



Following recent media coverage on the use of exclusions within school sixth forms, we are writing to remind you of the rules surrounding exclusion from school, including school sixth forms, which apply to maintained and academy schools.

Once a pupil has been admitted to a school, they can only be removed from the roll if they meet one of the criteria set out in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended. If a school sets academic entry standards for pupils to progress into the school sixth form, the Regulations say that they may remove pupils from their registers at this point if they have failed to meet these standards and will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets. At all other points, including between Year 12 and 13, it is unlawful to remove pupils as a result of their academic attainment or ability.

Schools can exclude pupils, either permanently or for a fixed period, for disciplinary reasons, and the Department supports schools in using exclusion where this is warranted. Exclusion on any grounds other than discipline is unlawful. Where a pupil is asked to leave the school, the formal exclusions process set out in the [school exclusion guidance](#) must be followed. Schools may not exclude pupils because of their academic attainment or ability. Sending a pupil home without recording it as an exclusion is also not permitted.

Permanent exclusion should only be used as a last resort, 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.

Further information, including the full formal exclusions process, can be found in the statutory guidance on exclusion from school

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>.