**Manchester Vocational and Learning Academy**

**Off-rolling Statement**

Ofsted defines off-rolling as "the practice of removing a pupil from the school roll without a formal, permanent exclusion or by encouraging a parent to remove their child from the school roll, when the removal is primarily in the interests of the school rather than in the best interests of the pupil."

At Manchester Vocational and Learning Academy we know that off-rolling is both illegal and unethical. We are committed to following all statutory exclusions procedures to ensure that every child receives an education in a safe and caring environment.

Alternative provision settings should never be used as an opportunity to off-roll students. As education professionals, it is our collective duty to ensure that this does not happen. Our Leadership Team and Management Committee are fundamentally imposed to off-rolling, as it is directly contradictory to our school’s inclusive ethos.

**Unlawful exclusion**

Statutory guidance states that you can only permanently exclude a child where **both** of the following conditions are met:

1. The exclusion is in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy; **and**
2. Allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school

***Any exclusion outside of these conditions is off-rolling.***

Exclusions at Manchester Vocational and Learning Academy will only happen if these conditions are met. At our school, we believe that exclusion should be a last resort, and only happen if all other options have been explored. We have a separate exclusions policy which can be found on the school website.

When a student is referred to us, we will make enquiries as to the reasons for their exclusion. If we feel that the conditions for a lawful exclusion has not been met, we will decline the offer of a place for that student.

**Examples of off-rolling**

The following examples can be found in Ofsted's [guidance to inspectors](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-update-academic-year-2018-to-2019) from September 2018, and in a [briefing paper](https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-8444) published by the House of Commons.

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| **Managed moves** | |
| Off-rolling | Transferring a pupil to another school in a move that benefits the school, but where there's no clear evidence that it's in the best interests of the pupil |
| Not off-rolling | A well-thought-out placement to a setting that's demonstrably better suited to meet the pupil's needs |
| **Alternative provision** | |
| Off-rolling | Moving pupils into alternative provision (AP) to prevent them from being counted in the January census |
| Not off-rolling | A well-planned direction off-site to improve the pupil's behaviour |
| **Homeschooling** | |
| Off-rolling | Coercing parents to remove a pupil from school as the only alternative to permanent exclusion |
| Not off-rolling | Parents choose to educate their child at home for personal reasons |
| **Permanent exclusion**  Even in cases where a pupil is permanently excluded following a lawful process, the result may constitute off-rolling. For instance: | |
| Off-rolling | Permanently excluding a pupil, where a fixed-term exclusion would be more proportionate, in order to pass the cost of alternative provision on to the local authority |
| Not off-rolling | A permanent exclusion that is lawful, rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate and done according to statutory procedure |
| Off-rolling | Permanently excluding pupils with SEN/SEND because the cost of meeting their needs exceeds the funding received |
| Not off-rolling | All efforts are made for early intervention and there is coordination with parents, external services and the local authority to prevent exclusion |

Specific examples of off-rolling might include:

* Asking parents causing difficulty to remove their child from your school, even though the child doesn't meet the requirements for exclusion
* Pressuring pupils and/or their parents to voluntarily withdraw from school due to poor performance
* Pressuring parents and/or pupils to voluntarily withdraw due to persistent absence
* Pressuring parents to voluntarily withdraw because you feel unable to meet the pupil's special education and/or disability needs

If we believe that any of our referring schools are off-rolling we will make them aware that this is unlawful.

**A dual registered approach**

The majority of the students at MVLA are dual registered. This means that they remain on the school role at their referral school. Attendance and any exclusions during their time at Manchester Vocational and Learning Academy is reported to the referral school daily and should be recorded on their own systems.

When a referring school has an Ofsted inspection, the inspection team will usually explore the suitability of any alternative provision placements. We fully co-operate with these inspections. We will make all paperwork and records available to the inspection team and answer any questions that they have. We believe that Ofsted play an important role in keeping students safe and welcome these discussions.

The single registered students we have on roll are all referred through Manchester LA.

**Return to school**

Our aspiration is that, where possible, students should return to their mainstream school as quickly as possible. We request regular meetings with referral schools to review each student’s progress towards returning to school.

It is our expectation that when a student is ready to return to school that the referral school will re-admit the student. Manchester Vocational and Learning Academy reserves the right to end a student’s contract when they feel that the student is school ready.