

Preparing your ‘representations’ (questions and concerns about the exclusion) to the Governing Body (and/or to the Independent Review Panel or IRP)

What to include?

When thinking about your questions and concerns **start with a bullet point list** of the things you want to highlight or ask about. When making this list consider...

- How **your child has been impacted** and gain their views too.
- The **statutory duties around exclusions** (check the statutory guidance from [DfE](#) including Annex C, pages 55-61 which is a guide for parents, and information from [Child Law Advice](#))
- **Reading through the school’s evidence** about the incident/s and support in place & identify any gaps or discrepancies in information. For example, **what was put in place** to help your child manage their feelings and behaviour, and was this having any impact?
- **Reading the schools’ behaviour policy** as this may help you identify some further questions. For example, was the exclusion in accordance with their policy?
- Whether the agreed support was in place at the time of the incident/s. **Check support plan**, (such as an IEP or Pupil Passport). If unclear look at the schools’ **SEN Policy or SEN Information Report** to find out what their process is for reviewing progress/support & involving parents.
- **What other options** were open to school and, where you feel another option would have been more appropriate, why. You can check the schools’ own website for support options (SEN policy & SEN Information report), also the [Local Offer](#).
- Reading through any **specialist reports** for details of recommended strategies
- Any information or **circumstances the Head Teacher was not aware of** (don’t wait for the meeting in this case - get in touch with the Head Teacher as soon as you learn of the exclusion).

- Whether you feel the Head Teacher **took into account your child's SEND** and/or made '[reasonable adjustments](#)'.
- Whether you feel the Head Teacher has considered what **further assessment or support might be needed** to identify and address your child's needs, in order to reduce their risk of exclusion.
- Where there have been previous exclusions, did school consider **a referral through the IYFAP process**?
- **If your child has an EHC plan**, was the Annual Review brought forward and were any changes to support implemented?

Additionally, for an Independent Review Panel (IRP) consider...

- any questions or concerns about how the governor meeting was planned or conducted;
- particularly highlighting where you believe statutory duties have not been followed;
- where you have requested a SEN expert attend, the questions you would like to ask them. Their role does not include making an assessment of your child's special educational needs. They will look at school's policies which relate to SEN, and consider how these were applied in relation to the exclusion.

Prepare & organise

- ❖ **Decide if you will go to the governor meeting/IRP** and whether you would like a **friend/family member to accompany you for support on the day** (let the governing body/IRP know in advance). You can submit your questions, statement & evidence in advance if attending will be difficult for you
- ❖ **Use your bullet point list** to prepare and prioritise what you want to highlight to the governors or Independent Review Panel and start to plan questions you would like to ask.
- ❖ **Group your questions** so you are not jumping about between issues.
- ❖ **Organise your evidence** so you can easily find and refer to points on the day for example, use highlighters, post-it notes, file sections or indexing etc.
- ❖ **Preparing a statement** to read out can be a useful way to summarise, and to help you to stick to your key points. You could ask a friend/family member to read this out on your behalf.
- ❖ **Your child could also prepare a statement**, particularly where they are not attending. Help them prepare their views in writing or maybe submit as a short video.
- ❖ **Reading the evidence** & information from school about your child can be very emotional. Take your time to look through this and more than once can help. Your emotions will hopefully lessen the more times you read it, and in turn you will be able to fully digest & identify any gaps or questions.
- ❖ **Refer to letters or reports** that evidence your points – see next page for some ideas.

Evidence might include:

- school progress reports & support plans such as IEP's/Pupil Passports, meeting notes or written strategies etc.
- home to school record book (where one is in place) or incident reports
- CAF meeting notes
- reports from an educational specialist, for example an Educational Psychologist, CISS, SENDAT, or the local authority recommendations etc
- reports/letters from health, for example school or specialist nursing services, paediatrician, speech & language, occupational or sensory therapists, wellbeing or mental health services including clinical psychologist etc.
- Education, Health & Care plan (where one is in place), including Annual Review paperwork
- Individual Health Care plan (where one is in place)
- General guidance in the public domain, for example as provided by Suffolk in their local offer, the school's own website, the Department for Education statutory guidance & related law, the NHS, Council for disabled children (CDC) or from organisations such the National Autistic Society etc.

On the day

Remind yourself...

- ❖ you are doing this because you have some questions or concerns about your child's exclusion
- ❖ it is normal to feel anxious in this situation, try to relax as you have done all you can to prepare
- ❖ you should feel better for having said all you wanted to, **regardless of the outcome** - this is what other parents have told us