

# Suspension and Exclusion Policy



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# Exclusion Policy

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# Exclusion Policy

## 1. Introduction

A decision to suspend a pupil, either for a fixed period (FPE) or permanently (PEX) is seen as a last result by ISP school whilst always bearing in mind our duty of care to pupils and staff. The decision to suspend or exclude a pupil must be lawful, reasonable and fair.

ISP school is responsible for communicating to pupils, parents and staff its expectations of conduct and behaviour. A range of policies and procedures are in place to promote good behaviour and in turn our core values of kindness, commitment and resilience.

ISP school will take account of all needs when considering whether or not to suspend or exclude a pupil. The Head Teacher will ensure that reasonable steps have been taken by the school to respond to any disability so the pupil is not treated less favourably for reasons related to the disability. Where reasonable adjustments to policies and practices have been made, to accommodate a pupil's needs and to avoid the necessity for suspension or exclusion as far as possible, exclusion may be justified if there is material and substantial reason for it. A specific incident affecting order and discipline in the school may be such a reason.

No suspension or exclusion will be initiated without having first exhausted other strategies or, in the case of a serious single incident, a thorough investigation.

### Suspensions and exclusions

The Government supports Head Teachers in using suspension as a sanction where it is warranted. At ISP School suspension will be avoided wherever possible with early intervention made to identify and address underlying causes of behaviour as soon as possible.

However:

Our school will, wherever possible, not use temporary or permanent suspension as a behaviour management measure. Children who are in need of therapeutic education and care have in the past often broken-down multiple school placements through behaviour that has been deemed as unacceptable. A policy of suspension runs the risk that the emotional difficulties underlying this behaviour, and the intrinsic communications being conveyed by the behaviour, are not given due consideration.

Our children may have used a cycle of disruption and suspension to withdraw from the intense and difficult challenge of being educated. Therefore, we believe suspensions are totally non-therapeutic as they can replicate and deepen unhealthy feelings and experiences of rejection and abandonment.

Adults at our school will, wherever possible, support children to stay in school when their behaviour becomes challenging, using a range of strategies to keep everyone safe and to maintain a suitable learning environment for others. Close liaison

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between home and school may result in a child having a brief 'cooling-off' period/wellbeing day (s).

Part of the decision making around cooling off/wellbeing days will be made in consultation with the wider network that is our governing body and mainly our Director of Education; for example, if extremes of behaviour or incidents are causing a disruption to the learning of others, then home and school may plan for a supported reintegration, which may involve additional support meetings with the network. If challenging behaviour has reached the threshold where the police have been asked to intervene there may be a period out of school with the main purpose being to allow parent(s)/carers/legal guardians or other agencies to support our child(ren) in understanding the processes they are involved in.

During this period, essential plans for reconciliation and reparation will be made and implemented, to facilitate the child's return to school. The school will use a reintegration meeting to focus on restorative justice and address challenging interpersonal behaviours.

There is some behaviour that may require a professionals' meeting to be called to discuss and determine together the best ways to support the school placement, or to review whether the placement continues to be in the best interest of all involved.

These may include:

- An unacceptable risk to adults or other children within the school
- Fire setting
- Persistent absconding resulting in high-risk situations.
- Disagreement in the network around the child, including an irretrievable breakdown in the relationship between home and school, or the school and parent(s)/carers/legal guardian/placing authority

If a child is in need of frequent cooling off /well-being days due to persistent damage and/or harm (potential or actual) to others, the Head teacher will discuss the situation with the governing body in order to decide whether an early review is required.

### **Some other reasons for suspensions may be:**

- Use or threat of use of an offensive weapon or prohibited item
- Abuse against sexual orientation and gender identity
- Abuse relating to disability
- Inappropriate use of social media or online technology
- Wilful and repeated transgression of protective measures in place to protect public health
- Physical assault against a pupil
- Physical assault against an adult
- Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against a pupil
- Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against an adult
- Bullying
- Racist abuse

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- Sexual misconduct
- Drug and alcohol related
- Damage to property
- Theft
- Smoking/Vaping or having smoking/vaping paraphernalia
- Persistent or general disruptive behaviour
- Refusal to hand in mobile phone

### **Fixed period suspension**

A fixed period suspension will be used for the shortest time necessary to secure benefits without adverse educational consequences.

Suspension for a period of time from half a day to 5 days for persistent or cumulative problems would be imposed only when the school had already offered and implemented a range of support and management strategies. ISP school have a variety of strategies as an alternative to an suspension.

Temporary suspension may be used in response to a serious breach of our school rules and policies or a disciplinary offence. In such cases the Head Teacher will investigate the incident thoroughly, and will consider all evidence to support the allegation, taking account of the school's policies. The pupil will be encouraged, and if necessary be supported by familiar staff and parents, to give his/her version of events. A member of the Leadership Team will check to find out whether the incident may have been provoked, for example by bullying and/or harassment.

From the sixth day of suspension the pupil **MUST** have access to education.

### **Permanent Exclusion**

A permanent exclusion is a very serious decision and the Head Teacher will consult with the Governor's before enforcing it. As with a temporary suspension, It will follow a range of strategies and be seen as a last resort, or it will be in response to a very serious breach of the school rules and policies.

**A decision to exclude a pupil permanently should only be taken if there is a:**

- Serious breach of the school rules or policies
- Risk of harm to the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school

In line with DfE guidance, a decision to exclude a pupil can only be made by the Head Teacher.

### **The decision to suspend or exclude**

If The Head Teacher decides to exclude a pupil, they will:

- Ensure that there is sufficient recorded evidence to support the decision
- Explain the decision to the pupil
- Contact the parents/carers to explain the decision and ask that the child be collected

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- Send a letter to the parents/carers confirming the reason for the suspension, whether it is a permanent or temporary suspension, the length of the suspension and any terms and conditions agreed for the pupils return.
- In cases of more than a day's suspension, ensure that appropriate work is set
- Plan how to address the pupils needs on his/her return
- Plan a meeting with parents and pupil on his/her return

### **Pupils who have a social worker, including looked-after children, and previously looked-after children**

For the majority of children who have a social worker, that is due to known safeguarding risks at home or in the community: over half are in need due to abuse or neglect. For children with a social worker, education is an important protective factor, providing a safe space for children to access support, be visible to professionals and realise their potential. When children are not in school, they miss the protection and opportunities it can provide, and become more vulnerable to harm. However, Head Teachers should balance this important reality with the need to ensure calm and safe environments for all pupils and staff, so should devise strategies that take both of these aspects into account.

Where a pupil has a social worker, e.g., because they are the subject of a Child in Need Plan or a Child Protection Plan, and they are at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion, the Head Teacher should inform their social worker, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the pupil's parents to involve them all as early as possible in relevant conversations.

Where a looked-after child (LAC) is likely to be subject to a suspension or permanent exclusion, the Designated Teacher (DT) should contact the local authority's VSH as soon as possible. The VSH, working with the DT and others, should consider what additional assessment and support need to be put in place to help the school address the factors affecting the child's behaviour and reduce the need for suspension or permanent exclusion. Where relevant, the school should also engage with a child's social worker, foster carers, or children's home workers.

### **Behaviour outside of the school**

Pupils' behaviour outside the school, on trips and sporting events is subject to the schools behaviour policy. Negative behaviour in such circumstances will be dealt with as if it had taken place within the school.

### **Marking attendance registers following Suspension**

When a pupil is suspended temporarily, he/she will be marked as absent using code 'E'

### **Removal from the school for other reasons**

The Head Teacher may send a pupil home, after consultation with the parents and a health professional as appropriate, if the pupil poses an immediate and or serious risk to the health and safety of other pupils and staff, e.g., because of a diagnosed illness such as a notifiable disease. This will not be classed as a suspension and should be for the shortest possible time.

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## Procedure for appeal

If parents/foster parents wish to appeal against the decision to permanently exclude, the matter will be referred to the Board of governors. Governors who were not initially involved in the decision to exclude will acknowledge the complaint and schedule a hearing to take place as soon as is practicable and normally within 5 days.

Records relating to the decision to exclude and the parents' complaint will be copied to all parties not later than two days prior to the hearing. In no circumstances however will the school or its staff be required to divulge to parents/foster parents or others any confidential information on or the identities of pupils or others who have given information which has led to the exclusion or which the Head Teacher has acquired during an investigation.

Parents/foster parents may be accompanied by one other person. This may be a relative, friend or teacher. Legal representation will not normally be appropriate. If possible the complaint will be resolved without the need for further action. If further investigation is required it will be decided how this will be carried out. After consideration of all the facts considered to be relevant, a decision will be reached on whether to rescind or uphold the exclusion.

Parents/foster parents will be informed in writing of the decision and the reasons for it. This decision will be final and any recommendations will be sent to the parents.

Parents/foster parents are still entitled to appeal against this decision if it has upheld the Head Teachers decision to permanently exclude their child; even if they did not make a case to, or attend, the meeting. Where parents/foster parents dispute the decision not to reinstate a permanently excluded pupil, they can ask for this decision to be reviewed by an independent panel.

The independent review panel does not have any power to direct a governing body to reinstate an excluded pupil. However, where a panel decides that a governing body's decision is flawed when considered in the light of the principles applicable on an application for judicial review. It can direct a governing body to reconsider its decision.

This policy also links to: Behaviour Policy and statement of behaviour principles

All of our policies can be found here

<https://ispschools.org.uk/teynham/school-policies/>

1	March 2022
2	February 2023
3	July 2023
4	November 2024