

Appendix 1: Use of Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion

We are committed to understanding each child's behaviour and responding in a way that helps them learn to behave appropriately. The vast majority of behaviour incidents are managed through the strategies detailed in our behaviour policy. However, in a minority of cases, it may become necessary to resort to suspension when a child is not responding to these interventions and their behaviour is putting themselves, others or the learning of others at risk. Such behaviours may occur on-site (i.e. at school / school clubs) or off-site (i.e. on trips, on the way to / from school).

In England, schools may use three types of suspension / exclusion: internal suspension, suspension, and permanent exclusion. Each is explained below with examples of behaviours that may lead to them.

It is not possible to predict every possible eventuality; these examples are for guidance and are not an exhaustive list. Ultimately, the decision to use any form of exclusion will be at the discretion of the Headteacher (or designated Acting Headteacher* in the Headteacher's absence), in line with Buckinghamshire Council policy. The Headteacher will always assess the context and severity of each incident, as well as the child's age and level of understanding, to determine the most appropriate response. SEND, reasonable adjustments and equalities legislation will always be taken into consideration. Incidents will be investigated thoroughly before any decision to exclude is taken.

**The designated Acting Headteacher is the member of SLT - usually a Deputy Headteacher - who is temporarily responsible for the operational running of the school in the Headteacher's absence.*

Following a suspension, to reduce the risk of further suspensions, the school will ensure that appropriate support is provided if needed. This could include support from the inclusion team, a pastoral support plan, risk assessment, SEND assessment, referral to an agency such as the Pupil Referral Unit or CAMHS, or a referral to safeguarding bodies such as Channel (Prevent) and Children's Services.

Suspension and permanent exclusion are formally recorded on the child's school record. Internal suspensions are only recorded on CPOMs.

What is internal suspension?

Internal suspension is a disciplinary measure where a child is temporarily removed from their classroom. The child will complete their work in a separate location within the school, usually outside the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher offices. They will also spend their break and lunch times in this location for the duration of the internal suspension. This is typically used for moderately serious behaviour issues and allows the child to reflect on their actions while remaining in a structured school environment.

For children in EYFS / KS1, this is usually for part of a day. For children in KS2, internal suspension is normally for at least one full school day; therefore, if a child is internally suspended in the afternoon, usually they will complete their day of internal suspension the following morning. If a child misses a period of internal suspension through absence, this will be served when they are back in school. Children will still be able to sit statutory tests during a period of internal suspension.

Use of internal suspension

Internal suspension **may** be considered for incidents such as:

- Persistent disruption in lessons
- Persistent refusal to follow instructions
- Very offensive or abusive language
- Discriminatory or sexualised language and/or behaviour
- Bullying, including online bullying
- Physical aggression
- Damage to school property or property of others, including stealing
- Deliberately unsafe or disruptive misuse of school equipment including ICT / fire alarms

What is suspension?

Suspension occurs when a child is temporarily excluded from school for a fixed period, as a consequence of more serious incidents. The minimum period for which a suspension can be recorded is half a day. In most cases, a one-day suspension is given for a first incident. Repeated or very serious incidents may result in longer suspensions. During this time, the child is prohibited from attending school or participating in any activities outside home during school hours. They will be provided with schoolwork and expected to continue their studies at home. For suspensions longer than five school days, alternative education will be arranged.

For pupils sitting statutory tests, consideration will be given to allowing them to sit the tests in school if the suspension period means that they would otherwise miss the test window. In such circumstances, the child would sit the tests, isolated from other pupils, and return to their suspension afterwards. They would not be allowed to remain in school for the rest of the day; parents / carers would need to give an undertaking to collect them as soon as the tests are completed. In these circumstances, tests will be stopped if the child's behaviour is unacceptable. Governors will be informed if a pupil will miss statutory tests through suspension.

The school will give parents / carers as much notice of the suspension as possible, and work with them to address the child's behaviour and ensure appropriate support is in place. As well as verbal notification, parents / carers will be provided with written confirmation of the reason for the suspension, the duration and any rights of appeal. Parents / carers will be invited to attend a reintegration meeting where planned support and expectations will be discussed. The local authority will be notified of all suspensions; the Governing Body will be notified of suspensions totalling more than five days in one term. The number of suspensions is reported termly to the Governing Body.

Use of suspension

Suspension **may** be considered for incidents such as:

- Continuation and/or escalation of behaviours that have already led to internal suspension
- Physical aggression, threatening the safety of pupils or staff; this includes fighting which causes injury
- More serious sexualised or discriminatory behaviour, or bullying, causing physical or emotional harm
- Threatening verbal behaviour against staff. This includes allegations of staff misconduct which are demonstrably both false and malicious
- Bringing banned substances onto school premises such as vapes or cigarettes

What is permanent exclusion?

Permanent exclusion is the permanent removal of a child from school due to extremely serious or persistent poor behaviour where all other reasonable interventions have failed or are not appropriate. A child who is permanently excluded is no longer allowed to attend the school; this includes exclusion from school during statutory tests. This decision is made after careful consideration of their actions, the impact on others, and the school's duty to provide a safe environment for all pupils. Parents will be notified in writing of the details of the permanent exclusion and the appeals process. If a child is permanently excluded, the local authority and Governing Body will be notified. School will set work for five school days. Buckinghamshire Council is then responsible for arranging suitable education, starting from the sixth school day.

Use of permanent exclusion

Any decision to permanently exclude is taken with due consideration for SEND, reasonable adjustments and equalities legislation. It is only used in circumstances where allowing the child to remain in school would pose a risk to the education or wellbeing of the child, or of others. This **may** include incidents such as:

- Continuation and/or escalation of behaviours that have already led to suspension
- Behaviours which cause or risk serious harm to another through high level physical aggression, sexualised behaviour, discriminatory behaviour or bullying
- Bringing dangerous or illegal items (e.g. weapons, fireworks, drugs) onto school grounds, particularly if there is an attempt to use, share or sell them
- Deliberately causing or attempting to cause extensive damage to school property or the school environment, such as attempting to start a fire
- By law, a child cannot accumulate more than 45 days of suspension within a school year; therefore, a child who has reached 45 days of suspension is at risk of permanent exclusion for any further excludable incidents.

Appeals

Parents / carers are welcome to make an appointment with the Headteacher or another member of the Senior Leadership Team to discuss any form of exclusion for their child. For suspension(s) totalling fifteen days or less in one term, parents can also ask for a meeting with governors to share their views, although the Governing Body cannot overturn suspensions in this situation.

Parents have the right to appeal against suspension(s) totalling more than fifteen days in one term and against permanent exclusion:

- In the case of suspension(s) totalling more than fifteen days in one term, parents can request a review from the Governing Body. Governors in turn must decide whether or not to overturn the suspension. Where a suspension is overturned, the child will be reintegrated and the suspension ended, if still being served. The suspension will be removed from their school record.
- In the case of permanent exclusion, there will be a governors hearing to review the Head Teacher's decision. Parents can also appeal to an independent review panel. The panel will review the decision and determine whether the permanent exclusion was justified, taking into account the school's policies and the circumstances. If overturned, the child will be reintegrated and the permanent exclusion will be removed from their school record.