



DEBATE PACK

Number 2020-0032, 24 February 2020

School Exclusions

Summary

There will be a debate in Westminster Hall on School exclusions between 9.30 and 11.00 am on 26 February 2020. The debate was initiated by Sarah Jones MP.

This debate pack sets out current policy on school exclusions, statistical information, recent parliamentary proceedings and related research and news. It mostly relates to England, but also includes some statistical and other information on Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

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1. Background

Summary

- Schools in England can exclude pupils on a temporary or permanent basis, but only for disciplinary reasons.
- In 2017/18, England's permanent exclusion rate was 0.10% – equivalent to 10 per 10,000 pupils.
- The **rate increased** between 2012/13 (0.06%) and 2017/18 (0.10%)
- The most common reason for permanent exclusion in 2017/18 was **physical assault against another pupil**.

This briefing mostly covers school exclusions in England, although it also includes some press coverage and statistics for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

1.1 England: current policy

In England, pupils can be excluded on a temporary basis for periods totalling not more than 45 days per school year.

Permanent exclusion means the pupil will not return to the school, unless the exclusion is overturned.

The Department for Education's [statutory guidance on school exclusion](#) makes clear that exclusions must be lawful, taking account of exclusions and domestic equalities legislation, and the European Convention on Human Rights. They must also be "rational; reasonable; fair; and proportionate".¹ Pupils can only be excluded for disciplinary reasons.

Education for children who are permanently or temporarily excluded

In England, where a child of compulsory school age is temporarily excluded from a mainstream school for a period more than five consecutive days, the school's governing board must arrange suitable, full-time education for the pupil, beginning from the sixth school day of exclusion.

Where a child of compulsory school age is permanently excluded, the duty to arrange suitable full-time education falls on the pupil's home local authority. Again, this must begin no later than the sixth day following the permanent exclusion. Permanently excluded pupils may receive alternative provision – for example, at a pupil referral unit, or may find a place at a new school.

¹ Department for Education, [Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England](#), September 2017, p8.

1.2 Later life outcomes

In his Government-commissioned [review of school exclusion](#) (published in 2019, see section 2, below), Edward Timpson noted associations between exclusion and poorer later-life outcomes. Among other things, the review found that exclusion was “a marker for being at higher risk of becoming a victim or perpetrator of crime. 13 – 23% of young offenders sentenced to less than 12 months in custody, in 2014, had been permanently excluded from school prior to their sentence date”.²

However, the review qualified this by noting that there was insufficient evidence to say exclusion *caused* crime, or to presume that preventing the use of exclusion would, “in itself, prevent crime”.³ Nevertheless, it concluded that it was appropriate to “fully consider the form and content of the education a child receives following exclusion, in efforts to prevent and tackle serious violence.”⁴

Other bodies have similarly pointed to an association between crime and exclusion.

The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Knife Crime published [a report on school exclusion in October 2019](#).⁵ Among other things, this called for changes to school accountability frameworks to ensure that schools are held accountable for the performance of all children, including those they exclude. Additionally, it advocated for all excluded children to have access to a suitable full-time education; and every local authority to have a leader responsible for excluded children.

The Children’s Commissioner for England published [a report on gang violence and criminal exploitation](#) in February 2019. On school exclusion, it argued that being excluded or off-rolled increased young people’s susceptibility to gang violence. It also stated that gang-associated children were five times more likely to have been permanently excluded in the previous academic year, and six times more likely to have been in alternative provision, compared to other children assessed by children’s services.⁶

1.3 Exclusion: statistics on prevalence

England

Rate of permanent exclusions

The Department for Education publishes annual statistics on permanent and fixed term exclusions from state-funded schools in England.

² [Timpson review of school exclusion](#), CP 92, 7 May 2019, p8.

³ As above.

⁴ As above.

⁵ APPG on Knife Crime, [Back to school? Breaking the link between school exclusions and knife crime](#), October 2019.

⁶ Children’s Commissioner for England, [Keeping kids safe. Improving safeguarding responses to gang violence and criminal exploitation](#), February 2019, pps 7;18.

In 2017/18 there were 7,905 permanent exclusions in state-funded primary, secondary and special schools in England. This equated to a rate of 0.10% (or 10 exclusions per 10,000 pupils).

The rate of permanent exclusions is a more helpful measure when making comparisons over time because it accounts for changes in pupil numbers.

In general, between 1997/98 and 2012/13 the rate of permanent exclusions⁷ followed a downward trend reaching a low of 0.06% (or 6 exclusions per 10,000 pupils in 2012/13). However, since then the rate has been increasing, and has reached similar levels to those from ten years ago. The number of permanent exclusions has followed a similar trend.



Source: [Exclusions: Various Years, DfE](#)

Reason for permanent exclusion

The most common reason for a permanent exclusion in 2017/18 was physical assault against a pupil (1,037 permanent exclusions or 13.1% of permanent exclusions). The second most common reason for a permanent exclusion was physical assault against an adult (845 permanent exclusions or 10.7% of permanent exclusions).

Characteristics of permanently excluded pupils

Some groups of pupils are more likely to be permanently excluded than others. The table below shows that the rate of permanent exclusions for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) or eligible for free school meals (FSM) are higher than other pupils. The rate of permanent exclusions is the number of permanent exclusions expressed as a percentage of the number of pupils with the same SEN or FSM status.

⁷ The rate of permanent exclusions is the number of permanent exclusions expressed as a proportion of the number of sole and dual registered pupils on roll (as of January census day of a given year)

Permanent exclusions by pupil characteristics	
	Rate (%)
Free school Meal (FSM) eligibility ^a	
Known to be eligible for FSM	0.28
Not eligible for FSM	0.07
Unclassified	..
SEND status ^b	
Pupils with SEN with statements or an EHC plan	0.16
Pupils with SEN Support	0.34
Pupils with no SEN	0.06
England - all pupils ^c	0.10

Notes

a. FSM: Free school meal eligibility as at January 2018.

b. SEN: Special educational need. SEN support is provided in school. Children and young people with EHC plans will have complex SEN.

c. England totals include a small number of exclusions where free school meal eligibility could not be determined.

[Department for Education, Permanent and fixed period exclusions in England 2017 to 2018, 29 August 2019](#)

Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland

The Welsh Government [publishes annual data on exclusion numbers and rates](#).⁸ The latest data is for 2017/18. Rates of permanent exclusion in Wales have historically been lower than in England. In 2017/18, the rate was 0.04%, or 4 pupils in every 10,000. In common with England, the rate of permanent exclusion has increased in recent years, nearly doubling over the period 2013/14 to 2017/18.

[Data on exclusion in Scotland](#) is published every two years. The most recent data is for the 2018/19 academic year. In that year, over 99% of exclusions in Scotland were temporary, with just three pupils being permanently removed from school registers. Similar to other

⁸ Welsh Government, [Permanent and fixed-term exclusions from schools in Wales, 2017/18](#), October 2019

jurisdictions, Scottish pupils with additional learning needs or from disadvantaged backgrounds had higher rates of temporary exclusion than their peers.⁹

Northern Ireland's Department of Education publishes [annual statistics on pupil suspensions and expulsions](#).¹⁰ Permanent expulsions numbered only 15 in the 2017/18 academic year, and the suspension (temporary exclusion) rate was 1.4%. The highest suspension rate was for key stage 4 pupils – i.e., those in the GCSE phase.

⁹ Scottish Government, [Summary statistics for schools in Scotland no. 10: 2019 edition](#) (Chapter 7), 10 December 2019

¹⁰ Department of Education, [Pupil suspensions and expulsions](#), 24 January 2019.

2. Policy developments and commentary: England

2.1 Timpson review

In March 2018 the Government established a [review of school exclusions practice](#), led by the former Children's Minister Edward Timpson.¹¹

[The review](#), as well as a Government response, was published in May 2019.¹² The review set out 30 recommendations for Government on exclusions, including measures relating to off-rolling. Some of the key recommendations were that:

- The DfE should make schools responsible for the children they exclude and accountable for their educational outcomes, and consult on how to do this
- The DfE should update its statutory guidance on exclusion to provide more clarity on the use of exclusion
- Ofsted should recognise schools who use exclusion appropriately and effectively
- Where Ofsted finds off-rolling, this should always be reflected in inspections reports and in all but exceptional cases should result in a judgement that the school's leadership and management is inadequate
- The DfE should ensure that accessible, meaningful and substantive training on behaviour is a mandatory part of initial teacher training and is embedded in the Early Career Framework
- The DfE should look carefully at the timing and amounts of any adjustments to schools' funding following exclusion, to make sure they neither act as an incentive for schools to permanently exclude, nor discourage a school from admitting a child who has been permanently excluded from elsewhere
- The DfE should consult on options to address children with multiple exclusions being left without access to education, including considering a revised limit on the total number of days a pupil can be excluded for, or revisiting the requirements to arrange Alternative Provision in these periods
- Pupil moves should be systematically tracked, to increase transparency on when children move out of schools, where they move to and why
- In making changes that strengthen accountability around the use of exclusion, DfE should consider any possible unintended consequences and mitigate the risk that schools seek to remove children from their roll in other ways. This should include:

¹¹ [PO 179103, 19 October 2018](#)

¹² Department for Education, [Edward Timpson publishes landmark exclusions review](#), 7 May 2019

- reviewing a 'right to return' period where children could return from home education to their previous school, and other approaches that will ensure that this decision is always made in the child's best interests
- considering new safeguards and scrutiny that mitigate the risk of schools avoiding admitting children where they do not have the grounds to do so.¹³

2.2 Government response

The [Government responded](#) positively to the review, and said that a consultation on how to make schools accountable for the outcomes of permanently excluded children would be opened in autumn 2019. The response also stated that the Government would rewrite its guidance on exclusions, and behaviour and discipline in schools by summer 2020.¹⁴

2.3 2019 Government pledges

The Conservative Party 2019 General Election Manifesto included a pledge to "back heads to use exclusions".¹⁵

In response to a [PQ of 3 February 2020](#), Schools' Minister, Nick Gibb MP said that the Government had an "ambitious programme of action on behaviour, exclusion and alternative provision (AP)".¹⁶ He restated that, among other things, this would respect head teachers' powers to use exclusion.

¹³ Department for Education, [Timpson Review of School Exclusion](#), CP 92, May 2019. Full list of recommendations pages 12-15

¹⁴ Department for Education, [The Timpson Review of School Exclusion: Government Response](#), CP 95, May 2019, p5-6

¹⁵ Conservative Party, [General Election Manifesto 2019](#), November 2019, p13.

¹⁶ [PQ 11508](#), 3 February 2020.

3. UK Parliamentary Proceedings

3.1 Parliamentary Questions

[Violent Crime: Young People](#)

10 February 2020 | HC Deb vol 671 c 566

Asked by Edward Timpson

Children excluded from school are twice as likely to carry a knife. A quarter of young offenders who are serving a custodial sentence of less than 12 months have a history of permanent exclusion. To help turn around the life chances of these children, will my hon. Friend take up the recommendations in my report on school exclusion, published last year, which are aimed at taking a public health approach to crime and tackling the root causes, not just the symptoms, of school disengagement?

Answering Member: Victoria Atkins | Home Office

I thank my hon. Friend for his meticulous work in his report. He will know that the Prime Minister is taking charge of our response to serious violence, and is indeed holding a Cabinet Sub-Committee on this imminently. I agree that we must tackle the root causes of serious violence. That is precisely why we are bringing forward the serious violence Bill to place a duty on the agencies that can help to address it.

[School Exclusions Review](#)

3 February 2020 | 11508

Asked by Edward Timpson

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what progress he has made in implementing the recommendations of the Timpson Review of school exclusion, published May 2019.

Answered by Nick Gibb | Department for Education (DfE)

The Government is taking forward an ambitious programme of action on behaviour, exclusion and alternative provision (AP). This will respect head teachers' powers to use exclusion, enable schools to support children at risk of exclusion, and ensure that excluded children continue to receive a good education. The Department will expand AP and improve the quality of the sector so that pupils in AP receive the support and education they need to help them overcome the challenges they are facing, and to prepare them for the next stage of their lives.

Further information on the timeframes for this work will be provided in due course.

[Pupil Exclusions: Young Offenders](#)

27 January 2020 | 8304

Asked by Seema Malhotra

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with the Home Secretary on researching the link between the level of permanent school exclusions and youth crime.

Answered by Nick Gibb | DfE

The Government is taking forward an ambitious programme of action on behaviour, exclusion and alternative provision (AP). This will respect head teachers' powers to use exclusion, enable schools to support children at risk of exclusion, and ensure that excluded children continue to receive support and a good education.

Engagement in full-time, high-quality education is a protective factor against children's risk of involvement in serious violence. Research has shown that excluded children have a higher risk of being both a victim and perpetrator of crime. However, we must be careful not to draw a simple causal link. The surrounding issues and causes of serious violence are complicated. The Department is working with the education and care sectors, the Home Office and other Government Departments to help make our streets safer by supporting children and young people who are at risk of being caught up in serious violence.

The Department recognises that timely access to full-time, high-quality AP plays a critical role in improving outcomes for excluded pupils who may have vulnerabilities that make them at risk of involvement in crime. We will expand AP and improve the quality of the sector so that pupils in AP receive the right support and an education on par with that received by their mainstream peers. Further information on the timeframes for this work will be provided in due course.

[School Exclusions: Review](#)

23 October 2019 | 4432

Asked by: Sarah Jones

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many departmental staff are working on implementing the recommendations of the Timpson review of school exclusions; and which directorate is responsible for that work.

Answered by: Nick Gibb | DfE

The Behaviour, Attendance, Exclusion and Alternative Provision Division of the Department for Education is the lead division taking forward the Government's programme of action on behaviour, exclusions and alternative provision.

As of September 2019, this division had 32 members of staff, and sits in the Strategy, Social Mobility & Disadvantage directorate.

The recommendations of the Timpson review of school exclusion are wide-ranging, and it is not possible to record how much time individual staff will spend working on them, as this work will be carried out in addition to other duties. Staff from across the Department will also contribute to the work on an ad hoc basis.

School Exclusions: Review**26 September 2019 | 291420****Asked by: James Frith**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Timpson review of school exclusions, when his Department plans to issue updated guidance on school exclusions to schools.

Answered by: Nick Gibb | DfE

The Department is taking forward an ambitious programme of reform which will respect head teachers' powers to use exclusion, while equipping schools to support children at risk of exclusion and ensuring excluded children continue to receive a good education. The Department has already begun engaging with stakeholders including schools and local authorities on these reforms.

In addition, the Government committed to establishing a practice programme that embeds effective partnership working between local authorities, schools, alternative provision, and other partners.

This will better equip schools to intervene early for children at risk of exclusion and to ensure that the most effective provision is put in place for those who are excluded.

The Department will also re-write guidance on exclusions and behaviour to offer clearer, more consistent guidance to schools on managing behaviour, the use of in-school units, managed moves and the circumstances where it may be appropriate to use exclusion.

Guidance will be published by summer 2020 and more details on the practice programme will be announced in due course.

School Exclusions Review**2 September 2019 | 285262****Asked by: Paul Blomfield**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether the consultation on the recommendations of the Timpson Review will include (a) socio-economic and (b) ethnic trends in school exclusions.

Answering Member: Nick Gibb | DfE

The Government is taking forward an ambitious programme of action which will respect head teachers' powers to use exclusion, while also equipping schools to support children at risk of exclusion, and ensuring excluded children continue to receive a good education. As part of this, the Department will make schools responsible for pupils who are permanently excluded and will launch a consultation on how to deliver this in practice.

In designing this consultation, the Department is working with leaders from across the education sector and will consider the findings of the Timpson Review on disparities in exclusion rates between different groups of children. In response to the review, the Government called on the Directors of Children's Services, governing bodies, academy trusts,

and local forums of schools to review information on children who leave schools, by exclusion or otherwise, and to establish a shared understanding of how the data on the characteristics of such children feeds local trends.

[Crimes of Violence: Young People](#)

18 July 2019 | 279090

Asked by: Vicky Foxcroft

To ask the right hon. Member for Meriden, representing the Church Commissioners, what steps the Church of England's Education Department is taking to implement the decision taken at the General Synod in July 2019 in relation to the motion on tackling serious youth violence in schools; and what guidance it is planning to issue to youth workers.

Answering Member: Dame Caroline Spelman | Church Estates Commission

The Church of England Vision for Education identifies four core themes (wisdom, knowledge and skills; hope and aspiration; community and living well together; dignity and respect) which underpin all of our work in education. School leadership networks will be focusing on serious youth violence as part of these core themes. An education which promotes hope, aspiration and dignity is a vital part of addressing serious youth violence.

One aspect of this debate relates to the impact of school exclusions on vulnerable young people. Church of England schools exclude fewer children than non-church schools and the Church's commitment to the vulnerable and disadvantaged means that we will continue to explore ways of further reducing the negative impact of exclusion.

[Violent Crime: Young People](#)

15 July 2019 | HC Deb vol 663 c 557

Asked by: Catherine West

21. Reducing school exclusions is key to tackling this problem. Will the Home Secretary join the Housing, Communities and Local Government Secretary to co-fund high-quality intervention for young men who are falling out of school and being excluded from school between the ages of 13 to 15, which appear to be the key ages when they are at risk of going from pupil referral units to prison? [911937]

Answering Member: Sajid Javid | Treasury

The hon. Lady raises an important point and it shows precisely why we are planning to introduce the public health duty—to get more Departments and public agencies to work together in providing early intervention through many different types of programme. She is right to highlight alternative provision and some of the issues associated with it, especially how some of those children, sadly, become the target of gangs, and we are doing more work across government.

[Schools: Discipline](#)

25 June 2019 | 269136

Asked by: Alex Sobel

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the Government's policy is on the use of isolation booths for discipline in schools; and what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the use of isolation booths.

Answered by: Nick Gibb | DfE

Schools develop their own behaviour policies and strategies for managing behaviour. To help schools develop effective strategies, the Department has produced advice for schools which covers what should be included in the behaviour policy. This advice can be viewed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-and-discipline-in-schools>

Schools can adopt a policy which allows disruptive pupils to be placed in isolation away from other pupils for a limited period. If a school uses isolation rooms as a disciplinary penalty, this should be made clear in their behaviour policy. As with other disciplinary penalties, schools must act lawfully, reasonably and proportionately in all cases. The school must also ensure the health and safety of pupils.

As part of Ofsted inspections, schools will be asked to provide records and analysis of any use of internal isolation. Ofsted inspectors will expect schools to have clear and effective behaviour policies that promote high standards of behaviour that are applied consistently and fairly. In reaching a judgement on pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare, inspectors will take account of a range of information, including schools' use of internal isolation.

As part of the Government's response to the Timpson Review of School Exclusion, we committed to publishing clearer, more consistent guidance by summer 2020. This includes guidance on managing behaviour, on the use of in-school units and the sorts of circumstances where it may be appropriate to use exclusion.

Pupil Exclusions

25 June 2019 | 269043

Asked by: Bridget Phillipson

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will publish the number of (a) fixed-term and (b) permanent school exclusions by local authority area for each of the last five years.

Answering Member: Nick Gibb | DfE

The national statistics release, 'Permanent and fixed-period exclusions in England: 2016 to 2017' includes information on the number and rate of permanent and fixed period exclusions.

The release is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/permanent-and-fixed-period-exclusions-in-england-2016-to-2017>

In the underlying data, the file 'national_region_la_school_data_exc1617.csv' includes information at local authority level by year.

Pupil Exclusions: Secondary Education

24 June 2019 | 268464

Asked by: Bridget Phillipson

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to reduce the number of (a) permanent and (b) fixed-term exclusions from secondary schools.

Answered by: Nick Gibb | DfE

Schools can only exclude pupils, either permanently or for a fixed period, for disciplinary reasons and the Department supports head teachers in using exclusion where this is warranted.

Permanent exclusion should only be used as a last resort, 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 in the school.

The Timpson Review of school exclusion considered how schools use exclusion and how this impacts on all pupils, particularly why some groups of children are more likely to be excluded from school. The review and the Government response can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/school-exclusions-review-call-for-evidence>.

The Government welcomes the review and agrees with all 30 recommendations in principle. The Government is committed to supporting schools and their partners and will be taking forward an ambitious response which respects headteachers' powers to use exclusion.

Pupil Exclusions

18 June 2019 | 266175

Asked by: Bridget Phillipson

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of (a) fixed-term and (b) permanent exclusion on the excluded student's educational attainment.

Answered by: Nick Gibb | DfE

The technical note published alongside the Government's response to the Timpson review of school exclusion on 7 May 2019 includes descriptive statistics showing Key Stage 4 attainment by exclusion status. This can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/school-exclusions-review-call-for-evidence>

The report states: "Key Stage 4 attainment of pupils receiving a permanent exclusion during secondary school is lower than that for pupils who have never received either a permanent or fixed period

exclusion. Among those receiving some form of exclusion, attainment is highest for those receiving only one fixed period exclusion during their school career and lowest for those receiving a permanent exclusion. However, these results do not imply that exclusion is the cause of low attainment (or vice versa) as differences in pupil characteristics that may impact attainment have not been taken into consideration."

Pupil Exclusions: Special Educational Needs

18 June 2019 | 266174

Asked by: Bridget Phillipson

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to reduce the number of exclusions among pupils with special educational needs.

Answered by: Nick Gibb | DfE

Schools have a legal duty under the Equality Act (2010) not to discriminate against disabled pupils by excluding them from school because of their disability. Any exclusion must be lawful, reasonable and fair, but within these requirements, schools need to be able to set and enforce behaviour policies that reflect their ethos and the specific challenges they face.

The law does not prevent a pupil with special educational needs (SEN) or a disability from being excluded. Schools are required to record and return information on all exclusions which includes, if applicable, the SEN of the pupil. The Department will continue to support headteachers in creating safe and orderly environments that enable teachers to teach and pupils to learn.

Schools can only exclude pupils, either permanently or for a fixed period, for disciplinary reasons and the Department supports schools in using exclusion where this is warranted. Permanent exclusion should only be used as a last resort, 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 in the school.

The Timpson Review of school exclusion considered how schools use exclusion and how this impacts on all pupils, particularly why some groups of children are more likely to be excluded from school. The review and the Government response can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/school-exclusions-review-call-for-evidence>.

The Government welcomes the review and agrees with all 30 recommendations in principle. The Government is committed to supporting schools and their partners and will be taking forward an ambitious response which respects headteachers' powers to use exclusion, whilst equipping schools to support children at risk of exclusion.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

24 June 2019 | HC Deb vol 662, c 464

Asked by: Sarah Jones

A survey of headteachers in Croydon showed that 85% had been forced to cut special educational needs provision. We know that 50% of excluded kids have a special educational need, that a third of councils have no space left in their pupil referral units, and that not being in school is a particular risk factor for getting involved in criminal gangs. When will the Government wake up to this emergency and act? Actions have consequences.

Answering Member: Nadhim Zahawi | DfE

The hon. Lady would have been fair if she had also acknowledged that we launched a review of school exclusions, led by Edward Timpson. The Children and Families Act 2014 secures the presumption in law that children and young people with SEND should receive mainstream education—of course, 98.7% of them are educated in the mainstream. We have put £4 million into innovation funding to improve alternative provision as well.

[Pupil Exclusions: Ethnic Groups](#)

10 May 2019 | 252824

Asked by: Jim Cunningham

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment his Department has made of trends in the level of school exclusions for each ethnic group.

Answering Member: Nick Gibb | DfE

The rate of exclusion varies by pupil ethnicity, with pupils of some ethnic groups more likely to be excluded and others less.[1]

Last March, the Government commissioned Edward Timpson to explore how head teachers use exclusion and why some groups of pupils are more likely to be excluded than others.

New analysis undertaken for the Timpson Review shows that some ethnic groups are more likely to be excluded after controlling for other observable characteristics. For example, after accounting for other factors, Black Caribbean children are around 1.7 times more likely to be permanently excluded compared to White British children, while Mixed White and Black Caribbean children are around 1.6 times more likely, and Indian and Bangladeshi pupils are around half as likely.

Equally, children in some ethnic groups do not appear to be permanently excluded at a different rate from White British pupils, such as Black African children.

The Timpson review, the analysis technical note, and the Government's response can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/school-exclusions-review-call-for-evidence>.

[1] <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/permanent-and-fixed-period-exclusions-in-england-2016-to-2017>. National tables, table 8.

Pupil Exclusions

8 May 2019 | 252042

Asked by: Angela Rayner

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to his oral statement of 7 May 2019 on the Timpson Review of school exclusions, Official Report column 479, what steps he plans to take to reduce off-rolling before the start of the next school year.

Answering Member: Nick Gibb | DfE

The Department is clear that off-rolling is unacceptable, and while it believes this practice is relatively rare, the Government is committed to continue to work with Ofsted to define and tackle the practice of off-rolling.

Ofsted already considers records of children taken off roll and has recently consulted on proposals that will see a strengthened focus on this issue. It has proposed that where inspectors find off-rolling, this will always be addressed in the inspection report, and where appropriate will lead to a school's leadership being judged inadequate. Ofsted will publish the outcome of its consultation soon.

In response to Edward Timpson's review of school exclusion, the Department has committed to working with education leaders over the summer to design a consultation on making schools accountable for the outcomes for permanently excluded children, to be launched in the autumn. Among other things, the Department will seek views on how to mitigate the potential unintended consequences Edward Timpson has identified in his review, including how to tackle the practice of off-rolling.

Pupil Exclusions

8 May 2019 | 252040

Asked by: Angela Rayner

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to minimise waiting times for permanently excluded pupils to be found a new school place.

Answering Member: Nick Gibb | DfE

The Government's response to Edward Timpson's review of school exclusion sets out our commitment to ensure that pupils who have been excluded from school continue to benefit from high-quality education.

There are already duties in place to ensure children who are excluded from school are in education from the sixth day of their exclusion. The education provided must be full-time, or as close to full-time, if full-time would not be in a child's best interests because of his or her health needs.

Statutory guidance is also clear that schools should help to minimise the disruption that exclusion can cause to an excluded pupil's education including considering starting alternative provision as soon as possible after the exclusion. In the case of a looked after child, the school and the local authority should work together to arrange alternative provision from the first day following the exclusion. Where it is not possible, or not appropriate, to arrange alternative provision during the first five school days of an exclusion, the school should take reasonable steps to set and mark work for the pupil.

Fair access protocols exist to ensure that, outside the normal admissions round, unplaced children, especially the hardest to place and most vulnerable, are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible. However, the Department is aware there can be delays in the in-year admission of such children. As such, the Department is currently considering improvements to the in-year admission process, including Fair Access Protocols, to ensure that all children, especially the most vulnerable, can access a new school place as quickly as possible.

Pupil Exclusions

7 May 2019 | 251437

Asked by: Angela Rayner

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to his Statement of 7 May 2019 on the Timpson review of school exclusions, what sanctions (a) are currently in place and (b) will be put in place where schools or multi-academy trusts are found to have off-rolled pupils.

Answering Member: Nick Gibb | DfE

As noted in the Government response to Edward Timpson's review of school exclusion, the Government will make schools accountable for the outcomes of permanently excluded children. Over the summer, the Department will work with education leaders to design a consultation, to be launched in the autumn, on how to deliver these reforms in practice. Among other things, the Department will seek views on how to mitigate the potential unintended consequences Edward Timpson has identified in his review, including how to tackle the practice of 'off-rolling'.

Ofsted already considers records of children taken off roll and has recently consulted on proposals that will see a strengthened focus on this issue, and has proposed that where inspectors find off-rolling, this will always be addressed in the inspection report, and where appropriate will lead to a school's leadership being judged inadequate. Ofsted will publish the outcome of its consultation soon.

As in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) regulations 2006 as amended, state schools must notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register as soon as the ground for deletion under regulation 8 in relation to that pupil is established. The Department will provide guidance on the use of 'managed moves', as recommended by Edward Timpson.

The Government will also establish a practice programme that embeds effective partnership working between local authorities, schools, alternative provision and other partners to better equip schools to intervene early for children at risk of exclusion and to ensure that the most effective provision is put in place for those who are excluded. As a large proportion of schools are academies, the programme will support partnership working between local authorities and academies.

Pupil Exclusions

29 January 2019 | HL 13243

Member Asking: Lord Ousley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of pupils being suspended from schools for breaching drugs and alcohol rules; what assessment they have made of whether that number has increased since 2010; and if so, what measures they plan to put in place to decrease that number.

Member Replying: Lord Agnew of Oulton | DfE

In 2009/10 there were 370 permanent exclusions categorised with the main reason being recorded as 'drug and alcohol related', compared to 565 in 2016/17.

There were 8,765 fixed period exclusions in 2009/10 with the main reason of "drug and alcohol related", compared to 9,075 in 2016/17.

Schools have a statutory power to search for and confiscate prohibited items such as alcohol, and illegal drugs. Where they find other substances, which are not controlled drugs but a teacher believes them to be harmful or detrimental to good order and discipline, these can also be confiscated.

The department has produced the attached advice for schools which makes it clear that school staff can search pupils or their possessions, without consent where there are reasonable grounds to do so. If a pupil refuses to be searched, the school may bar them from the premises.

Ultimately, we support head teachers in using exclusion where this is warranted. It is equally important that the obligations on schools are clear and well understood, to ensure that any exclusion is lawful, reasonable and fair.

The process that head teachers must follow is set out in statutory guidance, which is attached.

In March 2018, the government launched an externally led review of exclusions practice, led by Edward Timpson CBE. The review is exploring how head teachers use exclusion, and why pupils with particular characteristics are more likely to be excluded from school. It is also considering the differences in exclusion rates across primary and secondary schools in England.

The review will report in early 2019. The full terms of reference for the review can be found attached.

[Searching Screening Confiscation](#) (PDF Document, 194.93 KB)

[Exclusion Statutory Guidance](#) (PDF Document, 339.99 KB)

[Review of School Exclusion Terms of Reference](#) (PDF Document, 104.37 KB)

Pupil Exclusions

3 December 2019 | HL 11980

Member Asking: Lord Ousley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of children excluded from school for racist bullying in England and Wales in the last year; and what assessment they have made of the implications of such bullying and exclusions for social and community cohesion.

Member Answering: Lord Agnew of Oulton | DfE

The most recent data from academic year 2016/2017 show that there were 25 permanent exclusions (0.3% of all permanent exclusions) and 4,565 fixed period exclusions (1.2% of all fixed period exclusions) recorded with the reason of 'racist abuse'. This includes derogatory racist statements, racist bullying, racist graffiti, racist taunting and harassment and swearing that can be attributed to racist characteristics. The data can be sourced from the National Tables spreadsheet (table 4), published at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/permanent-and-fixed-period-exclusions-in-england-2016-to-2017>

Racism has no place in our schools and any incident is unacceptable. The department supports head teachers using exclusion where it is warranted.

The government want to make sure that all children learn the values that underpin our society – including fairness, tolerance and respect. These values help knit our communities together, which is why education is at the heart of the government's integration strategy. All state funded schools have a legal obligation to promote community cohesion.

The government has committed to providing over £2.8 million of funding from September 2016 to March 2020 to four anti-bullying organisations to support schools to tackle bullying. This includes the Anne Frank Trust, which we are funding to develop and deliver their 'free to be' debate programme. The programme encourages young people to think about the importance of tackling prejudice, discrimination and bullying.

In November 2018, the department published the attached 'Respectful School Communities' publication, a self-review and sign-posting tool to support schools to develop a whole-school approach which promotes respect and discipline. This can combat bullying, harassment and prejudice of any kind.

In March 2018, the government launched an externally led review of exclusions practice, chaired by Edward Timpson CBE. The review is exploring how head teachers use exclusion, and why pupils with

particular characteristics are more likely to be excluded from school. It is also considering the differences in exclusion rates across primary and secondary schools in England.

The full terms of reference for the review are attached.

[HL11980 Respectful School Communities publication](#) (PDF Document, 2.71 MB)

[A Review of School Exclusion-terms of reference HL](#) (PDF Document, 107.44 KB)

3.2 Parliamentary Debates

[Knife Crime](#)

27 June 2019 | House of Lords | vol 798 cc 1143-77

That this House takes note of the impact of government policy on knife crime.

[Schools: Adopted Children](#)

14 May 2019 | House of Lords | vol 797 cc 1530-46

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have for schools to improve the educational experience and attainment of adopted children, including those adopted from abroad.

[Schools Exclusion: Timpson Review](#)

7 May 2019 | House of Lords | vol 797 cc 1193-1203

[Timpson Review of School Exclusion](#)

7 May 2019 | House of Commons | vol 659 cc 479-493

[School Exclusions: Timpson Review](#)

29 April 2019 | House of Commons | vol 659 cc 3-4

[Knife Crime](#)

7 March 2019 | House of Commons | vol 655 cc 1115-29

To ask the Home Secretary to make a statement on the crisis of knife crime.

[School Exclusions and Youth Violence](#)

28 January 2019 | House of Commons | vol 653 cc 616-24

4. Press Releases, Reports, Announcements and Statistical Resources

4.1 UK

[Differences in rates of school exclusions in the four jurisdictions the UK \[video\]](#)

University of Oxford

20 January 2020

[Back to school? Breaking the link between school exclusions and knife crime](#)

All-Parliamentary Group on Knife Crime

October 2019

[Physical violence against teachers is a weekly occurrence](#)

NASUWT The Teachers' Union

19 April 2019

4.2 England

[School exclusions: Evidence from England](#)

Royal Economic Society

13 February 2020

[Challenging school exclusions](#)

Justice

11 November 2019

[Unexplained pupil exits from schools: Further analysis and data by multi academy trust and local authority](#)

Education Policy Institute

11 October 2019

[HCMI commentary: managing behaviour research](#)

Ofsted

12 September 2019

[Support for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities in England](#)

DfE

25 July 2019 (updated August 2019)

[Permanent and fixed period exclusions in England 2017 to 2018](#)

National Audit Office

11 September 2019

[Edward Timpson publishes landmark exclusions review](#)

DfE

7 May 2019

[Timpson Review of School Exclusion](#), CP 92

DfE

7 May 2019

[Excluded teens are often the most vulnerable- and they're falling through the gap](#)

Children's Commissioner for England

7 May 2019

[Exclusions from mainstream schools](#)

Children's Commissioner for England

7 May 2019

[Coram school exclusions report finds inadequate support for excluded pupils and their families](#)

Coram

7 May 2019

[Social mobility and vulnerable learners: Unexplained exits from schools: A growing problem?](#)

Education Policy Institute

18 April 2019

[Preventing school exclusions report](#)

Education Panel London Assembly

15 April 2019

[Link between rise in exclusions and increase in knife crime explored](#)

House of Commons Education Committee

22 March 2019

[Ofsted: Stronger partnerships needed to tackle knife crime](#)

Ofsted

12 March 2019

[Skipping School: Invisible Children](#)

Children's Commissioner

4 February 2019

[Forgotten children: Alternative provision and the scandal of ever increasing exclusions](#)

House of Commons Education Committee

18 July 2018

4.3 Wales

[Education otherwise than at school](#)

Welsh Assembly's Children, Young People and Education Committee
Ongoing

[Exclusion from education in Wales: The hidden cost](#)

1 August 2019

Samaritans

[Permanent and fixed-term exclusions from schools in Wales, 2017/18,](#)

October 2019

Welsh Government

[The management of school moves for disengaged pupils needs strengthening](#)

Estyn

29 March 2018

4.4 Scotland

[Summary statistics for schools in Scotland \(chapter 7 covers exclusions\)](#)

Scottish Government

10 December 2019.

[Not included, not engaged, not involved](#)

Autism Society

25 September 2018

4.5 Northern Ireland

[Queen's researchers part of £2.55m ESRC research into UK school expulsions](#)

Queen's University Belfast

2 October 2019

[Pupil suspensions and expulsions](#) (statistics)

24 January 2019

Department of Education

5. Press & journal articles

The following is a selection of news and media articles relevant to this debate.

Please note that the Library is not responsible for either the views or accuracy of external content.

5.1 UK

[Researchers given £2.6 million grant to investigate impact of school exclusions](#)

Schools Week

2 October 2019

5.2 England

[Exclude and you're not "outstanding", Ofsted told heads](#)

Times Education Supplement

14 February 2020

[Ministers want academy trusts to open their own AP](#)

Schools Week

14 February 2020

[Publish data on all pupil moves to stop schools using "tricks" to hide exclusions- think tank](#)

Schools Week

7 January 2020

[Children excluded from primary school for racism increased by 40 percent in 10 years](#)

The Telegraph

1 January 2020

[Call for reform of pupil exclusions "as schools unaware of legal duties"](#)

The Guardian

11 November 2019

[Sadiq Khan announces £4.7 million to "cut school exclusions"](#)

Schools Week

4 November 2019

[Call for reform of pupil exclusion "as schools unaware of legal duties"](#)

The Guardian

11 November 2019

[Hold schools accountable for expelled pupil's exam results to reduce knife crime, MPs say](#)

The Independent

25 October 2019

[School exclusions: The teacher's perspective](#)

Royal Society of the Arts

25 September 2019

[School exclusions are a social justice issue, new data shows](#)

Royal Society for the Arts

6 August 2019

[School exclusions at highest rate in a decade](#)

The Times

26 July 2019

[Bishop calls for Church of England schools to minimise exclusions](#)

The Guardian

6 July 2019

[Tackling off-rolling could prompt exclusions rise, and 8 other findings from the Timpson review](#)

Schools Week

7 May 2019

[School exclusions: What's legal and what's not?](#)

BBC News

7 May 2019

[Education Secretary calls on schools to expel fewer pupils](#)

The Guardian

7 May 2019

[School exclusions for drugs and alcohol at ten-year high as "county lines" gangs are blamed](#)

The Telegraph

30 April 2019

[School exclusions are too often a one-way ticket to the scrap heap](#)

The Times

Robert Halfon MP

22 March 2019

[Schools are ignoring rules over knife exclusions, Ofsted warns](#)

Schools Week

12 March 2019

[Fact check: What are the links between school exclusions and knife crime?](#)

Schools Week

7 March 2019

["Broken" school exclusion system linked to knife crime surge, police chiefs warn Theresa May](#)

The Independent

7 March 2019

5.3 Wales

[Autism and ADHD "not being spotted" as exclusions rise](#)

BBC News

5 February 2020

[The awful price paid by children permanently excluded from school and left in limbo](#)

Wales Online

20 March 2019

[School exclusions: Mother had "no help" for son](#)

BBC News

1 April 2019

[ADHD: Excluded pupils "should be screened automatically"](#)

BBC News

4 January 2019

5.4 Scotland

[Is Scotland's school exclusion policy the one the UK should follow?](#)

Times Education Supplement [subscription]

7 February 2020

[Scottish schools get rid of exclusion "reflex"](#)

Times Education Supplement [subscription]

19 December 2019

[Just three pupils permanently excluded in Scotland](#)

Times Education Supplement [subscription]

10 December 2019

[Is there a link between Scotland's exclusion rates and knife crime?](#)

BBC News

8 March 2019

[Scottish schools "too reluctant to exclude violent pupils"](#)

The Independent

8 March 2019

[Revealed: Disabled children more likely to be excluded from school than able-bodied pupils](#)

The Herald [subscription]

18 March 2018

5.5 Northern Ireland

[Autism: Parents calls for more support in Northern Ireland schools](#)

BBC News

8 July 2019

[NI school figures show 90 suspensions for pupils younger than 10](#)

BBC News

25 January 2019

5.6 Journal articles

[Exclusion from school in Scotland and across the UK](#)

British Educational Research Journal, vol 45

McCluskey, G, Cole, T, Daniels, H, Thompson, I & Tawell, A

July 2019

[Not in the classroom, but still on the register: hidden forms of school exclusion](#)

International Journal of Inclusive Education

Power, S & Taylor, C

February 2018

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