

Promoting Inclusion and Reducing Exclusions in Educational Establishments Policy, 2022

Summary Table

Policy Status (circle as appropriate)	<p>Approved and finalised</p> <p>Subject to consultation</p> <p>Draft</p>
Responsible Officer	Lisa Lees, Quality Improvement Officer (Acting), Inclusion, Equity and Wellbeing Team
Policy Sponsor	Vincent Docherty Head of Education and Chief Education Officer
Authorised by	Education and Children's Services Committee
Approval Date	June 2022
Review Date	June 2027

1. Policy Statement

The Scottish Government is committed to supporting and promoting Children's rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act (2009) requires Authorities to reduce barriers to learning. Aberdeenshire Council is obliged to meet the requirements of The Equality Act (2010) equalities legislation, which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.

This policy helps to deliver Council Priorities: Our People: Education and Health & Wellbeing and against Aberdeenshire Children's Services Plan which is based on requirements set out on the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and built upon the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) philosophy.

The policy has been informed by: [The Schools General \(Scotland\) Regulations 1975, 1982, Amendment \(No 2\); Education \(Scotland\) Act 1980, 2016; Standards in Scotland's Schools, etc. Act 2000; Age of Legal Capacity \(Scotland\) Act 1991; Equality Act 2010; Included, Engaged and Involved Part 2: A Positive Approach to Preventing and Managing School Exclusions, 2017; The Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act \(2014\)](#) and has been shaped by the national [Getting It Right For Every Child \(GIRFEC\) strategy \(2008\)](#).

This policy replaces previous exclusion guidance, policies and procedures adopted by Aberdeenshire Council, and those developed by individual establishments.

2. Scope

This policy has been developed by The Promoting Inclusion and Reducing Exclusions Working Group, representing colleagues from Aberdeenshire Headteachers' Association (ASHTA), Primary Headteachers' Council (PHTC), Educational Psychology, Social Work and Joint Trade Union Secretary.

The scope of this policy extends to all learning establishments.

3. Principles

This policy aims to define a clear and consistent protocol that schools must follow when considering, initiating, and managing all aspects of the exclusion process.

All schools will have policies and practices in place to promote and support positive behaviour which take cognisance of Aberdeenshire's Interim Relationships, Learning and Behaviour Policy. School policies will have been developed in consultation with all members of the school community and will be regularly reviewed.

Effective arrangements for learning and teaching and for a flexible, pupil-centred curriculum go hand in hand with an ethos of nurture, care, and respect. However, even in the most nurturing and respectful school environment, there may be instances where behaviours displayed by children and young people, or actions taken by them are unacceptable.

The key to preventing exclusion is intervening early when problems arise and implementing a planned and staged approach to supporting pupils. A range of measures will be taken in the classroom or in the wider school, to support children and young people in these circumstances. In most cases these approaches are sufficient to move the situation forward. Sometimes the situation is more complex and will require support from partners or a multi-agency approach to supporting inclusion.

Exclusion is the most serious consequence that can be imposed on a pupil and must be a last resort. Where exclusion is used, it should be a proportionate response where there is no appropriate alternative. When considered necessary, it must be for as short a period as possible with the aim of improving outcomes for the child or young person and their wellbeing should be the key consideration. The time during and after the exclusion period should be used constructively to resolve the situation and ensure positive and appropriate support is in place for all.

In response to the policy context and the priorities of National and Local Government, this policy is based on the following key principles:

- All children and young people have a right to education and Aberdeenshire Council has a duty to provide this education.
- A consistent and well-maintained commitment to a whole school ethos of prevention, early intervention, and support as the context for the promotion of positive relationships, learning and behaviour.
- All children and young people need to be included, engaged, and involved in their learning.
- Everyone in a school or learning establishment should feel they are in a safe and nurturing environment.
- All children and young people have the right to get the support they need to benefit fully from their education and fulfil their potential.
- Exclusion should be the last resort; it should be for as short a time as possible, and always have a positive, purposeful intention for the learning and wellbeing of the child or young person.
- Exclusion should not be viewed as punitive.
- Where exclusion is used, it should be as a proportionate response where there is no appropriate alternative, and the wellbeing of the children and young people should be a key consideration.

Schools must take due cognisance of the key steps, in accordance with the national guidance set-out in *Included Engaged Involved Part 2: A Positive Approach to Preventing and Managing School Exclusions*, which provides guidance on approaches that can be used to prevent the need for exclusion, ensuring all children and young people are Included, Engaged and Involved in their education and summarises the legislative duties placed on Local Authorities regarding exclusion from school.

4. Related Links

This policy should be read in conjunction with Aberdeenshire's [Promoting Inclusion and Reducing Exclusions in Educational Establishments Guidance, 2022](#)

5. Index of Documents

a) Policy

Revision Date	Previous Revision Date	Summary of Changes
May 2022	'School Discipline and the use of Exclusion Policy' 2007	The policy takes account of current legislation, national policies and guidance

b) Distribution

Name	Title