

St Katherine's School



Suspension & Exclusion Policy

Policy Number SKP A039

Next Review: September 2026

**Signed : Justin Humphreys
Headteacher**

Dated :

**Signed: William Harding
Chair of Governors**

Dated :

1. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on statutory guidance from the Department for Education:

- Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement - from September 2023.

It is also based on the following legislation, which outlines schools' powers to exclude pupils:

- Section 51a of the Education Act 2002, as amended by the Education Act 2011
- The School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012

In addition, the policy is based on:

- Part 7, chapter 2 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, which sets out parental responsibility for excluded pupils
- The Education Act 1996 and The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended by The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014
- School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012
- The Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- DfE's Governance Handbook 2020
- The School Inspection Handbook

This policy complies with the Cathedral Schools Trust's funding agreement and articles of association.

2. Definitions

- **Suspension** - when a pupil is removed from the school for a fixed period. This was previously referred to as a 'fixed-term exclusion'.
- **Exclusion** - when a pupil is removed from the school permanently and taken off the school roll. This is sometimes referred to as a 'permanent exclusion'.
- **Parent/carer** - any person who has parental responsibility and any person who has care of the child.
- **Managed move** - when a pupil is transferred to another school for a specified period..All parties, including parents/carers and the admission authority for the new school, should consent before a managed move occurs.
- **EHCP** - Education, Health and Care Plan
- **SENCo** - Special Educational needs Co-ordinator

3. Principles

- We are a learning institution which aims to provide life chances for all of its pupils. We view suspensions and permanent exclusions as a last resort when all other possible methods of managing pupil behaviour have been exhausted. The decision to suspend or permanently exclude is never taken lightly and careful consideration is taken of the facts and the surrounding circumstances before reaching a decision to suspend or permanently exclude. The school only uses suspensions and permanent exclusions as part of creating a safe and supportive environment in which pupils can learn and thrive.
- We recognise the detrimental impact of suspension and permanent exclusion on both the education and wellbeing of pupils and their families. We also recognise the impact of social exclusion, which can result from the permanent exclusion of a student and will try hard to avoid it.
- Permanent exclusion is an extremely serious step to take and has a significant impact on the ability of a pupil to access education in the future. It is only used where it is unavoidable and where every possible appropriate alternative has been considered. We are committed to using

alternatives to permanent exclusion such as managed moves and alternative provision where appropriate.

- We are committed to following all statutory exclusions procedures to ensure that every child receives an education in a safe and caring environment.
- We aim to involve parents as early as possible in any process

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4. PROCESS / PROCEDURE

Only the headteacher can suspend or permanently exclude a pupil 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.

4.1 GUIDELINES

- A decision to suspend or exclude a pupil will only be taken in response to serious or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy **and** if allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others.
- To suspend a pupil is a serious sanction and should not be used lightly. To exclude a pupil permanently from school is the ultimate sanction, and one that should be avoided if at all possible.
- The school tries to support pupils to help them improve their behaviour and focus on their education. The School's Behaviour Policy sets out the strategies used and the context in which exclusion is used.
- In most cases the decision whether to exclude, and for how long, takes into account cumulative unacceptable behaviour and the response of the pupil to the support and advice offered.
- There are a few actions which may result in an immediate suspension or permanent exclusion. Please see the School Behaviour Policy for further guidance.
- Parents/Carers should be warned where practicable if their child's behaviour is such that it is likely to lead to a suspension. Parents/Carers are likely to be involved in preventative strategies.

4.2. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUSPENSIONS AND EXCLUSIONS

The following procedures must be followed:

- The decision to exclude is most likely to follow a particular incident. This may be serious enough to justify exclusion or be the culmination of a series of events.
- Incidents will be investigated to the satisfaction of the headteacher before a decision to suspend or permanently exclude is made. Investigation may include viewing CCTV, speaking with staff/pupil witnesses and taking statements.
- Statements are usually given in confidence. These must not be directly quoted or shown to other pupils, or their parents/carers, without the permission of the pupil who made the statement.
- Statements may also be taken from adults (as well as staff) who have witnessed the incident.
- The pupil's Head of House, working alongside the Deputy/Assistant Headteacher, will discuss the most appropriate action to be taken. If a pupil is the subject of an EHCP, discussions must include the SENDCo. Other members of staff may be consulted as appropriate. Where other agencies are known to be involved in the pupil's/family's lives e.g Social Services it may be appropriate to include them.
- If they decide to recommend to the headteacher that the pupil should be suspended, they will prepare the appropriate documentation.
- If the recommendation is to permanently exclude, the Deputy Headteacher (and SENDCo) must prepare the documentation to support the case. This will include a full

past history of the pupil including information on attainment. Where appropriate, a full report from Inclusion must be included. The documentation must be compiled within five working school days of the exclusion.

- The headteacher makes the decision whether to suspend or exclude. In doing so they will consider:
 - all the relevant facts and evidence on the balance of probabilities, including whether the incident(s) leading to the exclusion were provoked
 - whether the pupil has special educational needs (SEN)
 - the pupil is especially vulnerable (e.g. the pupil has a social worker, or is a looked-after child (LAC)) or Previously Looked -after (PLAC)
 - Consider whether all alternative solutions have been explored, such as off-site direction or managed moves
 - Consider the views of the pupil, in light of their age and understanding, before deciding to suspend or exclude, unless it would not be appropriate to do so.
- Every effort must be made to contact parents/carers by telephone by the Head of House or other nominated member of staff.
- Where a pupil has LAC/PLAC status, contact is made with the Virtual School Head (VSH) prior to making any decision to permanently exclude a pupil to ensure all options have been considered.
- The school's standard disciplinary letter must be used. The reasons for the suspension or exclusion must be fully explained.
- One copy of the letter is posted to the parents/carers and another is placed on the pupil's file.
- During the period of suspension, it is the responsibility of the Assistant Headteacher/Head of House to provide work to be done at home by the pupil.
- The parent(s)/carers must be asked to accompany the pupil on return to school following a suspension. (This interview may take place during the period of suspension. The pupil must be present). They will normally be seen by the Headteacher or a nominated Deputy or Assistant Headteacher.
- Agreements to avoid a repeat of unacceptable behaviour must be agreed and documented.
- This may take the form of a behaviour contract or Pupil Support Plan. The pupil may be placed on report. It must be made clear that failure to abide by the agreement may lead to further suspension. Copies are shared with relevant colleagues so that support can be organised.

5. ADMISSION OF PUPILS EXCLUDED FROM OTHER SCHOOLS

Any pupil joining St Katherine's School following exclusion from another school will be considered through North Somerset Council or Bristol City Council panel meetings. The Deputy Headteacher, or another nominated member of staff, will attend all Admission Forums and Fair Access Panels as part of this commitment by the school.

6. MONITORING EXCLUSIONS

The Deputy Headteacher will keep a record of all suspensions and permanent exclusions. Suspensions are reported to the Governors at their Local Governing Body (LGB) meeting each term. Any suspension of more than five days in aggregate in any one term, or one that would cause a pupil to miss a public exam, must be reported immediately to the Chair of Governors. The Governors Disciplinary Committee can direct that excluded pupils be reinstated either immediately or on a fixed date.

7. MEETINGS OF GOVERNORS

7.1 A Governors Disciplinary Committee must be convened to consider reinstatement of the pupil to school where an suspension/exclusion meets any of the following conditions:

- It is a permanent exclusion;

- It is a suspension that alone, or in conjunction with previous suspensions, will take the pupil's total number of days suspended from school above fifteen within one school term;
- It is a suspension or permanent exclusion that will result in the pupil missing a public exam.

7.2 Where a suspension takes the pupil's total number of school days suspended above five (5) but fewer than sixteen (16) in a single term then the Governors Disciplinary Committee must consider any representations made by parents/carers. If representations are received, the Governors Disciplinary Committee must convene to consider reinstatement within fifty days (50) of receiving notice of the suspension.

7.3 Where a suspension, alone or in conjunction with previous suspensions, will take the total number of days that a pupil has been suspended within a school term to five (5) or fewer, the Governors Disciplinary Committee must consider any representations from parents/carers but do not have the power to direct the pupil to be reinstated.

8. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour policy
- Safeguarding
- SEND policy