

# Changes to the school suspension and permanent exclusion process during Covid 19 outbreak

On the 10 September, the DfE amended their *Changes to the school suspension and permanent exclusion process during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak* guidance in relation to the use of remote access technology and the number of days in which a parent/guardian can appeal for an independent review.

## **Conducting remote meetings**

For suspensions and permanent exclusions occurring between 25 September 2021 and 24 March 2022 (inclusive of those dates), meetings of governing boards or IRPs should 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 COVID-19 and the governing board, or arranging authority for IRPs, is satisfied that:
- all the participants agree to the use of remote access;
- all the participants have access to the technology which will allow them to hear and speak throughout the meeting, and to see and be seen, if a live video link is used;
- all the 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.

The governing board, or arranging authority for IRPs, is responsible for ensuring that these conditions are met before a meeting takes place.

## **Applications for an independent review**

The deadline for applications for an independent review has been reinstated to normal statutory timescales (15 days) in relation to permanent exclusions occurring from 25 September 2021. Applications for an independent review must be made within 15 school days from the date on which notice of the governing board's decision is given in writing to parents, or directly to the pupil if they are 18 or above.

Schools must allow 15 school days to pass without an application having been made before deleting the name of a permanently excluded pupil from their admissions register. This is in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

The deadline for applications for an independent review in relation to permanent exclusions occurring between 25 September 2020 and 24 September 2021 remains 25 school days from the date on which notice of the governing board's decision is given in writing to parents, or directly to the pupil if they are 18 or above. Full guidance can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion/changes-to-the-school-exclusion-process-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>