

TIMPSON REVIEW OF SCHOOL EXCLUSIONS

SENDIASS Leicester Publication

July 2019

In May 2019, the Timpson Review discovered many failings in schools around exclusions. This document provides a shorter version to **highlight key points**. You can read the full report on www.gov.uk website.

Department of Education guidance on exclusion says:

- Only the **head teacher** can exclude a pupil—this **MUST** be on disciplinary grounds.
- A pupil may be excluded for one or more **fixed periods** (max 45 days in a single academic year) or **permanently**.
- Permanent exclusion is a **last resort**
- Any decision to exclude a pupil must be **lawful, reasonable and fair**.



Department for Education

Children most likely to be excluded include:

- Children with some types of **SEN**—46.7% of permanent exclusions and 44.9% of fixed period exclusions were given to children with SEN.
- Boys
- Those who have been supported by **social care**
- **Disadvantages** children and young people

There is a worrying trend of pupils going through “off-rolling”.

“While exclusion is an **important component** of effective behaviour management in schools, **outcomes of excluded children are often poor**. It is therefore right that head teachers **carefully consider** when this is the right choice or if there are other, more effective, ways to **address the underlying causes** and put in place the **support** a child may need to **improve** their behaviour, without the need to exclude.”
- Timpson Report, Page 7

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Contact SENDIASS Leicester if your child has Special Educational Needs (diagnosed **and** undiagnosed).



0116 482 0870



info@sendiassleicester.org.uk



SENDIASS Leicester



@SendiassL

The Timpson Report calls for the government to consider the following points:

1. **Ambitious Leadership:** setting high expectations for every child
2. **Equipping:** Giving schools the skills and capacity to deliver
3. **Incentivising:** Creating the best conditions for every child
4. **Safeguarding:** Ensuring no child misses out on education.



The impact on children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Children with identified SEN accounted for 46.7% of permanent exclusions and 44.9% of fixed period exclusions in most recent data.

Children **without EHCPs**, but who have SEN, are **more likely to be excluded**. Potentially because there are less guidelines for head teachers on their needs.



There is a strong correlation between the pupils who receive support for **SEMH** and exclusions (as much as **3.8 times** as likely to be excluded).

Furthermore, children with a **Specific Learning Difficulty** or **Moderate Learning Difficulties** are also more likely to be excluded.

Children receiving SEN **support for Autism** (but without having an EHCP) are **no more likely** to be excluded.

Children with Autism who have an EHCP are actually **half as likely** to receive an exclusion to children with no SEN.

This data **does not account** for children and young people with **multiple needs** (such as Autism and ADHD). There is a chance that these pupils will instead be considered under the SEMH statistics (hence the higher rate).

Furthermore, pupils who were excluded without SEN needs were more likely to be identified as having SEN. Those with SEN support, were more likely to go on to gaining an EHCP.

Parents and carers generally spoke about **exclusions of children with SEN being the result of a failure to understand and properly identify children's needs**.

It is concerning that a **minority** of school leaders spoke about **permanent exclusions** being used as a **tool** to encourage an **EHC assessment** (therefore against DfE advice and guidance).

Further issues around excluding children with SEN include:

- The pupil seeing it as a **reward** as they get to stay home (not understanding exclusion).
- Children being more **isolated**, or feeling **anxious** or **rejected** by their school.

Ultimately, schools have a **statutory duty** to use their **best endeavours** (as set out in the **SEND Code of Practice, 2014**) to support pupils with SEN.



The Timpson Review is not predominantly anti-exclusion, but simply proposes **appropriate exclusions**.

For example, **pupils** who were asked, believed that exclusions for drugs, alcohol, smoking, assaulting staff or pupils, bullying and damaging school property deserved some level of exclusion.

Parents who children who have experienced repeated fixed term exclusions noticed that their children felt **rejected, anxious, destroying self-esteem** and negatively impacting on **mental health**.

Whilst multiple fixed-term exclusions are rare, in 2016/17 **95 pupils** were excluded for **45 days in one academic year**, and 80 were **unlawfully excluded for more than that**. Multiple exclusions arguably create more behaviour problems, not less.

The report found that some head teachers were using the exclusions to **trigger the help**. For example, getting children into **oversubscribed special schools** or into **Alternative Provision (AP)**.

There are also the schools that have been **off-rolling** for their **own interests**. This is where parents are told to move their child out of the school for the child's best interests.



The review suggests that the government:

- Gives **clearer and more consistent guidance to support** schools on how to manage behaviour
- Clarify the **role of LA** to advocate for children with **additional needs** and those at risk of moving out of school through exclusion
- Well-evidenced and meaningful **training and support offer for new and existing school leaders**
- Extend funding to **equality and diversity hubs** beyond 2020

There is **too much variation** in how behaviour is managed, both in the support given to children who need it and the use of sanctions when they misbehave.

In some cases children remain in school, in others, they are simply **moved elsewhere**, without being given the opportunity to learn from and improve their conduct.

The key principles in the report are that:

- Every child, regardless of their background or school, **deserves a high-quality education that allows them to flourish**.
- We should expect schools consistently to have the right systems in place and teachers to have the right skills
- Schools must be **calm and safe environments** and it is right that we support head teachers to establish a strong behaviour culture in schools
- There is no optimum rate or number of exclusions, they must be considered based on the context of the decision to exclude.
- Alongside considering the **wider school community**, the **individual needs of the pupil** also needs to be regarded
- Schools must be **welcoming and respectful**
- We should **not accept that exclusion comes at the cost of a child getting a good education**.



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