

Gotham Primary School

Suspension and Exclusion Policy



Date policy agreed by Governing Body:	8th October, 2024
Date of next review:	September 2025

Introduction

This policy is in line with the September 2023 DFE guidance on Suspension and Permanent Exclusions. This can be found using the following link [statutory guidance on suspensions and permanent exclusions](#) and further detail to this policy can be found there.

Definitions

Internal Suspension - when a pupil is removed from being with their usual class and must work away from them for a fixed amount of time. This will be supervised by a member of staff and may be within another classroom. An internal suspension can be used to support a child to understand the impact of their inappropriate behaviour and stop it from escalating into a suspension as defined below.

Suspension - when a child is temporarily removed from school and must remain at home for a fixed amount of time. This should be for the shortest time necessary to ensure minimal disruption to the child's education, whilst mindful of the seriousness of the breach of policy.

A suspension can also be for parts of the school day. For example, if a pupil's behaviour at lunchtime is disruptive, they may be suspended from the school premises for the duration of the lunchtime period. The legal requirements relating to the suspension, such as the Head Teacher's duty to notify parents, apply in all cases. Lunchtime suspensions are counted as half a school day in determining whether a governing board meeting is triggered.

Permanent exclusion - when a child is permanently excluded from school and not allowed to return. This is a very serious decision and the Head Teacher will consult with senior leaders and the Chair of the Governing Body as soon as possible in such a case.

Reasons for Suspension or Exclusion

A decision to suspend or exclude a pupil, either internally, for a fixed period or permanently, is seen as **a last resort** by the school. The physical and emotional health of our children and staff is our primary concern, and we therefore accept, that in some serious situations, it may be necessary if all other strategies have been exhausted.

The decision will usually follow a range of strategies and be seen as a last resort, or it will be in response to a very serious breach of school rules and policies or a disciplinary offence (please refer to Appendix 1) such as:

- Serious actual or threatened violence against another pupil or a member of staff.
- Persistent bullying.
- Persistent prejudice-based harassment or hatred-based acts.
- Persistent destruction of school property.

Persistent or cumulative problems which result in children being removed from class to work in another area and fixed-term suspension, may be used in response to a persistent poor behaviour which breaches school rules and policies. In the most serious cases where the problem persists and there is no improvement, a permanent exclusion may be necessary. This action would only be imposed when the school had already offered and implemented a range of support and management strategies. These could include joint action plans with parents/carers, child and school, target setting, home/school communications, external behaviour support agencies.

The length of an exclusion will depend upon a number of factors, such as the severity of the incident, and the likely impact on the child's learning and ability to succeed on returning to school. Such decisions will be made in the best interests of the child, whilst also mindful of the need to maintain order and reinforce the rules and expectations of the school in a clear and consistent way.

Single incident

Internal and fixed-term suspensions may be used in response to a very serious breach of school rules and policies or a disciplinary offence. In the most serious cases where the problem persists and there is no improvement, a permanent exclusion may be necessary. In such cases, the Head Teacher or a designated senior leader will investigate the incident and consider all evidence to support the allegation, taking account of the school's policies.

The pupil will be encouraged to give their version of events and the Head Teacher will check whether the incident may have been provoked, for example by bullying or racial harassment.

The Governing Body will be informed of all suspensions on a termly basis and additional consultation may also take place about key incidents with the Chair of Governors.

The decision to suspend or exclude

If the Head Teacher decides to suspend or exclude a pupil they will:

- Ensure that there is sufficient recorded evidence to support the decision.
- Explain the decision to the pupil, if they are in the state of mind to listen.
- Contact the parents, explain the decision and ask that the child be collected.
- Send a letter to the parents confirming the reasons for the exclusion, whether it is a permanent exclusion or a fixed term suspension.
- The length of the suspension and any terms or conditions agreed for the pupil's return.
- In cases of more than a day's suspension, ensure that appropriate work is set and that arrangements are in place for it to be marked.
- Plan how to address the pupil's needs and integration back into their class on their return.
- Plan a meeting with parents/carers and pupil on their return to be conducted by a suitable senior member of staff.

Safeguarding

A suspension or exclusion will not be enforced if doing so may put the safety of the pupil at risk. In cases where parents/carers will not comply by, for example, refusing to collect the child, the child's welfare is the priority. In this situation, depending on the reason for suspension, the school may consider an internal suspension until the end of the day, implementing the original suspension decision from the time the child is collected from school, or, in more severe circumstances the school may contact the Local Authority and/or the Police to safely take the pupil off site.

Re-integration

After fixed term suspension, the pupil and parent/carer will be requested to attend a re-integration meeting with a senior member of staff. At this meeting, the behaviour leading to suspension will be discussed and targets will be set for improvement. Support around behaviour will also be discussed. The meeting will be recorded on the school's CPOMS system and parents/carers can request a copy of this.

Work Set

When a pupil is suspended for more than one day, work should be set by the school within a reasonable time-scale and this should be returned to the school when the suspension is over. If a child is suspended at the end of a school day, then it may not be possible to arrange for work to be set until the following morning. A pupil can be suspended for up to 10 continuous days on a fixed term basis. On the 6th continuous day, the school is responsible for providing education for the pupil, which could be at another local school or by providing home education.

Informing the local authority (LA)

The Head Teacher will notify the LA of all suspensions and permanent exclusions without delay, regardless of the length of a suspension.

The notification will include:

- The reason(s) for the suspension or permanent exclusion
- The length of a suspension or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent

For a permanent exclusion, if the pupil lives outside the LA in which the school is located, the Head Teacher will also, without delay, inform the pupil's 'home authority' of the exclusion and the reason(s) for it.

The Head Teacher must notify the LA without delay of any cancelled exclusions, including the reason the exclusion was cancelled.

Behaviour outside school

Pupils' behaviour outside school **on school business** e.g. on school trips, at sports events, or behaviour outside of school which may affect the school culture is subject to the school's Behaviour Policy. Unacceptable behaviour in such circumstances will be dealt with as if it had taken place in school; and additionally, this includes the any serious breach of policy which could 'bring the school into disrepute'.

Pupils with special educational needs and disabled pupils

The school must take account of any special educational needs when considering whether or not to suspend or exclude a pupil. The Head Teacher should ensure that reasonable steps, in line with the Disability Discrimination Act have been taken by the school to respond to a pupil's disability so the pupil is not treated less favourably for reasons related to the disability.

Managed move

In cases where the Head Teacher and parent/carer's agree that the progress of the pupil has been unsatisfactory and the pupil is unwilling or unable to profit from the educational opportunities offered, or if a parents failure to engage in strategies implemented by the school are resulting in a continuing pattern of poor behaviour or lack of improvement in behaviour, the Head Teacher may consult with the Local Authority and propose a managed move to another school. This is not exclusion and in such cases the Head Teacher may assist the parents/carers in placing the pupil in another school. School and parents would agree that a managed move is in the best interests of the child.

Removal from the school for other reasons

The Head Teacher may send a pupil home, after consultation with that pupil's parents/carers and a health professional as appropriate, if the pupil poses an immediate and serious risk to the health and safety of other pupils and staff, for example because of a diagnosed illness such as a notifiable disease. This is not an exclusion and should be for the shortest possible time. A pupil cannot be 'sent home' for other reasons, including poor behaviour.

Equal Opportunities

The Governing Body recognise that it is unlawful to take into account anyone's gender, marital status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, religious beliefs, age, or sexual orientation. Full consideration has been given to this during the formulation of this policy.

Procedure for appeal

If parents/carers wish to appeal the decision to permanently exclude, the matter will be referred to the Governing Body and handled through the school and Local Authority appeal procedure.