

Platt Bridge Community School



Exclusions and Suspensions Policy

School Name: Platt Bridge Community School

Address: Rivington Avenue, Platt Bridge, Wigan, WN2 5NG

Headteacher: Mr. Stephen Wallace

Policy Written By: Nicola Wood

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1. Introduction

Platt Bridge Community School is committed to providing a calm, safe, and supportive learning environment where all pupils can thrive. Our behaviour policy focuses on promoting positive conduct and resolving issues through early intervention and support. This Exclusions and Suspensions Policy is a serious and final measure for managing behaviour when other strategies have been exhausted.

This policy is based on the statutory guidance "Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England" (DfE, updated August 2024) and complies with all relevant legislation, including the Education Act 1996 and the Equality Act 2010.

2. Definitions

- **Suspension (Fixed-Period Exclusion):** A pupil is temporarily removed from school for a specified number of days or part of a day (e.g., lunchtime). A pupil may be suspended for a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year.
- **Permanent Exclusion:** A pupil is permanently removed from the school roll and may not return. This is the most serious disciplinary sanction.
- **Headteacher:** In this policy, this refers to the Headteacher or a person acting in their absence. Only the Headteacher has the power to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil.

3. Grounds for Suspension or Permanent Exclusion

A Headteacher may suspend or permanently exclude a pupil only on disciplinary grounds. The decision must be made:

- In response to a **serious breach** or **persistent breaches** of the school's behaviour policy; AND
- Where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others (including staff or pupils).

Examples of such breaches, as detailed in our school's behaviour policy, may include but are not limited to:

- Physical assault against a pupil or adult.
- Verbal abuse or threatening behaviour.
- Serious or persistent bullying (including cyber-bullying).
- Racist, sexist, or homophobic abuse.
- Possession or use of an illegal substance or an offensive weapon.
- Persistent disruptive behaviour.

4. Procedures for Suspension

- **Decision to Suspend:** The Headteacher will make the decision to suspend. The civil standard of proof will be applied, meaning it is "more likely than not" that the pupil committed the action. The decision must be lawful, reasonable, and fair.
- **Notification:** Parents will be notified of the suspension without delay, usually by phone, followed by a formal letter. The letter will state the reasons for the suspension, the duration, and inform parents of their right to make representations to the Governing Body.
- **Education During Suspension:**
 - For the first five school days of any suspension, the school will provide and mark work for the pupil.

- If a suspension is for more than five school days, the school is responsible for arranging suitable, full-time education from the sixth school day.
- **Parental Responsibilities:** During the first five school days, parents are legally responsible for ensuring their child is not in a public place during school hours without good reason.

5. Procedures for Permanent Exclusion

- **Decision to Exclude:** A permanent exclusion is a last resort. It will only be issued for serious or persistent breaches of the behaviour policy where allowing the pupil to remain would seriously harm the welfare or education of others. The Headteacher must be satisfied that a permanent exclusion is the only appropriate response.
- **Notification:** Parents will be notified without delay, followed by a formal letter. This letter will provide the reasons for the exclusion, the effective date, and details of their right to apply for a review by the Governing Body.
- **Alternative Provision:** The Local Authority is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for permanently excluded pupils, which must begin no later than the sixth school day after the exclusion takes effect.

6. Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

- The school will use its "best endeavours" to ensure that appropriate special educational provision is made for pupils with SEND.
- It is unlawful to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil simply because they have SEND or a disability that the school feels it is unable to meet.
- The Headteacher will give special consideration to the circumstances of any pupil with SEND or a disability when making an exclusion decision and will make reasonable adjustments as required by the Equality Act 2010.

7. Governing Body Review

The Governing Body has a legal duty to review all permanent exclusions. It must also review suspensions that result in a pupil missing more than 15 school days in a single term, or where a public exam or national curriculum test would be missed.

Parents have the right to attend these review meetings and make representations. The Governing Body can decide to:

- Uphold the Headteacher's decision.
- Direct the Headteacher to reinstate the pupil.

If a permanent exclusion is upheld, parents have the right to request an Independent Review Panel.