice to develop a clear and shared understanding between all staff, children and young people, parents and carers about the policy and practice involved in internal exclusion. If internal exclusion is one of the disciplinary measures

used by a school, this should be reflected in the school's behaviour policy. Guidance for schools on the establishment of school behaviour policies (including both the relevant legal requirements and good practice advice) is available at http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/ schooldisciplinepupilbehaviourpolicies/.

Remove rooms **should be** used:

- for pupils who have been internally excluded and referred through the correct channels

- when a potentially explosive situation can be resolved by placing pupils in the remove room

- in line with the school's behaviour policy

Remove rooms **should not be** used:

- for statutory education provision for excluded pupils

- as a place where pupils catch up on coursework or missed exams and tests

- for pupils sent without using the school's referral mechanism

Internal exclusion should **not become:**

- a provision for long-term respite care

- a dumping ground for pupils who may need specific support

- a 'badge of honour' for children and young people (i.e. they can gain inappropriate approval from their peers)

- a fast track to permanent exclusion

Referrals

There needs to be a transparent referral system for pupils who are internally excluded. An internal exclusion could, for example, be authorised by the Head of Year or a senior member of staff on the recommendation of the class teacher. The reasons for the referral to the remove room should be made clear to the pupil (and parents/carers if appropriate). The referral should also include information on what lessons the pupil will be missing and any suggested work that can be completed in the remove room. All referrals should be reported to the head teacher.

Schools may wish to inform parents of any longer referral to the remove room. This would help to emphasise the seriousness of the sanction. Parents and carers

need to know and understand the school's policy on internal exclusion, as part of the school's behaviour policy. Further information about communicating the behaviour policy to parents can be found at http://www.teachernet. gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/schooldisciplinepupilbehaviourpolicies/ nonstatguidanceforheadsandstaff/communicatingbehaviourpolicy/.

Education in the remove room

Pupils should understand that they will be required to complete set work whilst excluded from class and this work should be provided by teachers. Pupils should also be encouraged to reflect on the reasons for their internal exclusion.

Where pupils are placed in internal exclusion for more than half a day, particular attention should be given to the activities they will undertake during this time. These activities might include:

- completing a task set by the class or subject teacher

- completing a task set by staff supervising internal exclusion

- discussing the incident with an adult

- conducting a self review resulting in a practical outcome such as a written apology

- analysis of the pupil's behaviour with supervising staff, with suggestions as to how the same situation can be avoided in the future

Structure

The programme of activities for the remove room should be carefully planned and structured. As internal exclusion is a sanction for poor behaviour, then any time a pupil spends in the remove room should be focused and used constructively to tackle any problems or carry on with class work. It is important that the pupils understand exactly what they have to do and why they are doing it.

The remove room may operate different start and finish times compared to the rest of the school. If this is the case, then timings would need to be co-ordinated with any transport arrangements that are already in place and any out-of-school responsibilities that the pupil may have, such as escorting a younger pupil home or being a primary carer for a family member.

Environment

The remove room may be located within a classroom in a quiet area of the school, be a separate room within the school or in a separate building with its own entrance. A limit should be set regarding the number of pupils that can be in the remove room at any one time as overcrowding will diminish the positive effect this sanction can have. Staff should have access to an internal telephone or mobile phone. It is important that the remove room is completely separate and distinct from the Learning Support Unit and from any special educational needs bases.

Appropriate resources, such as pens, pencils, rulers, calculators and PCs, should be available for the staff member on duty to lend to pupils while in the room. It is also useful to have a variety of literacy, numeracy and problem solving exercises ready for pupils to carry out if they have finished their work or while waiting for it to arrive. This will help to ensure that all the time pupils spend in the room is usefully occupied.

The pupils should have appropriate access to toilets and drinking water. Lunch may be provided in the room unless this contravenes health and safety regulations, in which case it is advisable to ensure lunch is provided at a different time from the rest of the school.

It is also useful to have examples of the type of behaviour expected (as described within the school behaviour policy) on display, as a reminder to pupils as they reflect on the incident that has resulted in their internal exclusion. It may also be helpful to provide a display of reflective questions, as a stimulus, as pupils consider the consequences of their actions and how they might put a situation right.
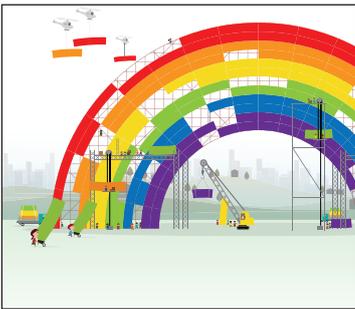
Costs including staffing

Schools will wish to consider the costs involved in setting up provision for internal exclusion. There may be some initial start-up costs, but thereafter costs will mainly relate to staffing. The remove room could be supervised by staff on a rota basis or a permanent member of staff could take on this role, with the support of senior staff.

Schools will want to ensure that all staff who supervise internal exclusion have the appropriate skills in managing difficult situations where pupils may be volatile, upset, angry or distressed in some way. This could potentially be a good development opportunity for staff and some staff may benefit from additional training. They will need to understand the purpose and functions of internal exclusion and be confident in applying agreed policy and procedure.

Monitoring

It is good practice to monitor all referrals to the remove room on a regular basis, including the gender, ethnicity, SEN status and age of pupils referred to the remove room and also the class from which they were removed and the length of time each pupil spends in the remove room. This can result in a useful set of data that will help with early intervention projects and school self evaluation. Schools can use the data to analyse referrals to internal exclusion and identify any trends that may occur.