



Thornbury Primary School Exclusion Policy 2026–2027

Signed by: Emma Mantell (Headteacher)

Policy Statement

Thornbury Primary School is committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment where all pupils can achieve their full potential. The school believes that exclusion should only be used as a last resort and after appropriate support and intervention strategies have been considered.

This policy outlines the circumstances in which suspension or permanent exclusion may be used and sets out the procedures that will be followed to ensure decisions are lawful, reasonable, fair, and proportionate.

Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Maintain a safe and orderly school environment.
- Promote positive behaviour and inclusion.
- Ensure pupils understand expectations and consequences.
- Protect the education and welfare of all pupils.
- Ensure exclusions are used consistently and fairly.
- Meet legal and statutory requirements.
- Support pupils to successfully reintegrate following a suspension.

Legal Framework

This policy is based on:

- The Education Act 2002.
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- Equality Act 2010.
- SEND Code of Practice.
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance issued by the Department for Education.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education.

The school will ensure no pupil is discriminated against on the grounds of:

- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Gender reassignment

- Pregnancy and maternity
- Sexual orientation

Principles

The school believes that:

- Exclusion is a serious sanction.
- Early intervention is preferable to exclusion.
- Every decision must be evidence-based.
- Pupils with additional needs require careful consideration.
- Exclusions should not be used informally or unlawfully.
- The welfare and educational progress of all pupils must be considered.

Alternatives to Exclusion

Before considering exclusion, the school may implement:

- Behaviour support plans.
- Pastoral support.
- Individual risk assessments.
- Parental meetings.
- SEND assessments and reviews.
- Early Help referrals.
- Mentoring programmes.
- Managed support strategies.
- Multi-agency involvement.
- Adjustments for pupils with SEND.

The Headteacher will consider whether appropriate support has been provided.

Suspension

A suspension is when a pupil is temporarily removed from school for a fixed period.

Suspensions may be used where a pupil has:

- Seriously breached the school's behaviour policy.
- Persistently breached behavioural expectations.
- Endangered the safety of others.
- Engaged in behaviour that significantly disrupts learning.

Examples may include:

- Serious physical aggression.
- Threatening behaviour.
- Deliberate damage to property.
- Verbal abuse towards staff.
- Repeated bullying.
- Racist, discriminatory, or prejudicial incidents.
- Possession of prohibited items.

Each case will be considered individually.

Permanent Exclusion

Permanent exclusion may be considered:

Following a Serious One-Off Incident

Examples may include:

- Serious violence.
- Significant assault on a pupil or member of staff.
- Possession of an offensive weapon.
- Serious safeguarding incidents.
- Significant criminal behaviour.

Following Persistent Breaches

Permanent exclusion may also be considered where:

- Numerous interventions have failed.
- The pupil's continued presence seriously harms the education or welfare of others.

The Headteacher must be satisfied that permanent exclusion is lawful, reasonable, and proportionate.

Factors Considered Before Exclusion

Before making a decision, the Headteacher will consider:

- The seriousness of the incident.
- The facts of the case.
- The pupil's age and maturity.
- Previous behavioural history.
- Whether there are safeguarding concerns.

- Special educational needs or disabilities.
- Any protected characteristics.
- The impact on other pupils and staff.
- Whether the incident was provoked.

The Headteacher will seek all available evidence wherever possible.

Pupils with SEND

Particular care will be taken when considering exclusion involving pupils with:

- Special Educational Needs.
- Education, Health and Care Plans.
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs.
- Neurodiverse conditions.

The school will consider:

- Whether behaviour is linked to identified needs.
- Reasonable adjustments already in place.
- Additional adjustments that may be required.
- Advice from external professionals where appropriate.

Having SEND does not prevent exclusion where circumstances justify it, but additional scrutiny will always be applied.

Decision-Making Process

Only the Headteacher (or Acting Headteacher) may make the decision to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil.

The Headteacher will:

1. Investigate the incident.
2. Consider witness statements.
3. Review relevant evidence.
4. Consider mitigating circumstances.
5. Consider equality and safeguarding implications.
6. Make a balanced decision.

Notification to Parents

Parents will be informed without delay and provided with:

- The reason for the exclusion.

- The length of any suspension.
- Information regarding representation.
- Details of governing board review arrangements.
- Arrangements for education during the exclusion period.

Communication will normally be made by telephone and confirmed in writing.

Education During Suspension

The school will provide work for the first five school days of a suspension.

Parents are responsible for ensuring their child is not present in a public place during school hours during the first five days of suspension unless there is a reasonable justification.

Alternative educational provision will be arranged where required by legislation.

Reintegration Meetings

Following a suspension, a reintegration meeting will normally take place involving:

- The pupil.
- Parents/carers.
- School representative.
- Relevant pastoral staff.

The purpose is to:

- Rebuild positive relationships.
- Review support arrangements.
- Clarify expectations.
- Reduce the likelihood of future incidents.

A pupil's return to school will not be delayed if parents are unable to attend.

Governing Board Responsibilities

The Governing Board will:

- Review exclusions where required by law.
- Consider relevant evidence.
- Ensure procedures have been followed.
- Consider equality implications.
- Act fairly and impartially.

The Governing Board may uphold or overturn exclusion decisions in accordance with statutory guidance.

Off-Site Behaviour

A pupil may be suspended or permanently excluded for behaviour outside school where there is a clear link to the school, including:

- School visits.
- Travel to and from school.
- Online behaviour affecting members of the school community.
- Behaviour whilst wearing school uniform.

Safeguarding Considerations

Exclusion can be a safeguarding issue.

Prior to exclusion, consideration will be given to:

- Vulnerability factors.
- Child protection concerns.
- Family circumstances.
- Risk of exploitation.
- Mental health needs.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be consulted where appropriate.

Monitoring and Equality

The school will monitor exclusion data to identify patterns regarding:

- Gender.
- Ethnicity.
- SEND.
- Disadvantage.
- Looked After Children.
- Previously Looked After Children.

Data will be reported to governors regularly to ensure fairness and reduce disproportionate outcomes.

Recording and Confidentiality

The school will maintain accurate records of:

- Behaviour incidents.
- Interventions implemented.
- Suspensions.

- Permanent exclusions.
- Communications with parents.
- Governing Board decisions.

Records will be stored securely and managed in line with data protection requirements.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if:

- Legislation changes.
- Department for Education guidance changes.
- Local procedures change.
- Monitoring identifies the need for revision.

Appendix A: Examples of Behaviour That May Lead to Exclusion

The following list is illustrative and not exhaustive:

- Physical assault against a pupil.
- Physical assault against an adult.
- Verbal abuse and threatening behaviour.
- Bullying, including cyberbullying.
- Racist abuse.
- Discriminatory behaviour.
- Theft.
- Vandalism.
- Deliberate damage to property.
- Possession of prohibited items.
- Serious disruption to learning.
- Behaviour that places others at risk.

Policy Statement for Staff

All exclusion decisions must be:

Lawful, reasonable, fair, proportionate, evidence-based, and made in the best interests of both the individual pupil and the wider school community. Exclusion remains a sanction of last resort following appropriate support and intervention wherever possible.