

# North Petherton Community Primary School Exclusion Policy



Date Approved by FGB: 25/11/2025

Date for Review: 25/11/2026

Chair of Governors: Jodie Scarrott

Headteacher: Melanie Lawson



## Exclusion Policy

### North Petherton Community Primary School

Policy Statement: This policy sets out North Petherton Community Primary School's approach to exclusions, ensuring they are used as a last resort and in a fair, consistent, and lawful manner. It aligns with the principles of "Be Kind, Be Safe, Be Ready" and the legal frameworks governing exclusions in England.

#### Purpose and Scope

- The purpose of this policy is to promote good behaviour and discipline and to provide a clear and fair process for exclusions. The policy ensures all children are treated fairly and with respect, in accordance with our school principles of **Be Kind, Be Safe, Be Ready**.
- This policy applies to all children, staff, and parents/carers of North Petherton Community Primary School. It outlines the process for fixed-term and permanent exclusions, the reasons for which they may be applied, and the rights of parents and children in such cases.

#### Legal Framework

This policy is based on the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- \*Education Act 2002\*
- \*Education and Inspections Act 2006\*
- Department for Education (DfE) Guidance on Exclusions (latest version)
- The policy complies with the 'Equality Act 2010', ensuring that no child is discriminated against on the grounds of disability, race, religion, gender, or any other protected characteristic.

**Please note:** we follow Somerset's advice on managing suspensions and exclusions. However, we reserve the right to establish our own reasons for suspensions.

We seek a consistency across the school when we manage children's behaviour, however, as many points in our policy are based on factors around the pupil's age and understanding, then so it is for adapting our policy to the EYFS age group, Key Stage, or for children with SEND.

- Children with SEN will receive support and intervention to avoid exclusion where possible, there are certain circumstances where this will be overridden at the discretion of the Headteacher due to;
  - The child's safety, other pupils' safety and staff safety
  - Aggression/Violence towards any of the above causing significant damage to property and/or people
  - The child has had continuous support and intervention and the processes and support of the following are not succeeding;

support from outside agencies

support from local authority advisors

support from alternative provision settings

## Aims and Principles

- To promote a safe, inclusive, and positive learning environment where all children can thrive.
- To ensure that suspensions/exclusions are used as a last resort after all other appropriate behaviour management strategies have been tried and failed.
- To uphold the principles of fairness, consistency, transparency, and proportionality in the exclusion process.
- To ensure the welfare of all children, including those who are at risk of exclusion.
- To uphold the school's core principles
  - **Be Kind:** Treat everyone with respect and care.
  - **Be Safe:** Ensure the safety and well-being of yourself and others.
  - **Be Ready:** Be prepared to learn, listen, and participate positively in the school community.

## Types of Exclusions

- **Suspension:** A temporary exclusion where a child is removed from school for a specific period, not exceeding 45 days in a single academic year. The duration of the exclusion will be determined based on the severity of the incident and the child's prior conduct.
- **Permanent Exclusion:** A decision to permanently exclude a child from the school. This is a serious measure and is only taken in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy, where allowing the child to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the child or others in the school.
- **Internal Exclusion:** An alternative to external exclusion where the child is removed from their usual class but remains in school under supervision. This is used for less severe incidents where the child's behaviour needs to be addressed without a complete exclusion from the school environment.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### The headteacher

#### Deciding whether to suspend or exclude

Only the headteacher, or acting headteacher, can suspend or permanently exclude a child from school on disciplinary grounds. The decision can be made in respect of behaviour inside or outside of school. The headteacher will only use permanent exclusion as a last resort.

A decision to suspend a child will be taken only:

- In accordance with the school's behaviour policy
- To provide a clear signal of what is unacceptable behaviour
- To show a child that their current behaviour is putting them at risk of permanent exclusion

Where suspensions have become a regular occurrence, the headteacher will consider whether suspensions alone are an effective sanction and whether additional strategies need to be put in place to address behaviour issues.

A decision to exclude a child will be taken only:

- In response to serious or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy, **and**
- If allowing the child to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others

Before deciding whether to suspend or exclude a child, the headteacher will:

- Consider all the relevant facts and evidence on the balance of probabilities, including whether the incident(s) leading to the exclusion were provoked
- Allow the child to give their version of events
- Consider whether the child has special educational needs or disabilities (SEND)
- Consider whether the child is especially vulnerable (e.g. the child has a social worker, or is a looked-after child (LAC))
- Consider whether all alternative solutions have been explored, such as:
  - For suspensions, detentions or other sanctions provided for in the behaviour policy
  - For exclusions, off-site direction or managed moves

The headteacher will consider the views of the child, in light of their age and understanding, before deciding to suspend or exclude, unless it would not be appropriate to do so.

Children who need support to express their views will be allowed to have their views expressed through an advocate, such as a parent/carer or social worker.

The headteacher will not reach their decision until they have heard from the child and will inform the child of how their views were considered when making the decision.

### **Informing parents/carers**

If a child is at risk of suspension or exclusion, the headteacher will inform the parents/carers as early as possible, in order to work together to consider what factors may be affecting the child's behaviour, and what further support can be put in place to improve the behaviour.

Support will always be given to avoid suspension/exclusion. Meetings will likely to have taken place with SENCo / Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher. A behaviour support plan and/or a pastoral support plan will be in place to avoid this as a sanction if a child's behaviour has been building up over time.

It is also likely that support will be sought from external professionals, such as an Educational Psychologist or 'The Bridge outreach team' to gain a better understanding of what is happening for a child.

If the headteacher decides to suspend or exclude a child, the parents/carers will be informed, in person or by telephone, of the period of the suspension or exclusion and the reason(s) for it, without delay.

The parents/carers will also be provided with the following information in writing, without delay:

- The reason(s) for the suspension or permanent exclusion
- The length of the suspension or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent
- Information about the parents/carers' right to make representations about the suspension or permanent exclusion to the governing board and, where the child is attending alongside parents/carers, how they may be involved in this

- How any representations should be made
- Where there is a legal requirement for the governing board to hold a meeting to consider the reinstatement of a child, and that parents/carers have a right to attend the meeting, be represented at the meeting (at their own expense) and bring a friend
- That parents/carers have the right to request that the meetings be held remotely, and how and to whom they should make this request

If the child is of compulsory school age, the headteacher will also notify parents/carers without delay and by the end of the afternoon session on the first day their child is suspended or permanently excluded, that:

- For the first 5 school days of an exclusion (or until the start date of any alternative provision or the end of the suspension, where this is earlier), the parents/carers are legally required to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours without a good reason. This will include specifying on which days this duty applies

➤ Parents/carers may be given a fixed penalty notice or prosecuted if they fail to do this

If alternative provision is being arranged, the following information will be included, if possible:

- The start date for any provision of full-time education that has been arranged
- The start and finish times of any such provision, including the times for morning and afternoon sessions, where relevant
- The address at which the provision will take place
- Any information the child needs in order to identify the person they should report to on the first day

If the headteacher does not have all the information about the alternative provision arrangements by the end of the afternoon session on the first day of the suspension or permanent exclusion, they can provide the information at a later date, without delay and no later than 48 hours before the provision is due to start.

The only exception to this is where alternative provision is to be provided before the sixth day of a suspension or permanent exclusion, in which case the school reserves the right to provide the information with less than 48 hours' notice, with parents/carers' consent.

If the headteacher cancels the suspension or permanent exclusion, they will notify the parents/carers without delay, and provide a reason for the cancellation.

## **Informing the governing board**

The headteacher will, without delay, notify the governing board of:

- Any permanent exclusion, including when a suspension is followed by a decision to permanently exclude a child
- Any suspension or permanent exclusion that would result in the child being suspended or permanently excluded for a total of more than 5 school days (or more than 10 lunchtimes) in a term
- Any suspension or permanent exclusion that would result in the child missing a National Curriculum test or public exam
- Any suspension or permanent exclusion that has been cancelled, including the reason for the cancellation

## Informing the local authority (LA)

The headteacher 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 child lives outside the LA in which the school is located, the headteacher will also, without delay, inform the child's 'home authority' of the exclusion and the reason(s) for it.

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

## Reasons for Suspension or Permanent Exclusion

Suspension or permanent exclusions may be applied for the following reasons, where behaviour is in serious breach of the school's behaviour policy and its core principles of "**Be Kind, Be Safe, Be Ready**":

- Persistent disruptive behaviour that impacts the learning and safety of others.
- Physical assault against another child or adult.
- Verbal abuse or threatening behaviour against a child or adult.
- Bullying (including cyberbullying) that harms the safety and well-being of others.
- Child on child abuse that harms the safety and well-being of others
- Vandalism or damage to school property.
- Drug and alcohol-related incidents.
- Theft or other criminal behaviour.
- Serious breaches of safety, including bringing prohibited items to school.

Suspension or exclusion should not be used for minor incidents or breaches of uniform rules unless part of a persistent pattern of behaviour that shows disregard for the school's expectations.

## Process for Exclusion

- **Investigation:** The Headteacher or designated member of staff will conduct a thorough and fair investigation into the incident, gathering evidence from all parties involved and giving the child an opportunity to present their case.
- **Decision-Making:** The Headteacher will make the final decision on whether to exclude a child based on the evidence, the context of the incident, the child's behaviour history, and the impact on the school community.
- **Notification:** Parents/carers will be informed immediately, in writing, of the decision to exclude, including:
  - The reason(s) for the exclusion.

- The period of exclusion (for fixed-term exclusions) or that it is a permanent exclusion.
- Parents' right to make representations to the governing body and the process for doing so.
- Arrangements for the child's education during the exclusion period.

**Reintegration:** After a fixed-term exclusion, a reintegration meeting will be held with the child, parents/carers, and relevant staff to develop a reintegration plan. This plan will include support measures to help the child improve behaviour and adhere to the principles of "**Be Kind, Be Safe, Be Ready**".

## **Governance and Appeals**

The Governing Body is responsible for reviewing all permanent exclusions and suspensions exceeding 15 days in a term. They also hear appeals from parents/carers who contest an exclusion.

An Independent Review Panel may be convened for any appeals against the governing body's decision to uphold a permanent exclusion. The panel will be impartial and include individuals trained to understand the legal and procedural requirements.

## **Support and Interventions**

North Petherton Community Primary School is committed to proactive support and early intervention to address behavioural issues. Strategies include:

- Positive behaviour management techniques.
- Development of individual Pastoral Support Plans (PSPs).
- Mentoring and counselling services.
- Additional support for Special Educational Needs (SEN) and reasonable adjustments to accommodate individual needs.
- Early identification of behavioural issues allows for targeted interventions and support, reducing the need for exclusion.

## **Record-Keeping and Monitoring**

Detailed records of all exclusions and suspensions will be maintained, including the reasons, duration, and outcomes.

The school will regularly monitor exclusion data to identify trends, address inequalities, and ensure that exclusions are used consistently and fairly.

## **Training and Awareness**

Regular training will be provided for staff on behaviour management, exclusion and suspension procedures, and their responsibilities under the law.

The policy will be communicated clearly to parents, children, and staff, ensuring it is accessible and understood by all.

## **Review and Updates**

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with current legislation, reflect best practices, and align with the needs of the school community. Updates will be made as needed based on new guidance or changes in school circumstances.

By following this policy, North Petherton Community Primary School aims to ensure a **Be Safe, Be Kind, and Be Ready** learning environment for all children, using suspensions and exclusions only when absolutely necessary and in the best interests of the school community.