



Exclusions Policy

Last reviewed: September 2026
Owner: Headteacher

Due for review: September 2029
Reviewed by: FGB

1. Introduction

- 1.1. We do not wish to exclude any child from school. However, sometimes exclusion may be necessary. St Mary's School follows the West Sussex Exclusions Guidance which follows the national guidance: [Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement](#).
- 1.2. In the event of an exclusion, the most current statutory national guidance should be consulted over and above this policy, in case of interim updates to law and legislation.

2. Law

- 2.1. Only the headteacher (or the acting headteacher) has the authority to suspend or exclude a child from school.
- 2.2. The school can exclude a pupil if they misbehave in or outside school.
- 2.3. The headteacher may exclude a child for one or more fixed periods, for up to 45 days in any one school year. In extreme and exceptional circumstances, the headteacher may exclude a child permanently. It is also possible for the headteacher to convert a suspension into a permanent exclusion, if the circumstances are extreme and exceptional.
- 2.4. There are only two types of exclusion which are lawful:
 - 2.4.1. suspension (sometimes referred to as fixed-term or fixed-period exclusion)
 - 2.4.2. permanent exclusion
- 2.5. Any exclusion of a pupil, even for a short period of time, must be formally recorded. A pupil must only be excluded on behavioural grounds. The decision to exclude must be:
 - 2.5.1. lawful
 - 2.5.2. rational
 - 2.5.3. reasonable
 - 2.5.4. fair
 - 2.5.5. proportionate
- 2.6. Both types of exclusions are serious actions for schools to take and neither should be considered before all other options have been exhausted. Exclusion from school, even short term, is always viewed as a last resort.

3. Communication

- 3.1. Parents will be notified without delay, in writing, stating:
 - 3.1.1. the reason for the exclusion
 - 3.1.2. the length of the exclusion

- 3.1.3. arrangements for any alternative provision
- 3.1.4. parents right to respond or appeal

4. Types of exclusion

4.1. Suspensions (also known as fixed-term or fixed-period exclusion)

- 4.1.1. A suspension is when a child is removed temporarily from school for a fixed period of time, such as a number of days or even for part of the school day (for example lunchtimes).
- 4.1.2. When added together, suspensions cannot exceed 45 days in one academic year, even if the child has changed schools.
- 4.1.3. The pupil remains on the school roll during the suspension, and returns to school on a stated date.
- 4.1.4. The school will set and mark work for the first 5 school days.
- 4.1.5. If the suspension is longer than 5 school days, the school will arrange suitable full-time education from the sixth school day, for example, at a pupil referral unit.

4.2. Permanent exclusions

- 4.2.1. Permanent exclusions happen when a pupil is removed from school permanently and their name is taken off the school roll.
- 4.2.2. Permanent exclusions should only be resorted to in situations where the child has seriously breached the schools behaviour policy and the child remaining in school could seriously harm the education or welfare of other pupils.
- 4.2.3. The local council must arrange full-time education from the sixth school day.

5. Records

- 5.1. Parents / carers can request a copy of their child's school records to look at any incidents and witness statements that are related to the incident.
- 5.2. The school has up to 10 school days to provide the school record; there may be a charge for photocopying.

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

- 6.1. The government's exclusion guidance states that pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) should only be permanently excluded from school in exceptional circumstances.
- 6.2. The school will take into account children's SEND and how it affects their behaviour.
- 6.3. For a pupil with SEND, the school will take into account the need to identify the child's needs and provide additional support. This could include putting in place a Pastoral Support Plan (PSP).
- 6.4. **The West Sussex Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support (SENDIAS) service**

- 6.4.1. SENDIAS is available to ensure that all parents have access to impartial information, advice and support so they can make informed decisions about their child's special educational needs. SENDIAS can help by:
- 6.4.1.1. advising parents / carers further with the exclusions process
 - 6.4.1.2. informing parents / carers of their rights and responsibilities
 - 6.4.1.3. assisting parents / carers in preparing an appeal case
 - 6.4.1.4. supporting meetings (SENDIAS may be able to attend in some circumstances but not as an advocate)
 - 6.4.1.5. signposting to other organisations that may be able to provide support and help.
- 6.4.2. Any information that is shared with SENDIAS is in confidence unless permission has been obtained to share this with other individuals, services and agencies that may be able to help the family with their circumstances.
- 6.4.3. For more detailed information about school exclusions visit the [SENDIAS factsheets](#) page and find the 'Schools Exclusions' factsheet.
- 6.4.4. **How to contact SENDIAS:**
Helpline: 033 022 28555
Email: send.ias@westsussex.gov.uk

6.5. Further advice for SEND

- 6.5.1. Independent Provider of Special Educational Advice (IPSEA).
- 6.5.2. National Autistic Society (NAS)

7. Further advice on exclusions

- [The School Exclusions Hub](#) has a variety of information and resources about exclusions.
- The [West Sussex Fair Access Team](#) can provide detailed advice to parent carers, schools and governing bodies on exclusions.
- The Access & Exclusion Team in West Sussex can be contacted directly by email: ACDExclusions@westsussex.gov.uk.