



Riversdale Primary School

A nurturing, ambitious and values led school.

SUSPENSIONS AND EXCLUSIONS POLICY

DATE: 5th January 2026

REVIEW DATE: 4th January 2027

INTRODUCTION

Riversdale Primary School is committed to maintaining a safe, orderly and inclusive learning environment in which all pupils can achieve and thrive.

Positive behaviour underpins effective teaching and learning. The vast majority of behaviour concerns are addressed through the school's Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy and through supportive pastoral approaches.

However, in exceptional circumstances, the Headteacher may determine that a suspension or permanent exclusion is necessary.

This policy outlines the circumstances in which suspensions and permanent exclusions may be used and the procedures that will be followed.

The policy is based on the statutory guidance Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from Maintained Schools, Academies and Pupil Referral Units in England.

AIMS OF THE POLICY

This policy aims to ensure that:

- suspensions and permanent exclusions are used lawfully, fairly and proportionately
- decisions are made in the best interests of the school community
- clear procedures are followed
- parents, pupils and governors understand their rights and responsibilities
- statutory guidance is followed consistently.

PRINCIPLES

The school will always seek to avoid suspension or permanent exclusion wherever possible.

Before deciding to exclude a pupil, the Headteacher will consider:

- the seriousness of the incident
- the pupil's behaviour record
- the impact on other pupils and staff
- whether appropriate support has been provided
- whether the behaviour poses a risk to safety or wellbeing.

Suspension or permanent exclusion will only be used where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school.

Decisions will always be:

- lawful
- reasonable
- fair
- proportionate.

When considering behaviour incidents and potential exclusion, the school will take into account the pupil's age, stage of development and individual circumstances.

TYPES OF EXCLUSION

Suspension

A suspension is a temporary exclusion from school for a fixed period.

Suspensions may be issued in response to serious breaches of the school's behaviour policy.

Suspensions may be issued for one or more fixed periods up to a maximum of 45 school days in any academic year.

Permanent Exclusion

Permanent exclusion is the most serious sanction available.

A permanent exclusion will only be used where:

- there has been a serious breach of the school's behaviour policy, and
- allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school.

Permanent exclusion may be used in response to:

- serious violence
- threats of violence
- possession of prohibited items
- serious bullying
- persistent and serious disruptive behaviour.

This list is not exhaustive.

PROHIBITION OF INFORMAL OR UNOFFICIAL EXCLUSIONS

Riversdale Primary School will not use informal or unofficial exclusions.

An exclusion will only occur where it is issued formally by the Headteacher and recorded in accordance with statutory guidance.

The school will not:

- send a pupil home without formally recording a suspension
- ask parents to keep a pupil at home without a formal suspension being issued
- place pressure on parents to remove a pupil from the school roll as an alternative to exclusion.

All exclusions will follow the procedures outlined in this policy.

AUTHORITY TO EXCLUDE

Only the Headteacher has the authority to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil.

In the absence of the Headteacher, this authority may be exercised by a senior member of staff acting in the Headteacher's role.

FACTORS CONSIDERED BEFORE EXCLUSION

Before deciding to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil, the Headteacher will consider:

- the evidence available
- witness statements where appropriate
- the pupil's explanation of events
- the pupil's behaviour record
- whether the incident was provoked
- whether the pupil has SEND
- whether the pupil has safeguarding vulnerabilities
- whether reasonable adjustments have been made.

The Headteacher will consider whether alternative strategies could address the behaviour.

Where behaviour presents a serious safeguarding risk to pupils or staff, the school may determine that exclusion is necessary in order to protect the safety and wellbeing of the school community.

SERIOUS INCIDENTS AND IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION

In cases involving serious incidents, the Headteacher may decide to suspend a pupil immediately while the incident is investigated.

This may occur where:

- there is a risk to the safety or wellbeing of pupils or staff
- there is a risk that evidence may be compromised
- the seriousness of the incident requires immediate action.

Suspension in these circumstances allows the school to conduct a fair and thorough investigation.

The decision will be based on the balance of probabilities, taking into account the evidence available.

INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES

Before making a decision to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil, the Headteacher will ensure that an appropriate investigation has taken place.

This may include:

- gathering statements from staff or pupils
- reviewing relevant evidence
- giving the pupil the opportunity to explain their actions
- considering the context in which the incident occurred.

The standard of proof used in exclusion decisions is the balance of probabilities.

CONSIDERATION OF SEND

The school recognises that pupils with special educational needs or disabilities may require additional support.

Before excluding a pupil with SEND, the Headteacher will consider:

- whether the behaviour may be linked to unmet needs
- whether appropriate support has been provided
- whether reasonable adjustments have been made.

The school will also consider whether additional support, interventions or adjustments could reasonably address the behaviour before deciding that exclusion is necessary.

The school will ensure that exclusion decisions do not discriminate unlawfully.

INFORMING PARENTS

Where a pupil is suspended or permanently excluded, parents will be informed without delay.

Written notification will include:

- the reason for the exclusion
- the length of the suspension (if applicable)
- the date on which the pupil may return
- arrangements for governing board review
- information about the parent's right to make representations.

EDUCATION DURING SUSPENSION

The school will ensure that work is provided for the pupil during the first five school days of a suspension.

From the sixth school day, the local authority is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education.

REINTEGRATION FOLLOWING SUSPENSION

Following a suspension, the school will normally hold a reintegration meeting with parents and the pupil.

The purpose of this meeting is to:

- support the pupil's return to school
- clarify expectations
- identify any additional support required.

GOVERNING BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES

The governing board must review:

- permanent exclusions
- suspensions totalling more than 15 days in a term
- exclusions where a pupil would miss a public examination.

The governing board will ensure that the decision was lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair.

INDEPENDENT REVIEW

Where a governing board upholds a permanent exclusion, parents may request an independent review panel.

OFF-SITE DIRECTION

In some circumstances, the school may direct a pupil to attend alternative provision for a temporary period.

RECORDING AND MONITORING

All suspensions and permanent exclusions will be recorded and monitored.

The school will review exclusion data to ensure decisions are:

- fair
- proportionate
- consistent.

The school will also monitor exclusion data in order to identify patterns or trends, including any disproportionate impact on particular groups of pupils.

EQUALITY CONSIDERATIONS

The school will ensure that exclusion decisions comply with the Equality Act 2010.

LINKED POLICIES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the:

- Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Attendance Policy

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher and the Governing Board to ensure that it remains compliant with current legislation, statutory guidance and best practice.