

Trent CE Primary School Governing Body

Suspension and Exclusion Policy

Inspired by Christ



Kindness Thankfulness Perseverance

“A new command I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another” Inspired by Jesus’ example, the Trent school community aims to serve one another in love.

We show **kindness** to others because God has shown us great kindness.

We live **thankful** lives, because every good thing comes from God.

We **persevere**, not giving up, because God is our helper.

Approved by committee/GB	CSSW
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Inspired by Christ we serve one another in love.

As a Christian School our deep desire is to do all we can to 'include' and very slow to 'exclude' or suspend any member of the school community. This policy seeks to express that desire whilst also modelling Jesus' care and protection for individuals and recognising at times that requires stronger disciplinary action. Where that stronger action is required, we commit to carrying it out with the grace and gentleness that Jesus shows each of us.

1. Introduction

Trent CE Primary School is dedicated to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, with the expectation that all staff and volunteers share this commitment. Every child has the right to enjoy and engage in all school activities within a safe and supportive environment, free from any threats to their mental or physical well-being. This responsibility rests with every adult employed by the school or invited to provide services. We acknowledge our duty to protect all children from harm, including physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, neglect, and bullying, while actively promoting their welfare.

At Trent CE Primary school, we are committed to fostering a safe, inclusive and nurturing environment where every child can thrive. We believe that positive behaviour is essential for effective teaching and learning and that disciplinary measures should be fair, constructive and aligned with our restorative ethos. This policy outlines the principles and processes guiding suspensions and exclusions to ensure the well-being of all members of our school community.

Legal Framework:

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

Education Act 1996

Education Act 2002

Education and Inspections Act 2006

The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007

Equality Act 2010

The School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012

The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)

This policy also has due regard to statutory and non-statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

DfE (2022) 'Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement'

DfE (2022) 'Behaviour in Schools'

DfE (2015) 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'

DfE (2018) 'Mental health and behaviour in schools'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

Behaviour Policy

Anti-bullying Policy

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

2. Aims

- Promote high standards of behaviour, ensuring the safety and well-being of all children and staff.
- Provide clear and consistent procedures for managing serious behavioural incidents.
- Reduce the need for exclusions by prioritising preventative measures and restorative practices.
- Offer support for children at risk of exclusion to help them develop positive behaviour patterns.
- Ensure that decisions regarding suspensions and exclusions are fair, transparent and compliant with statutory regulations.

3. Grounds for Suspension or Exclusion

Suspension or exclusion will only be considered in cases of serious or persistent breaches of the Behaviour Policy. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- **Physical harm:** Serious assault towards children or staff.
- **Verbal abuse or threats:** Including racist, sexist, or other discriminatory language.
- **Bullying:** Repeated and intentional harm, including online or offline harassment.
- **Dangerous behaviour:** Possession or use of prohibited items (e.g., weapons, drugs, alcohol).
- **Disruption of learning:** Persistent refusal to follow rules, disrupting lessons, or endangering others.
- **Other serious misconduct:** Including theft, vandalism or actions compromising the safety of the school community.

4. Definitions

- **Suspension:** A temporary removal of a child from the school for behaviour management purposes, lasting no more than 45 school days in an academic year.
- **Permanent Exclusion:** The permanent removal of a child from the school following a serious breach of the Behaviour Policy.

5. Roles and responsibilities

The headteacher is responsible for:

Implementing good levels of discipline to ensure all pupils can benefit from the opportunities provided by education and to minimise potential suspensions and exclusions.

Applying the civil standard of proof when establishing the facts in relation to a suspension or exclusion.

Complying with their statutory duties in relation to pupils with SEND when administering the suspension or exclusion process.

Considering any contributing factors that are identified after an incident of poor behaviour has occurred, e.g. if a pupil has suffered bereavement, experienced bullying or has a mental health issue.

Considering the use of a multi-agency assessment for a pupil who demonstrates persistent disruptive behaviour.

Reviewing the effectiveness of suspensions and exclusions as sanctions, e.g. if a pupil has received multiple suspensions.

Considering what extra support may be needed to identify and address the needs of individual pupils, particularly those with SEND, those eligible for Free School Meals, Looked After Child and those from certain ethnic groups.

Engaging effectively with parents in supporting the behaviour of pupils with additional needs.

Determining whether a pupil will be suspended or excluded on disciplinary grounds.

Withdrawing any suspensions or exclusions that have not been reviewed by the governing body, where appropriate.

Ensuring any decision to suspend or exclude is lawful, rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate.

Complying with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 when deciding whether to suspend or exclude a pupil.

Ensuring they have considered their legal duty of care when sending a pupil home following a suspension or exclusion.

Making the decision to suspend or exclude based on the evidence available at the time, regardless of any police investigation and/or criminal proceedings.

Notifying a pupil's parents without delay where the decision is taken to suspend or exclude the pupil, including the days on which the parents must ensure the pupil is not present in a public place at any time during school hours, as well as any other necessary information statutorily required.

Ensuring that all information provided to parents is clear and easily understood.

Notifying the Chair of Governors and LA of their decision to exclude a pupil where appropriate, as well as the pupil's home authority if required.

Notifying the governing body once per term of any exclusions in the headteacher's report to governors.

Organising suitable work for excluded pupils where alternative provision cannot be arranged.

The governing body is responsible for:

Providing information to the Secretary of State and LA about any suspensions and exclusions within the last 12 months.

Arranging suitable full-time education for any pupil of compulsory school age who is suspended.

Considering parents' representations about suspensions and exclusions within 15 school days of receiving notice if the appropriate requirements are met.

Where a suspension or exclusion would result in a pupil missing a public examination or test, considering the suspension or exclusion before this date.

Considering whether it would be appropriate for a pupil to be permitted onto the school premises to sit the public examination or test.

Arranging the representation meeting at a time and date convenient to all parties, but in compliance with the statutory time limits.

Adhering to its responsibilities to consider the reinstatement of pupils.

Considering the interests and circumstances of the suspended or excluded pupil, including the circumstances in which they were suspended or excluded, and have due regard to the interests of others at the school.

Using the civil standard of proof (based on the 'balance of probabilities', it is more than likely that the fact is true) when establishing the facts relating to a suspension or exclusion.

Ensuring clear minutes are taken of the representation meeting.

Noting the outcome of the representation meeting on the pupil's education record, along with copies of relevant papers for future reference.

Notifying the pupil's parents, the headteacher and the LA of its decision and the reasons for it, without delay.

Where appropriate, informing parents of where to apply for an independent review panel.

Informing parents of relevant sources of information.

Ensuring a pupil's name is removed from the school admissions register, where appropriate.

Reconvening within 10 school days to reconsider reinstatement of a pupil where directed to do so by the suspensions and exclusions review panel.

The LA is responsible for:

Having due regard to the relevant statutory guidance when carrying out its duties in relation to the education of Looked After Children.

Arranging suitable full-time education for any pupil of compulsory school age excluded permanently, in coordination with the school.

Reviewing and reassessing pupils' needs in consultation with their parents where they have an EHC plan and are excluded permanently, with a view to identifying a new placement.

Arranging for an independent review panel hearing to review the decision of the governing body not to reinstate a permanently excluded pupil where required.

Arranging the hearing without delay at a time, date and venue convenient for all parties.

Ensuring the independent review panel consists of three or five members as appropriate, which represent the required categories.

Ensuring all panel members and the clerk have received training within the two years prior to the date of the review.

If requested by parents, appointing a SEND expert to attend the panel and covering the associated costs of this appointment.

6. Grounds for suspension or exclusion

The school will only suspend or exclude a pupil where it is absolutely necessary and where all other possible disciplinary sanctions, as detailed in the school's Behaviour Policy, have failed to be successful.

The following examples of behaviour may warrant the decision to suspend or exclude a pupil:

Physical assault against a pupil

Physical assault against an adult

Verbal abuse or threatening behaviour against a pupil

Verbal abuse or threatening behaviour against an adult

Use, or threat of use, of an offensive weapon or prohibited item

Bullying

Discriminatory abuse, e.g. racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic or ableist abuse

Pupils can be suspended on a fixed-period basis, i.e. for up to 45 school days within a year, or permanently excluded. Similarly, pupils can be permanently excluded following a suspension, where further evidence is presented. In all cases, the headteacher will decide whether a pupil will be subject to a suspension or an exclusion, depending on what the circumstances warrant.

7. Decision-Making Process

The headteacher has sole responsibility for decisions to suspend or exclude a child. They will:

- Investigate incidents thoroughly, including gathering evidence and statements from all parties.
- Ensure the child has the opportunity to provide their account of events.
- Apply the **civil standard of proof** (balance of probabilities) when determining the facts.
- Consider all relevant factors, including the child's previous behaviour, any contributing circumstances (e.g., bullying or mental health issues), and the impact on the wider school community.

Exclusion decisions will be lawful, reasonable and proportionate and made in consultation with senior staff where appropriate.

At all times, the headteacher will take into account their legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years', ensuring that they do not discriminate on any grounds, e.g. race, sex, or disability, and will not increase the severity of a pupil's suspension or exclusion on these grounds.

8. Factors to consider when suspending or excluding a pupil

The headteacher will consider what extra support may be available for vulnerable pupil groups whose suspension and exclusion rates are higher, to reduce their risk of suspension or exclusion, including the following:

LAC

Pupils eligible for FSM

Pupils with SEND

Certain ethnic groups

The headteacher will consider avoiding excluding LAC, those with SEMH issues or pupils with an EHC plan. Where any member of staff has concerns about vulnerable pupil groups and their behaviour, they will report this to the headteacher, who will instigate a multi-agency assessment to determine whether the behavioural issues might be a result of educational, mental health or other needs and vulnerabilities. The full assessment procedures are outlined in the school's Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy.

Where SEND or SEMH issues are identified, an individual behaviour plan will be created using the graduated response outlined in the school's Behaviour Policy. If the pupil continues to endanger the physical or emotional wellbeing of other pupils or staff, despite exhausting the graduated response process, then suspension or exclusion may be considered. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, under no circumstances will a pupil with identified SEND or SEMH issues be suspended or excluded before the graduated response process has been completed.

Where a pupil with SEND or SEMH issues is excluded because of a SEND- or SEMH-related need that could not be met at the school, detailed records will be kept highlighting that these pupils are closely tracked and showing that the school has a close relationship with the pupil's next destination.

The headteacher will work in conjunction with the parents of any pupil with additional needs to establish the most effective support mechanisms.

9. Parental Notification

Parents or carers will be informed immediately when a decision to suspend or exclude is made. This communication will:

- Include the reasons for the suspension or exclusion.
- Outline the length of the suspension or whether the exclusion is permanent.
- Provide information about the child's right to education during the exclusion period.
- Advise parents on their right to make representations to the governing board.
- Detail how the parent can request a meeting or appeal the decision.

10. Preventative Measures

To minimise the need for exclusions, the school will:

- Implement **Pastoral Support Plans (PSPs)** for children displaying concerning behaviour.
- Offer additional support, such as counselling, mentoring or referrals to external services.
- Collaborate with parents and carers to address behaviour concerns early.
- Provide professional development for staff in behaviour management strategies and restorative practices.

11. Restorative Practices

Restorative approaches are central to our Behaviour Policy and aim to repair and rebuild relationships, and foster a positive school community. Strategies include:

- **Restorative Conversations:** Structured one-on-one discussions using open-ended questions to reflect on the incident and agree on reparative actions.
- **Restorative Circles:** Group discussions involving affected parties to collaboratively resolve conflicts.
- **Formal Restorative Meetings:** Including children's parents and staff to address serious incidents, agree on outcomes and set behaviour targets.

These practices are integral to reintegrating children following suspension and ensuring they feel supported.

12. Re-integration Following Suspension

Before returning to school, the suspended child will attend a **re-integration meeting** with their parent/carer and the headteacher or a senior staff member. This meeting will:

- Review the incident and actions taken.
- Reinforce expectations for future behaviour.
- Outline any additional support or monitoring that will be provided to the child.
- Include a restorative element to repair harm caused to others.

13. Permanent Exclusion

Permanent exclusion is a last resort and will only be considered when:

- There is a serious breach or persistent breaches, of the Behaviour Policy.
- The child's presence in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others. Parents have the right to request an independent review panel to challenge a permanent exclusion. The panel may include a SEND expert if relevant.

14. Education During Suspension or Exclusion

- For suspensions longer than five days, the school will arrange suitable full-time education starting from the sixth day.
- For permanently excluded children, the local authority will take responsibility for their education from the sixth day.
- The school will provide work for short-term suspensions to ensure continuity of learning.

15. Monitoring and Accountability

- The governing body will review all suspensions and exclusions to ensure they are applied fairly and consistently.
- Suspension and exclusion data will be analysed to identify trends and inform behaviour management strategies.
- This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure alignment with current legislation and best practices.

This policy is reviewed every two years unless new legislation is introduced.