



# Understanding Suspensions and Exclusions

An overview of Suspensions and Exclusions and the support schools should provide.

Schools/Academies have a legal responsibility to provide education and not discriminate against a pupil in how they provide education (Equality Act, 2010).

[KNOW MORE](#)

# Welcome Leicestershire Virtual School's bitesize training for Social Care Staff

In response to requests from social care we have designed a series of short training videos to take you through different issues facing children in education. If you want further support please contact:  
[bronwen.barradell@leics.gov.uk](mailto:bronwen.barradell@leics.gov.uk)



# What is a Suspension?

A suspension is when a child is removed temporarily from school. They can only be removed for up to 45 school days in one school year, even if they've changed schools.

If a child has been suspended for a fixed period, schools should set and mark work for the first 5 school days.

If the suspension is longer than 5 school days, the school must arrange suitable full-time education from the sixth (or the first day for a looked after child) school day, for example, at an alternative provision.

**Lunchtime suspension** where parents/carers take responsibility for their child during lunchtimes and return them to school at the start of the afternoon session;

**Suspension/ fixed period exclusion** where a child or young person is not permitted to attend school for a specified number of days;

Schools sometimes use the term 'exclusion' or 'inclusion' to refer to **internal suspensions**, where a pupil is not permitted to attend a specific lesson(s) but remains onsite during school hours.

You can find out more about the laws surrounding Suspensions and Exclusions [here](#)





# After a Suspension

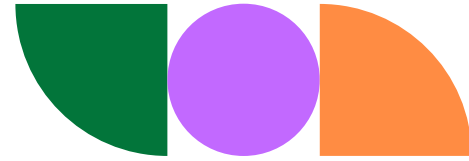
Reintegration meeting should take place before they return to school

At the meeting the Child or Young Person and their Parents or carers should be given the opportunity to think about what happened before the incident, what could be done differently to avoid it happening again and what adult support is needed in school.

It is unlikely that a suspension alone will change a child's ability to deal with difficulties in school.

How will we avoid this happening again?

What are the adults around the child going to do?



## Part- time Timetable

A school may suggest reducing a child's timetable to a couple of hours or lessons per day and gradually building up their time in school.

This can be a successful approach for some children and young people. However, the following guidance should be followed;

# What is a Permanent Exclusion?

Permanent exclusion means your child is no longer allowed to attend a school due to their behaviours.

When this happens your local council must arrange full-time education from the sixth school day (or the first day if a child is looked after).

## Alternative education and exclusion

The school or local council must tell you about any alternative education they arrange. It's your responsibility to make sure your child attends.

## Making a complaint

If alternative education is not arranged within 5 days, or you're not happy with the education, you can complain to:

- [the school](#), for suspensions
- [the local council](#), for permanent exclusions

If you're not happy with the response, you can [complain to the Department for Education \(DfE\)](#).

You'll need to show that you followed the school or council's complaints procedure.

## Children with special educational needs or a disability

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) or a disability can be suspended or permanently excluded from school.

Schools are not allowed to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil because they have a disability or additional needs the school cannot meet.



# After a Permanent Exclusion

## Looked After Children and Children with a Social Worker

Before a Head Teacher makes the decision to Permanently Exclude a Looked After Child they must contact the Virtual School for advice and guidance to ensure all options have been explored to avoid a Permanent Exclusion. Where a child is known to Social Services the Head Teacher should contact the social worker before issuing intent to Permanently exclude.

## Alternative education

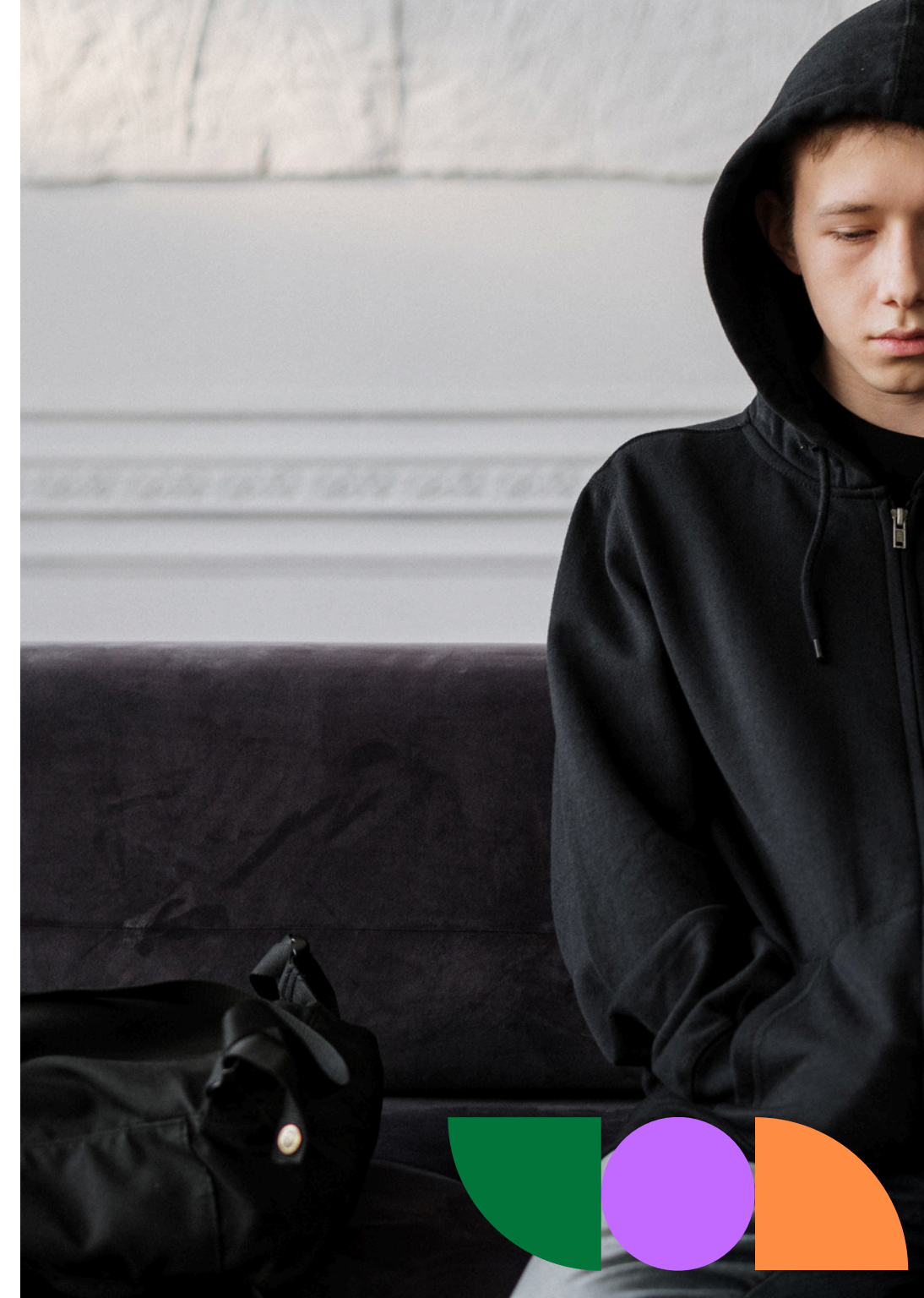
The school must notify the Inclusion Service of their intention to Permanently Exclude. Once the notification has been received the referral will be passed to the relevant Inclusion Team for an education package to be formalised.

## School move

## Children with a Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

The school, parents or carers can request an Emergency Annual Review of the EHCP to assess if the school can meet the child's needs. The resulting decision and supporting paperwork must be submitted to SENa who will then begin the commissioning process to find a new school place.

You can find out more about the laws surrounding Suspensions and Exclusions [here](#)





# Impact of Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion

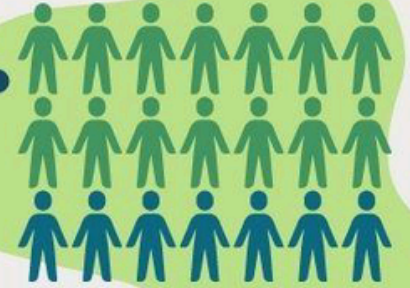
We know that suspensions and exclusions have an impact on all children and their families. However, some children are disproportionately suspended or excluded in comparison to their peers. It is important that we closely monitor this and support schools and the wider community to tackle bias and discrimination.

Data taken from Department of Education

## Exclusions in Numbers

### Boys vs. Girls

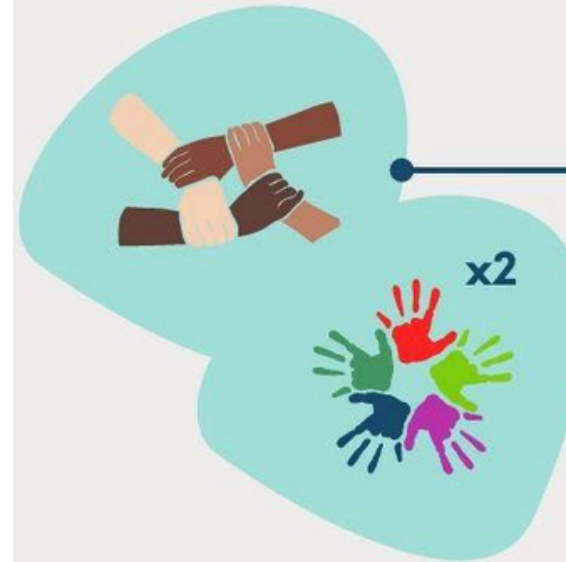
Boys are 3x more likely to be permanently excluded/suspended than girls. (DfE, 2021)



### Demographics

Pupils of colour have the highest rates of exclusion/suspension. (DfE, 2021)

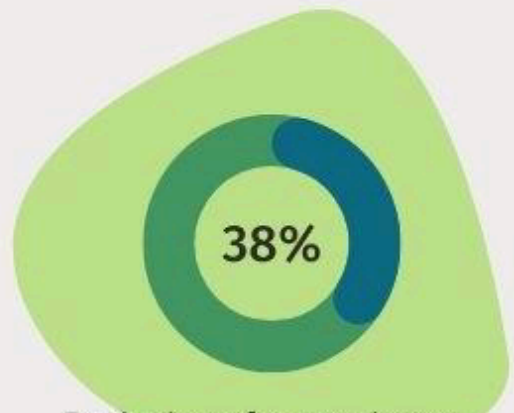
Excluded pupils are twice as likely to have a special educational need. (DfE, 2022)



### Age

Permanent exclusions/suspension rates peak at age 14. (DfE, 2021)





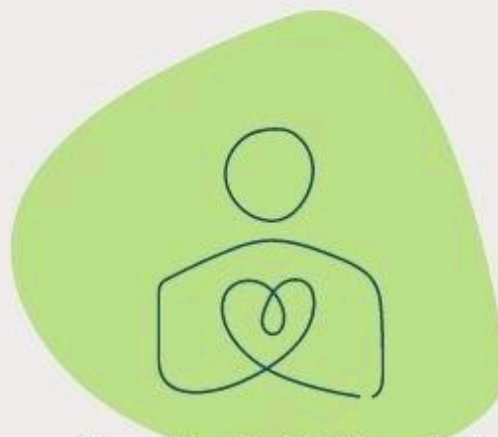
Exclusions for persistent disruptive behaviour, compared to 34% nationally. (Leicestershire Virtual School, 2022)



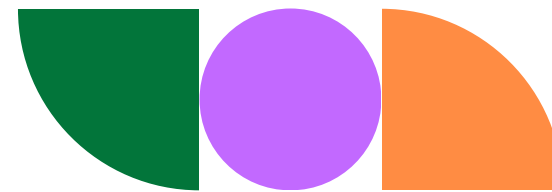
Children in care are 5x more likely to have had 1+ suspensions from school compared to the overall pupil population. (DfE, 2022)



Children who have been in care for less than 12 months are most likely to be suspended. (DfE, 2022)



Almost half of CiN excluded have a special educational need, compared to 16% of the population. (DfE, 2022)



# Children and Young People with a Social Worker

Exclusion can disproportionately affect children and young people in care and those with a social worker, compared to their peers.

Schools should work with agencies supporting families to keep children in school and positively engaged in learning.

# Risk Factors for Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion

Being male

Young people with a history of suspensions

All signs of disengagement

Late entry into care

Having Special Educational Needs

School non attendance

Young people with behavioural, social or emotional difficulties

Belonging to an ethnic minority

Low attainment particularly in English and maths

In care due to abuse and neglect

Living in residential care rather than foster or kinship care



# Protective Factors to reduce Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion

Trusting relationships with key adults in school

Parent and carers positive engagement with school

The young person has social competencies e.g. the ability to plan ahead and make choices

Staff understanding the young person's social and emotional needs, showing sensitivity and confidentiality

2 non related adults who genuinely care

Parent or carer has high aspirations for the child

The young person has a positive sense of identity e.g. they feel they have some control over things that happen to them

Staff flexibility in their approach and taking into account individual learning styles

Young person has a commitment to learning and is motivated to do well

The young person possesses positive values e.g. takes on personal responsibility

Safe and stable home where they feel cared for



# What works well

Evidence based and practice based research for what works well to support children to remain in school



- School pastoral or Inclusion team are made up of teaching and non-teaching staff
- Seeking advice from external professionals- virtual school, inclusion forums etc
- Positive, regular engagement with parents and carers
- Restorative Practice



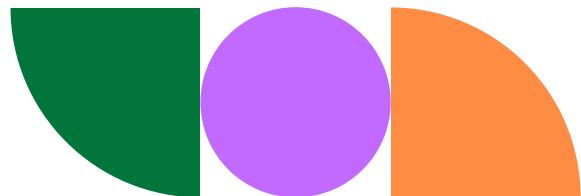
- Embedding Emotion Coaching within the school ethos
- Weekly whole school updates focussing on vulnerable children
- Providing staff training on ACES, trauma informed practice, emotion coaching



- Flexibility of school policies based on individual needs including “reasonable adjustments”.
- Promoting belonging through participation in extra curricular activities
- Mediation
- Avoidance of “zero tolerance”

# Principles of Trauma Informed Practice

Trauma-Informed Practice is a relational approach to supporting individuals who have experienced trauma and adversity, aiming to change organisations and systems, so they reduce the risk of re-traumatisation. The approach is underpinned by five guiding principles;



# Low level and high level concerns

By identifying patterns of interaction early on, we hope to avoid situations escalating to the point where a child or young person is excluded. Statutory guidance suggests early intervention should include assessments of the current provision and whether it supports any Special Educational Needs or Disability that a child or young person may have (DfE, 2017).

The framework below provides a progressive response to support a child or young person known to Social Care who may be struggling to navigate the school environment. The following action or series of actions may be taken when a child or young person is deemed to be at low, medium, or high risk of suspension:

