



Torquay Girls Grammar School Suspension Policy

Policy Information	
Policy Owner	Headteacher
Issue Version	1.1
Approving Committee	Full Trust Board
Adopted Date	November 2022
Review Cycle	Annual
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Next Review Date	January 2026

1. Introduction

This Policy aims to set out the process that will be followed and additional considerations around suspensions and exclusions.

Where TGGs's approaches towards behaviour management have been exhausted, suspensions and permanent exclusions will sometimes be necessary as a last resort. This is to ensure that other pupils and teaching staff are protected from disruption and can learn in safe, calm and supportive environments.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the behaviour policy and the SEND policy for TGGs.

This policy applies to all members of the TGGs community. TGGs will apply suspensions and exclusions in accordance with this policy and ensure that its contents are relayed to all staff, parents and pupils.

2. Legislation

The principal legislation to which this policy relates is:

- a) The Education Act 2002, as amended by the Education Act 2011;
- b) The School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012;
- c) The Education and Inspections Act 2006; and
- d) The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007.
- e) Statutory guidance on suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies, pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement (May 2023).

3. Types of Exclusion

Suspensions and permanent exclusions are different:

- Suspensions (previously called fixed-term exclusions) are where a pupil is prevented from attending the school for a fixed period. At the end of the period, they are expected to return to school following a reintegration meeting. A pupil may receive a maximum 45 days of suspension in an academic year before being permanently excluded.
- Permanent exclusions are where, subject to a decision of the trustee board to reinstate the pupil to the school, the pupil is prevented from attending the school again. A decision to permanently exclude will only be taken 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 such as staff or pupils in the school.

4. Roles and responsibilities

All members of the school Trust are expected to follow this policy. Roles, responsibilities and expectations of each section of the school community are set out in detail below.

Exclusions Policy

The Headteacher

All decisions to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil will be taken by the Headteacher after considering all the circumstances. Every decision made will be proportionate to the seriousness of the behaviour with reference to the school's behaviour policy.

The Senior Leadership Team

All decisions to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil will be taken by the Headteacher. The senior leadership team are responsible for collecting all the appropriate paperwork ahead of the decision-making process. This includes other relevant data about the child alongside their views.

The Trustees

The Trust Board are responsible for forming committees to review exclusions and suspensions when it is required to do so if it is requested by parents or it is, in its view, prudent to review an individual decision. In each case, the decision of the relevant committee formed by the trustee board will be to decide whether to uphold the exclusion or suspension, or instead to reinstate the pupil to the school.

Parents

Parents will be informed without delay of any suspension or exclusion and that there is an ability to make representations in regard to any suspension or exclusion decision. Details will be provided on the rights parents have with every letter that is sent from the Headteacher.

Pupils

All pupils of the school are expected to follow the expectations regarding their behaviour to ensure that all pupils can learn and participate in school life effectively. Where those expectations are breached, the behaviour policy will apply.

5. CCTV, witness evidence and pupil views

TGGS uses Close Circuit Television (CCTV) within its premises. This is to provide a safe and secure environment for pupils, staff and visitors. If behavioural incidents are recorded on CCTV, the footage may be viewed as part of the investigation and the content considered before imposing a sanction. If CCTV is relied upon for a decision on a suspension or exclusion, then it will be shown in some format (redacted as necessary) at any trustee review meeting. Please see the TGGS' CCTV policy and privacy notices for more information.

Where witness evidence is relied upon, whether that be from a pupil or a staff member, the statement(s) will be provided at any trustees review meeting. All statements will be signed and dated unless the Headteacher has good reason to protect the anonymity of the relevant witness. Reasons may include threats of reprisals.

Before taking a decision to suspend or exclude and where appropriate, the Headteacher will take the pupil's views into account, considering these in light of their age and understanding, and inform the pupil about how their views have been factored into any decision made. Where relevant, the pupil will be given support to express their view, including through advocates such as parents or, if the pupil has one, a social worker. The Headteacher will also take account of any contributing factors identified after an incident of misbehaviour has occurred. Collecting the statements from pupils will be completed by their Head of Year or SLT link and all information will be shared with the Headteacher in advance of a decision .

6. The Headteacher's powers to use suspension or permanent exclusion

Only the Headteacher of a school can suspend or permanently exclude a pupil on disciplinary grounds.

A pupil's behaviour outside school can be considered grounds for a suspension or permanent exclusion.

When establishing the facts in relation to a suspension or permanent exclusion decision the Headteacher must apply the civil standard of proof, i.e. 'on the balance of probabilities' it is more likely than not that a fact is true, rather than the criminal standard of 'beyond reasonable doubt.' This means that the Headteacher should accept that something happened if it is more likely that it happened than that it did not happen.

Headteachers use their professional judgement based on individual circumstance when considering whether to exclude a pupil. Where applicable, up to three reasons can be recorded for each suspension or permanent exclusion.

7. Suspension

A pupil may be suspended for one or more fixed periods (up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year). A suspension does not have to be for a continuous period.

A suspension may be used to provide a clear signal of what is unacceptable behaviour as part of the school's behaviour policy and show a pupil that their current behaviour is putting them at risk of permanent exclusion. Where suspensions are becoming a regular occurrence for a pupil, the Headteacher will consider whether suspension alone is an effective sanction for the pupil and whether additional strategies need to be put in place to address behaviour

It is important that during a suspension, pupils still receive their education. Headteachers should take steps to ensure that work is set and marked for pupils during the first five school days of a suspension.

A suspension can also be for parts of the school day. For example, if a pupil's behaviour at lunchtime is disruptive, they may be suspended from the school premises for the duration of the lunchtime period.

The legal requirements relating to the suspension, such as the Headteacher's duty to notify parents, apply in all cases. Lunchtime suspensions are counted as half a school day in determining whether a trustee board meeting is triggered.

The law does not allow for extending a suspension or 'converting' a suspension into a permanent exclusion. In exceptional cases, usually where further evidence has come to light, a further suspension may be issued to begin immediately after the first suspension.

If a student is suspended for 6 or more consecutive days, the school will arrange an alternative provision. If a child is LAC or PLAC the school will attempt to arrange alternative provision from day 1 of any suspension.

8. Permanent Exclusion

A permanent exclusion is when a pupil is no longer allowed to attend a school (unless the pupil is reinstated). The decision to exclude a pupil permanently should only be taken:

- In response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy.
- Where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others such as staff or pupils in the school.

For any permanent exclusion, Headteachers should take reasonable steps to ensure that work is set and marked for pupils during the first five school days where the pupil will not be attending alternative provision. Any appropriate referrals to support services or notifying key workers (such as a pupil's social worker) should also be considered.

9. Duty to inform parents

Whenever a Headteacher suspends or permanently excludes a pupil, parents must be notified.

For suspensions, this is usually via the Head of Year or a member of the senior leadership team.

For permanent exclusions this is by the Headteacher.

In all cases the Headteacher writes a letter to the parent which is e-mailed and sent home via the post.

10. Reintegration strategy meetings following suspension or off-site direction

Where a pupil is suspended or is directed to be educated off-site, upon return to the school both the pupil and parents/carers will be invited to a reintegration strategy meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to:

- Offer the pupil a fresh start.
- Help them understand the impact of their behaviour on themselves and others.
- Teach them to how meet the high expectations of behaviour in line with the school culture.
- Foster a renewed sense of belonging within the school community.
- Build engagement with learning, so that further suspensions are not needed.

School staff will work with the pupil to understand what led to the behaviour and to establish if any changes can be made or further support implemented from a pastoral or practical perspective that might reduce the chance of repeat behaviours. Previous behaviour is not seen as an obstacle to future success.

The school uses various measures to support a pupil's successful reintegration. These might include:

- Daily contact with a designated pastoral professional in-school.
- Use of a report card with personalised targets leading to personalised rewards.
- Academic support via academic mentoring/school hub.
- Planned pastoral interventions.
- Mentoring by a trusted adult or a local mentoring charity.

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- Regular reviews with the pupil and parents to praise progress being made and raise and address any concerns at an early stage.
- Informing the pupil, parents and staff of potential external support.

Whilst reintegration meetings are highly encouraged by the school, pupils will not be prevented from being admitted to the school or being put in mainstream classes because a meeting has not taken place.

Reintegration meetings are most frequently led by a member of the senior leadership team and the Head of Year. If the pupil is considered a high risk of a permanent exclusion the Headteacher will lead the meetings.

11. Cancelling a suspension or exclusion

A suspension or exclusion can be cancelled by the Headteacher as long as the suspension or exclusion has not been considered by the trustees. In relation to an exclusion, it cannot be cancelled if the total time the pupil was excluded or suspended that academic year would be over 45 days at the point of the decision to cancel the exclusion.

Where a suspension or exclusion is cancelled, the relevant parties will be informed by the Headteacher in accordance with the Statutory Guidance on Suspensions and Exclusions.

12. Suspensions before a permanent exclusion

In exceptional circumstances, pupils may receive a suspension prior to a permanent exclusion. For each decision, the Headteacher will send the relevant letter setting out the rights of parents. A suspension cannot be converted into a permanent exclusion and so any subsequent permanent exclusion would be a fresh decision due to commence immediately after the suspension had ended.

Exceptional circumstances may include where further evidence has come to light or where the incident was serious and time is required to fully investigate the circumstances and consider alternatives.

13. Directing off-site and managed moves

Before taking any decision to permanently exclude a pupil, the Headteacher will consider whether a direction to attend alternative provision and/or a managed move as part of a planned intervention would be a reasonable alternative that should be considered.

In the case of directing a pupil off-site to alternative provision, the aim of any direction is for it to be used as a short-term measure as part of the school's behaviour management strategy to improve a pupil's behaviour where in-school interventions and/or outreach have been unsuccessful or are deemed inappropriate. While parental consent is not needed, discussions would take place with parents to feed in their views about the options.

For a managed move to take place there needs to be agreement between the school, the parents and the new school that a managed move should occur. Before a managed move is agreed to, the pupil will attend the new school for a fixed period to ensure that the new school would be suitable for them. We will share relevant information with the new school and check that they have an integration strategy. At the end of this period, the relevant parties (including the parents) will review the placement before a decision is taken about whether the move becomes permanent.

The school will inform the local authority of any managed moves.

14. Independent Review Panels (IRPs)

TGGS arranges its own IRPs, and requests for an IRP where a permanent exclusion has been upheld should be made to the Headteachers PA (Mrs Louise Rumbelow - email: lrumbelow@tggsacademy.org) within 15 school days.

Further details on the role and powers of IRPs can be found in Part Ten of the Statutory Guidance on Exclusions and Suspensions.

15. Reconsideration by the Trustee Board

Where an IRP either recommends reconsideration or quashes the initial decision of the trustee board, the decision will be considered within 10 school days. This may involve a rehearing with oral evidence given by the school and parents or may be a reconsideration with only the trustee board members and the Headteacher present.

16. Remote meetings

The school's preference is for meetings with parents and pupils concerning suspensions or exclusions to take place face-to-face. However, any meeting may be conducted remotely as long as all parties have access to the meeting and can make representations. In addition, where a child's social worker or the virtual school head are due to attend a meeting, they may join an in-person meeting remotely as long as it can be fairly accessed, the technology is available, and everyone can make representations.

17. Complaints

If parents have any concerns or complaints over the application or implementation of this policy or feels that they are being pressured into a managed move, they should raise their concerns with a staff member or the Headteacher in accordance with TGGS' complaints policy. If the concern relates to an exclusion, the statutory procedure set out in the Statutory Guidance on Exclusions and Suspensions will be followed.

18. Equality impact

The school does all it can to ensure that its policies do not discriminate against pupils or others, either directly or indirectly, in line with any Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics. This includes race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, and sex.

19. Monitoring arrangements

The senior leadership team and trustees review data on exclusions to ensure that the use of suspensions and exclusions is appropriate.