

Policy document control box	
Policy title	Exclusion
Policy owner (including job title)	Jessica Lechner (Centre Coordinator)
RB Cambridge approving body	RB Cambridge trustees
Policy written/updated	September 2025
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Policy contents:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose • Scope • Policy statement, provision and safeguards

1. Purpose

Red Balloon aims to provide supportive learning communities that enable young people to re-engage with education.

RB Cambridge is committed to inclusion and will work tirelessly to support the maintenance of a RB placement.

Only as a very last resort, where an individual persistently chooses to fail to meet their own responsibility to the community by ignoring / abusing the rights of other members or another member, will we consider exclusion.

2. Scope

The Centre Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that this policy impacts appropriately upon practice.

3. Policy statement, provision and safeguards

The DfE guidance [School Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion Guidance August 2024 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/912422/school-suspensions-and-permanent-exclusion-guidance-august-2024.pdf) sets out that only the head teacher of a school can suspend or exclude a pupil, and permanent exclusion must be a last resort and in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy; and where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school. RB Cambridge supports this statement. Whilst it will always seek to continue to work with a student once placement has been agreed, the statement that remaining in school 'would seriously harm the welfare of the pupil or others in the school' is important, particularly so when most, possibly all, students within the Red Balloon community will have experienced harmful behaviours from their peers prior to their placement at Red Balloon.

RB Cambridge will seek advice from its referring authorities as to their procedure for recording and monitoring exclusions (fixed term or permanent). Should RB Cambridge apply a fixed term exclusion, the Centre Coordinator will ensure that the appropriate procedure is followed.

Red Balloon Cambridge will only use fixed term exclusion where staff have failed to enable a young person to modify their behaviour and that behaviour impacts unacceptably upon the rights of other members of the community. The purpose of such an exclusion would be twofold:

- to ensure the rights of all members of the community are upheld;
- to allow time to set up a meeting involving parents, commissioning agents and other involved agencies - at that meeting a clear plan will be set to ensure that all

rights are upheld.

Should the commissioning agent or the student feel that continued attendance would leave other members of the community at discernible risk, ie the 'excluded' student is unable or unwilling to commit to maintaining the rights of others, then the placement may be terminated.

Red Balloon would only apply permanent exclusion procedures if the student, their parents and the commissioning agent wished to continue placement, but the Centre Coordinator judged that the rights (to learn, to be safe emotionally and physically and to be treated with respect) of a member or members of the community would be placed in jeopardy by the continued attendance of the student.

All days lost to exclusion will be recorded and communicated to the appropriate authority.

Should a parent feel that a student has been unfairly denied access to a place at Red Balloon, they should submit a complaint in line with the Red Balloon Complaints Policy.

Work with placing authorities / agencies

Given that students placed at Red Balloon are almost certain to be funded through an EHCP, it is envisaged that permanent exclusion will be a very rare occurrence. It is hoped that termination of the placement (again a very rare event) will be agreed with the placing authority and parents / carers without recourse to permanent exclusion. If any student continues to behave in a manner that does not acknowledge the rights of all members of the community, then Red Balloon believes that that student's needs are not well met at the centre, hence other provision is required. The need for 'different' provision where an EHCP exists should not trigger permanent exclusion.

End of placement procedures

In the unlikely event that a placement is terminated, Red Balloon Cambridge will ensure that any agencies involved with the student (eg social services, youth justice) are fully informed and will liaise with the placing authority / agent to identify appropriate 'other' provision. It must remain, however, the responsibility of the student's local authority (once fully informed) to identify and fund future placement. Red Balloon will return any money owed to a placing authority ie if placement is funded at K30 for 12 months and is terminated after 6 months, then K15 will be returned to the local authority.

Legislation and Guidance that inform this document

- School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations (2012)

- Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England (2015)
- School Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion Guidance (August 2024 update)

The above do not apply directly to independent schools, but it is essential that Red Balloon staff who manage referrals are cognisant of legal requirements that apply to schools, academies, and referral units and of the responsibilities given to local authorities.

Other Red Balloon policies to be read in conjunction with this one

- Behaviour for Learning
- Admissions
- Use of Reasonable Force
- Complaints... should any parent /carer feel that their child has been unfairly treated, they should refer to the complaints policy for guidance on the appropriate action to take.