

Alternatives to Suspensions and Exclusion

Schools should adopt a range of initial intervention strategies to help pupils manage their behaviour and to reduce the likelihood of suspension and permanent exclusion.

Parents should be invited into school to discuss any concerns and how best to support their child. It is good practice for parents to be involved and consulted. Schools may make referrals following such a meeting to other professionals to help in school, such as an educational psychologist or other specialist teacher.

Schools and academies have many different strategies in place to help pupils manage their behaviour and stay in school without being excluded.

- **Pupil Support Units**

A pupil support unit is a planned intervention occurring in small groups and in place of mainstream lessons within school to accommodate pupils from the school in which they are located, used to improve behaviour and maintain learning with the goal being to successfully reintegrate pupils back into mainstream lessons.

- **Off-site direction**

Off-site direction is when the governing board of a school requires a pupil to attend another education setting for a time limited period to improve their behaviour. Where possible in school interventions and support should be used before consideration to off-site direction. The placement should be reviewed regularly with parties involved to include parents and other agencies e.g. the Local Authority (in the case of a pupil with an Education Health Care Plan), a pupil's social worker with planned reintegration back to the referring school or agreed next setting.

- **Managed Moves**

A pupil can also transfer to another school as part of a 'managed move'. This is to allow the pupil to have a fresh start in a new school and can be used if a pupil is at risk of exclusion and all other interventions have not worked. Managed moves should only occur when it is in the pupil's best interests; and should focus on the benefits in having an opportunity for a 'fresh start' within a supportive framework, and in the building of a sense of belonging in the new school. They are a voluntary arrangement – they must only be arranged with the consent of the parties involved, including the parents and the pupil must be provided with an effective integration strategy.

If a parent believes that they are being pressured into a managed move or is unhappy with the arrangement, they can lodge a formal complaint with School and where appropriate the local authority. Managed moves are usually subject to a trial period in the new school. Pupils returned to the original school if the placement fails.