

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

Think about your questions

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. Ask them to explain how they have been affected and how they feel so you can share this at the meeting.

Were the statutory duties around exclusions followed ([check the statutory guidance from DfE including Annex C](#), pages 55-61 which is a guide for parents, and [check 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?

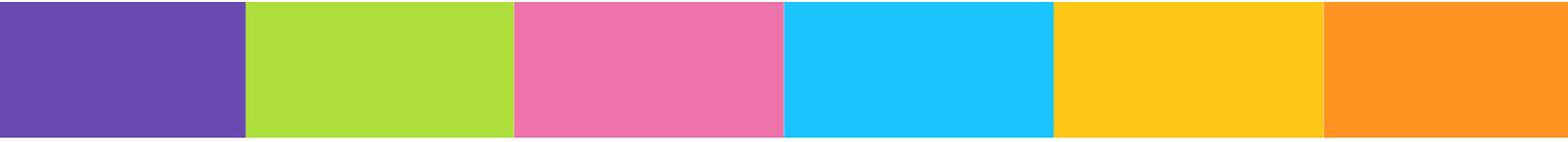
Check the support plan, (may be called something else eg. IEP, learning plan or Pupil Passport). You can ask school for a copy if you do not have one. Do you have any concerns about the support that was in place at the time of the incident/s?

What other support options were available 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 [check 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).

[Read about reasonable adjustments](#) and establish 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, such as a referral to the inclusion service for specialist advice. [Read more about the inclusion service.](#)

If your child has an EHC plan, was the Annual Review brought forward and were any changes to the plan made, for example with their needs, provision or with the outcomes?

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

any questions or concerns about how the governing body meeting was planned or conducted;

particularly highlight 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

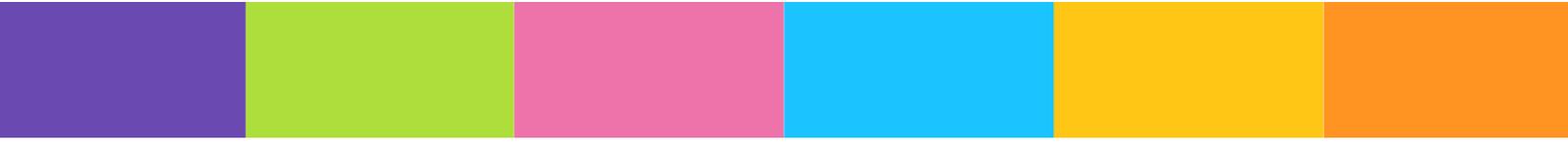
Use your bullet point list to prepare and prioritise what you want to highlight to the governors or Independent Review Panel and start to plan questions you would like to ask.

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 IEPs/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 are seeking answers to some questions and concerns you have 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.