

School exclusions

Information for parents and carers

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What is school exclusion?

- A **fixed-term exclusion** means your child is told to stay away from school for a set number of days.
- A **permanent exclusion** (also called “expulsion”) means your child can no longer attend the school.

Schools cannot exclude your child because they can’t meet their needs—this is unfair and not allowed.

When can a school permanently exclude?

Only for serious disciplinary reasons, for example:

- Physical violence or threats
- Carrying a weapon
- Sexual misconduct
- Racially-aggravated behaviour
- Drug offences (like dealing)

They must try other solutions first, unless the situation is very serious

What to do if your child is excluded

Check the paperwork:

- You must receive a **letter** from the school explaining:
 - The type of exclusion (fixed-term or permanent), and
 - The **reason** for it.

Respond quickly:

- Fixed-term: Often no appeal needed — but meet with school afterward.
- Permanent: **You have the right to appeal.**

How to appeal a permanent exclusion

Step 1: Appeal to the school governors

- You can challenge the decision within 6–15 days after the exclusion.
- The governors can:

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- change it to a fixed-term exclusion,
- cancel it, or
- reduce the length of exclusion.

Step 2: Appeal to the local authority appeals panel

If governors refuse your appeal, you can go to a panel set up by your local council.

What the school must do

Even during exclusion, the school must provide **work for your child to do at home**.

If they can't return your child after exclusion, the **local authority** must arrange suitable education .

Unlawful practices to watch for

- **Off-rolling:** When a school pushes parents to take their child out so they don't appear in school stats. This is illegal.
- **Discrimination:** If your child has a disability (e.g. autism, ADHD) and is excluded more than other children for similar behaviour—this could be **unlawful discrimination**.

Parent checklist

- Check the school's **exclusion letter** (type, reason, dates)
- Get paperwork if it's a **permanent exclusion**
- Appeal quickly: to governors, then local authority if needed
- Ask the school to provide **learning materials at home**
- Seek **advice** (Your local SENDIASS, (IPSEA or other support)

Where to get support

- Your **local authority** — can explain appeals and provide education.
- **SENDIASS** — gives confidential support, information and advice. [Find your local IAS service](#)
- **IPSEA** [Exclusions, other sanctions and children out of school | \(IPSEA\) Independent Provider of Special Education Advice](#)