TOTTINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL



Suspensions & Exclusions Policy

Written By	Deborah Taylor & using guidance from the Bury toolkit
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1 Purpose and scope

Tottington Primary School aims to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive education in which every child can learn and staff can work safely. We will respond to behaviour fairly, identify underlying needs early and work with families to prevent suspension and permanent exclusion wherever possible.

This policy explains how decisions are made, how children continue their education, and how parents can make representations and seek a review. It applies to all registered pupils, including Nursery and Reception pupils below compulsory school age. Particular legal duties that apply only to compulsory-school-age pupils are identified below. References to parents include carers and others within the statutory definition of parent.

A suspension is a fixed-period exclusion. A permanent exclusion prevents a pupil attending the school unless reinstated. Permanent exclusion is a last resort and requires both tests in section 5 to be met. Neither decision follows automatically from a particular incident or number of suspensions.

2 Policy framework and accountability

This policy has regard to the DfE suspension and permanent exclusion guidance effective from 26 July 2026. It uses the supplied Bury School Exclusion Toolkit for local prevention and support arrangements and aligns with the TPS Attendance Policy September 2026. Current legislation and statutory guidance take precedence over any older wording in local materials.

It should be read alongside the school's behaviour, safeguarding and child protection, SEND, equality, anti-bullying, attendance and physical intervention policies, and relevant Trust procedures. Sources and the legal framework are listed in section 16.

The academy trust is the governing board for statutory exclusion functions. In this policy, "review panel" means the Trust board or a properly authorised committee acting under its articles and current scheme of delegation. Local governors exercise these functions only where lawfully delegated. The clerk will verify authority and membership before arranging a hearing.

3 Roles and responsibilities

The Headteacher

Only the Headteacher, or a formally appointed acting Headteacher, may suspend or permanently exclude a pupil. An assistant or deputy headteacher does not acquire this power simply because the Headteacher is absent. The Headteacher will investigate, make and record the decision, issue notices, secure education arrangements and lead reintegration. Advice from the Trust or local authority does not transfer responsibility for the decision.

The Trust and governors

The Trust will ensure that statutory duties are fulfilled, suitable education is arranged from the sixth school day of a suspension where required, and impartial reviews are conducted within the correct timescales. Governors will scrutinise patterns and the impact of support under the scheme of delegation. Those who may review an individual decision must avoid prior involvement that compromises impartiality.

Staff and parents

Staff will implement the behaviour policy consistently, make agreed adjustments, record incidents objectively and raise concerns promptly. The SENCO will coordinate assessment and SEND support; the designated

safeguarding lead will assess safeguarding risks; the designated teacher will coordinate support for looked-after and previously looked-after children. Parents will be supported to share information, contribute to plans and maintain their child's education during exclusion.

4 Prevention and early support

We will use Bury's graduated approach to understand behaviour in context, including communication, learning, sensory, physical and emotional needs, bullying, relationships, trauma and difficulties at home. Support will begin when concerns emerge, without waiting for repeated suspensions or a diagnosis.

- Assess with the child, parents, class teacher, SENCO and pastoral staff. Record strengths, triggers, needs and the child's views using accessible communication.
- Plan a small number of clear outcomes, reasonable adjustments, teaching and pastoral strategies, named responsibilities and a review date. Use a pupil support plan, risk assessment or SEND plan as appropriate.
- Implement agreed support consistently, including staff guidance and training. Maintain a named contact for the child and family.
- Review the evidence and the views of the child and parents. Adapt the plan and seek additional assessment or specialist advice when progress is limited.

Where suspension recurs, we will review whether it is effective and what needs to change. In line with the supplied Bury toolkit, more than two suspensions in a school year will trigger a documented review of the coordinated support plan; this is a local support trigger, not a legal threshold or a reason to delay earlier action.

We will seek early advice from Bury's primary inclusion or SEND support leads and relevant outreach services when permanent exclusion is a risk. Depending on need, support may include the multi-agency inclusion panel, educational psychology, speech and language therapy, mental health services or Early Help and Team Around the School. Safeguarding referrals will follow the safeguarding policy without delay.

5 Fair and lawful decision making

Assessment before a decision

The Headteacher will establish what happened using the balance of probabilities, meaning that an event is more likely than not to have occurred. Decisions must be lawful, reasonable, fair and proportionate. Relevant behaviour outside school may be considered in accordance with the behaviour policy and the school's lawful powers.

- Gather reliable evidence, including accounts from those involved, the pupil's account and relevant contextual information. Distinguish facts from assumptions.
- Hear the pupil's views before deciding unless inappropriate, support them to communicate, and explain how their views were considered. Seek parents' relevant information wherever practicable.
- Consider age, understanding, SEND, disability, unmet need, bullying, provocation, safeguarding circumstances and the support and adjustments already provided.
- Consider alternatives, the impact on the pupil and others, and why the proposed sanction and its duration are justified. Record reasons and the arrangements for education and safety.

SEND and children who may be particularly vulnerable

We will comply with the Equality Act 2010, including reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, and use our best endeavours to secure appropriate special educational provision. We will consider whether SEND

contributed to the behaviour and whether exclusion would be lawful in those circumstances. Support and assessment will not depend on a formal diagnosis.

Where an EHCP is in place and exclusion or placement breakdown is a risk, we will contact the local authority SEND team and request an early review of the plan. We will involve the designated teacher, social worker and relevant Virtual School Head early for a looked-after child, and consider the personal education plan. For previously looked-after children, we will work with parents and the designated teacher and seek Virtual School advice where appropriate. We will, as far as possible, avoid permanently excluding looked-after children and pupils with EHCPs.

Suspension and permanent exclusion thresholds

A suspension may be used for a breach of the behaviour policy where it is a proportionate response. It must have a fixed end date and be no longer than justified. Total suspensions must not exceed 45 school days in an academic year, including suspensions at other schools. Lunchtime suspensions count as half a school day for calculating relevant totals and review thresholds.

Permanent exclusion will be considered only where both conditions are met: the behaviour amounts to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy; and the pupil's continued attendance would seriously harm the education or welfare of that pupil or other people in school. A sufficiently serious single incident may meet these tests; prior suspensions are not a prerequisite.

A suspension cannot simply be extended or converted into permanent exclusion. Exceptionally, for example when further evidence emerges, a fresh decision may impose a further suspension or permanent exclusion starting after the original suspension ends. New notices and all relevant safeguards are required.

6 Prohibited practices and immediate safety

There will be no informal or unofficial exclusions, including sending a child home to "cool off", even with parental agreement. A disciplinary instruction to remain at home and complete online learning is still an exclusion and must follow the formal process. Exclusions must not be open ended.

A child will not be excluded simply because of SEND, disability, academic attainment, the actions of a parent, or because the school considers that it cannot meet the child's needs. Reinstatement or return will not depend on parents attending a meeting or accepting additional conditions. Parents will not be pressured to home educate or remove their child to avoid permanent exclusion.

Staff will first secure immediate safety, follow safeguarding and physical intervention procedures where necessary, and provide support to anyone affected. The Headteacher and DSL will assess the risks of a child being out of school and arrange a safe handover to a responsible adult. A primary-aged child will not be sent away unsupervised. Police or social care involvement does not remove the school's own duties or automatically determine an exclusion decision.

7 Notifications and communication

Parents will be informed without delay, normally initially by telephone or in person, followed without delay by written notice. Communication will be accessible, with interpretation or other adjustments where needed. The notice will explain:

- The reasons, the start date and fixed duration of a suspension or the fact that the exclusion is permanent; for suspension, the date of return.
- The right to make representations, how and to whom to submit them, how the child may contribute, and the applicable review arrangements.

- Where a review hearing is required, the right to attend, bring a friend and arrange representation at the parent's expense; the right to request a remote hearing and how to do so.
- Arrangements for work, alternative education, contact and reintegration, and sources of free, impartial advice including the local SENDIAS service.

The formal exclusion notice will be delivered or posted in accordance with statutory requirements; electronic service will be used only where parents have given the required written agreement for this type of notice. The school will retain the notice and a record of delivery.

For a compulsory-school-age pupil, the notice will identify the first five school days, or the shorter applicable period, during which parents must ensure the child is not in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification. This duty ends earlier if the suspension ends or suitable full-time alternative provision begins. Notice of this duty must be given no later than the end of the afternoon session on the first exclusion day and explain the possibility of a penalty notice or prosecution.

Bury local authority will be notified without delay of every suspension and permanent exclusion. The pupil's social worker and, for a looked-after child, Virtual School Head will also be notified without delay. For permanent exclusion, the home local authority will also be notified if different. The governing board will be notified without delay of permanent exclusions, exclusions taking the term total above five days, and exclusions affecting a public examination or national curriculum test. Other suspensions will be reported at least termly.

8 Education during suspension or exclusion

The school will take reasonable steps to set and mark accessible, achievable work during the first five school days when alternative provision is not available. Staff will consider SEND, access to devices and adult support; a generic online link alone will not replace a suitable learning plan. The family will have a named school contact.

For a compulsory-school-age pupil suspended for more than five school days, the Trust must arrange suitable full-time education from no later than the sixth school day. Consecutive suspensions count together for this duty. For permanent exclusion, suitable full-time education must be arranged by the pupil's home local authority from the sixth school day. School will share information promptly and escalate any risk of a gap in provision.

For a looked-after child or a child with a social worker, school and the local authority should work together to arrange alternative provision from the first day following exclusion. Education arrangements for a looked-after child will be documented in the personal education plan. Children below compulsory school age will also receive appropriate learning and support arrangements, although the statutory sixth-day duty does not apply to them.

Parents will receive the placement address, start date, session times and the person to whom the pupil should report. If these details cannot reasonably be supplied with the initial notice, they will be provided without delay and at least 48 hours before provision starts. Less notice is permissible with parental consent where provision begins before the sixth day.

School and the Trust will check the suitability, safeguarding, SEND provision, quality and attendance arrangements of provision they commission. Absence will be reported and followed up on the same day. Eligibility for travel support will be considered with the local authority. For a lunchtime suspension, school will arrange a meal for a pupil entitled to free school meals, for example a packed lunch.

9 Reintegration and attendance

A suspension will be followed by a planned, supportive return and a fresh start. We will invite parents and the child to a reintegration meeting before or at return, reviewing what happened, what has been learned and what support needs to change. Non-attendance at the meeting must not delay the child's return.

The plan will identify a trusted adult, agreed routines and adjustments, learning to catch up, practical strategies for managing difficulty, support for relationships and a review date. The child's views will be included. The SENCO, pastoral staff, DSL and external professionals will contribute where relevant. Staff will monitor whether the plan is working and respond to renewed concerns promptly.

In line with the attendance policy, a part-time timetable must not be used to manage behaviour or disguise an exclusion. Any exceptional timetable for other justified reasons must meet the safeguards in that policy, have parental agreement, regular review and a planned return to full-time education.

Attendance records will show the actual circumstances of each session. Code E applies when the pupil is suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision has been made. When provision is arranged, the correct national code will reflect the arrangement and actual attendance; code D applies to sessions at another school where the pupil is also registered. Remote work at home does not count as attendance. Registers must not be altered to improve attendance figures.

10 Review by the governing board

The clerk will calculate cumulative days within the term, including half-days, and record the date the governing board received notice. These are school-day deadlines, not calendar-day deadlines. The academy review panel must have authority under the Trust's articles and scheme of delegation, be impartial and receive appropriate procedural advice.

Circumstances	Required consideration
Permanent exclusion	Consider reinstatement within 15 school days of receiving notice.
Suspension taking the total above 15 school days in a term	Consider reinstatement within 15 school days of receiving notice. This includes totals such as 15.5 days.
Any exclusion causing a missed public examination or national curriculum test	Consider reinstatement within 15 school days and, so far as reasonably practicable, before the examination or test.
More than 5 and up to 15 school days in a term	If parents make representations, consider reinstatement within 50 school days of receiving notice. Without representations there is no duty to meet and no power to direct reinstatement.
5 school days or fewer in a term	Consider any parental representations. There is no requirement for a meeting and no power to direct reinstatement. The examination or test rule above takes priority.

A fair hearing

Parents and the Headteacher will be invited, together with the pupil's social worker and Virtual School Head where applicable. The child will be supported to contribute in an age-appropriate way, in person or through

another suitable method. Parents may request a local authority observer; the academy Trust decides whether to agree and whether that representative may make representations.

The clerk will circulate relevant evidence, including the Headteacher's report and parental representations, in advance, normally at least five school days before the meeting. Late evidence will be handled fairly, giving everyone a reasonable opportunity to respond. Reasonable adjustments, accessible information and an impartial clerk will support participation.

The panel will consider the evidence and representations afresh, applying the balance of probabilities. It will assess lawfulness, reasonableness, fairness and proportionality, including SEND and equality duties, the child's circumstances and the welfare of others. It must not simply endorse the Headteacher's decision. It may decline reinstatement or direct reinstatement immediately or on a specified date where it has that power. It cannot extend a suspension or substitute a suspension for permanent exclusion.

The outcome, reasons and required next steps will be notified in writing without delay to parents, the Headteacher and relevant local authorities, social worker and Virtual School Head. A suspension that has already ended must still be reviewed where the statutory duty applies, and the outcome recorded on the pupil's educational record.

11 Independent review and discrimination claims

If the governing board does not reinstate a permanently excluded pupil, parents may apply for an independent review panel arranged and funded by the academy Trust. The application must normally be made within 15 school days of written notice of the governing board's decision. The decision letter must state the exact deadline, application address, required grounds and where to send supporting evidence. The clerk will calculate notification dates in accordance with the statutory service rules.

Parents may request a SEN expert at no cost, whether or not the child has identified SEN. The expert provides impartial advice about how SEN may be relevant; they do not conduct a new assessment of the child. Parents may bring a friend and arrange representation at their own expense. The Trust will arrange the review to begin within 15 school days of receiving the application and follow the statutory requirements for an independent, trained panel and clerk.

The independent panel may uphold the decision, recommend reconsideration, or quash the decision and direct reconsideration where the legal test is met. It cannot itself order reinstatement. If reconsideration is recommended or directed, the governing board must reconsider within 10 school days of receiving the panel's decision and notify the required parties. Any financial consequences of a direction will be handled under the statutory framework.

Parents may also bring a disability discrimination claim to the First-tier Tribunal for SEND, or a claim about other prohibited discrimination to the County Court. The usual time limit is six months from the alleged discrimination; the relevant court or tribunal can consider an extension in appropriate circumstances. These rights are separate from independent review and can apply to suspension as well as permanent exclusion. The decision letter will explain the applicable rights and sources of advice.

Remote meetings

Face-to-face hearings are the default. Parents may request a governing board hearing or independent review by remote access. The arranging body will follow the statutory process and be satisfied that participants can take part effectively and that the meeting will be fair and transparent. If these conditions cannot be met, a face-to-face meeting will be arranged without delay. Social workers and Virtual School Heads may join remotely subject to the statutory participation conditions, regardless of the format chosen for other participants.

12 Cancellation of an exclusion

The Headteacher may cancel a suspension or permanent exclusion before the governing board has met to consider reinstatement. Parents, the governing board, local authority and relevant social worker and Virtual School Head must be notified without delay, with the reason. The child must be allowed to return without delay and parents should be offered a meeting to discuss the circumstances. The governing board's duty to consider reinstatement then ends.

Days already spent out of school before cancellation still count towards the maximum of 45 school days in the academic year. A permanent exclusion cannot be cancelled if more than 45 school days have already been spent excluded that year, or would have been by the time cancellation takes effect. Records and notifications will be updated accurately, preserving the audit trail.

13 Off site direction and managed moves

Off site direction

Off-site direction is a temporary placement in another education setting intended to improve future behaviour. It must not be a punishment for past behaviour or an informal exclusion. The Trust will use it only through its lawful powers and current delegation arrangements, with regard to the 2026 regulations and current alternative provision guidance. School will explain the proposal, hear the child and parents, and assess whether it meets the child's needs.

The placement plan will set out objectives, provision, a proposed maximum duration, safeguarding and attendance arrangements, review dates and reintegration. Relevant learning, SEND and risk information will be shared securely. The school retains responsibility for overseeing the pupil's education and safety in commissioned provision; placement away from school does not end its SEND or equality duties.

Parents and, where there is an EHCP, the local authority must receive written information as soon as practicable and no later than two school days before the direction starts. This will include the address, reporting contact, number of days, reasons, objectives and session and break times.

The governing board must keep the direction under review. Parents and the EHCP local authority may request a review in writing, to be held as soon as reasonably practicable unless one has occurred in the previous 10 weeks. Review invitations must be sent no later than six days before the meeting; the decision, reasons and any continued duration must be notified in writing no later than six days afterwards. Reviews will consider the views of the pupil, parents, provider, school and relevant professionals.

Managed moves

A managed move is a voluntary, permanent transfer to another mainstream school, agreed by all relevant parties, including parents and the receiving admission authority. It will be considered only when in the child's best interests, with informed parental agreement and appropriate support and information sharing. A temporary trial must be considered through the lawful off-site direction framework rather than presented as a completed managed move.

The school will follow current Bury arrangements and involve the local authority where an EHCP requires review or amendment. The DSL, social worker and Virtual School Head will be involved as appropriate. The threat of exclusion must never be used to pressure parents into a move. Parents who believe they are being pressured may use the school and Trust complaints procedure; this does not replace statutory exclusion review rights.

14 Admission register and transition

A permanently excluded pupil will remain on the admission register until a lawful deletion ground is met. Following a decision not to reinstate, deletion on permanent exclusion grounds may take place once the 15-school-day application period has passed without an independent review application, or parents state in writing that they will not apply. Where an application is made in time, school must wait until the review is determined or abandoned and any required reconsideration is complete.

Deletion will not be backdated. The school will make the required local authority return, transfer educational and safeguarding information securely and support continuity at the receiving provision. Extended absence, a proposed move or parental discussion alone does not justify removing a child from roll. Any other proposed deletion must satisfy the 2024 registration regulations and the attendance policy.

15 Recording and monitoring

The school will retain an accurate record of incidents, evidence, pupil and parent views, adjustments, support, decisions, notifications, education, meetings and outcomes. Information will be shared on a lawful, necessary basis and held securely under the Trust's data protection and retention arrangements. Records relevant to a claim or review must be preserved; independent review minutes will be retained for at least five years in line with DfE guidance.

The Headteacher will report at least termly to governors and the Trust on the number, reasons, duration and recurrence of suspensions and permanent exclusions; pupil-group patterns, including SEND, disadvantage and looked-after children; missed learning; the quality of alternative provision; and the impact of prevention and reintegration. Small-group information will be handled confidentially. Governors will challenge disproportionate patterns and check that agreed actions improve pupils' experience and safety.

Operational checklist for each decision

- Record evidence, pupil voice, contextual factors, equality and SEND considerations, alternatives, the decision and reasons.
- Check the academic-year total, term total, sixth-day education trigger and any national curriculum test affected.
- Arrange safe handover, safeguarding contact, accessible work and any alternative provision. Record who will check delivery.
- Issue complete notices promptly to parents and all required bodies. Record the date, method and applicable review deadline.
- Plan reintegration or transition; review support and risk assessments; maintain accurate attendance and admission records.

16 Sources and review arrangements

This policy was prepared on 7 October 2026. It draws on the two supplied documents: Bury Schools Exclusions Guidance, containing the September 2023 School Exclusion Toolkit marked "No Changes or amendments made 2026–27"; and TPS Attendance Policy September 2026. Older legal references and inconsistent review thresholds in the toolkit have not been adopted.

Key legal framework: Education Act 2002, section 51A; School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012, as amended; Education and Inspections Act 2006, including section 100;

Education Act 1996, section 19; Equality Act 2010; Children and Families Act 2014; School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024; and the Education (Educational Provision for Improving Behaviour) Regulations 2010 as applied and amended by the 2026 regulations.

DfE statutory guidance, effective 26 July 2026: Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement. In particular, parts 3 to 11 cover decisions, pupil movement, notifications, education, reviews and remote hearings.
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-suspensions-and-permanent-exclusions

DfE parent guide and sources of advice
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusions-guide-for-parents
https://childlawadvice.org.uk/information-pages/school-exclusion/
https://www.ipsea.org.uk

The school office can provide this policy in an accessible format and help parents contact the clerk and local SENDIAS service: 01204 886169 or tottington@prestoleetrust.org. Each decision letter will provide the named contact and current details for the relevant review route.

Before adoption, the authorised Trust body will confirm approval, delegation and clerk arrangements. The Headteacher will review the policy annually and sooner when the law, guidance or relevant arrangements change.