

# Inspecting behaviour

Supplementary guidance for section 5 inspection

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**Age group:** All age groups

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## Introduction

**'Pupils behaviour' is one of the prime judgements that is evaluated under 'Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils'. The school's work to promote good behaviour is judged as part of the school's provision, under the 'effectiveness of care, guidance and support'.**

Inspectors should evaluate pupils' conduct in lessons and around the school. How this will be done needs to be planned carefully. The judgement must be based on the school's documentary evidence and pupils' and parents' views combined with what is observed. **Judgements should not be made solely on the basis of what is seen during the inspection.** Valuable evidence on behaviour can be gathered in many inspection activities – lesson observation, in the playground, observing lunchtime, talking with pupils, moving from one lesson to the next, looking at the school environment, observing pupils arriving at and leaving the school. The lead inspector should ask colleagues to record evidence on behaviour systematically during all activities so that it can be collated easily.

This guidance is in four parts:

- judging behaviour
- additional provision to manage behaviour
- behaviour and special educational needs and/or disabilities
- exclusion.

## Judging behaviour

1. Inspectors should take account of pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour in lessons. Where records or observations indicate that behaviour disrupts learning or threatens well-being more than very occasionally, it is likely that behaviour will be judged inadequate overall. In order to make a judgement on pupils' behaviour, inspectors should:
  - Plan to see a range of lessons; behaviour may vary considerably between groups and year groups.
  - Include groups of all abilities, including bottom sets – is there any variation in behaviour? What about pupils' behaviour with non-teaching staff?
  - Include both experienced and less experienced staff; those new to the school as well as those who are more established.
  - Evaluate whether pupils actively or passively engaged in their learning and whether they co-operative with each other.
  - Consider doing a 'learning walk', where a range of lessons is visited for about 10 minutes each, can be effective in providing additional evidence about the standard of behaviour.

- Look at documents which relate to the day-to-day standards of behaviour in lessons – the school's analysis of rewards and sanctions, 'on call' logs, 'remove room' records, detention records.
- 2. Inspectors should take account of the proportion of lessons disrupted by weaknesses in behaviour where learning is not as good as it should be. Inspectors might reflect on the following points:
  - Disruptive behaviour may be overt – for example persistent shouting out, pupils deliberately annoying each other, talking over the teacher, persistent low level chatter which does not cease when challenged by the teacher.
  - It may also be more covert – for example quiet refusal from a number of pupils to participate in group work or to co-operate with each other which prevents learning from taking place, persistent but quiet comments which nevertheless disrupt the flow of learning, refusal to start tasks.
  - Take care not to overemphasise the behaviour of one individual with an identified behavioural difficulty (which may be a special educational need), or experiencing difficult personal circumstances, when making your judgement on behaviour in the lesson.
- 3. Inspectors should take account of pupils' treatment of each other, including their politeness to one another and towards adults; their behaviour around the school, including awareness of each other's needs at break times, between lessons and in assemblies and other activities; the way that they treat the school facilities; and their ability and willingness to manage their own behaviour. Inspectors might:
  - plan inspection activities to ensure that this aspect can be judged, for example walking around the school at lesson change over times, being in the dining room and playground
  - gather pupils' views about this aspect during discussions with them, both formal and informal
  - look at the state of the school environment – are displays well kept? Is there graffiti or vandalism?
  - consider how well pupils respond to adults other than teachers, for example lunchtime supervisors, teaching assistants
  - look at behaviour during unstructured times, for example waiting outside a lesson, moving to assembly, coming in from break. If behaviour is affected by a lack of supervision from staff this would also need to be considered as part of **care, guidance and support**
- 4. Inspectors should take account of the extent to which pupils modify their behaviour in response to the school's behaviour management strategies, including the impact of exclusion strategies. Inspectors might usefully:

- find out what strategies are used to modify behaviour, for example reward and sanction schemes for all pupils, and more specialised strategies such as target sheets, learning mentor involvement, involvement of parents, nurture groups, small group work. Inspectors should then use the school's documentation alongside first hand evidence to evaluate how well pupils respond to these strategies
  - consider pupils with different needs and from different groups and how well they respond – older and younger pupils, those with special educational needs, boys and girls, pupils from different ethnic groups
  - consider whether repeated use of support and/or sanctions is leading to improvement of behaviour or maintenance of already good behaviour. For example, if the same pupils are in detention every week (**look at documentation**) this strategy is not helping them to modify their behaviour. If the strategies used are not effective in helping pupils to improve their behaviour then this may have an impact on the judgement for **care, guidance and support**.
5. Inspectors should take account of documentary evidence about pupils' behaviour, including records of: racist and bullying incidents; the use of any 'on-call' system; the use of 'remove' or 'seclusion' rooms; and the types of incidents which occur at break, lunchtime and social times. Inspectors should:
- look carefully at these documents because they will should provide the full picture of behaviour to make the judgement. Much of this evidence cannot be gathered through observation alone
  - bear in mind the importance of careful documentation and analysis. An effective school will record carefully any incidents and the action they have taken. Therefore a log which shows a number of bullying incidents may reflect good recording rather than a high level of bullying. Again, the question is whether pupils respond to the action taken – or are incidents of bullying or of misbehaviour in class continually repeated? Repeated incidents indicate more deep seated behaviour issues. This may indicate issues with **leadership and management**, as might poor recording.
6. Inspectors should take account of rates and patterns of permanent and overall/repetitive fixed-period exclusions, including any over-representation from different groups.
- Exclusion should not be used lightly and pupils should respond to it. High exclusion figures, and particularly the repeated exclusion of the same pupils, are not consistent with good behaviour overall, and also need to be considered when making a judgement on aspects of leadership and management and care, guidance and support.
  - See separate guidance on exclusion.

7. Inspectors should take account of parents' and pupils' views on the standard of behaviour, such as those expressed in parental questionnaires and discussion with parents and pupils; give particular attention to pupils' own views about being safe and free from harassment and how well pupils from different backgrounds get on with each other.
- This completes the picture gained from observations, discussion, and scrutiny of documents.
  - Any issues which arise about behaviour, including bullying, should be followed up through other inspection trails.

## **Additional provision to manage behaviour**

### **'Remove rooms' and 'on call' systems**

Secondary schools, in particular, may use such systems to remove individual pupils from a lesson if they are disrupting learning. In order to judge their impact and effectiveness, ask senior leaders for their analysis of the impact and effectiveness of the school's strategies.

- Are clear records kept of when and why pupils are removed, and any further action taken, such as informing parents, the involvement of learning mentors, or planned sanctions?
- Are leaders aware of any patterns – for example the same pupils being repeatedly removed; frequent removal from one subject or teacher?
- Do records show that the 'remove room' is being used sparingly?
- Do senior leaders use the records of removal from lessons to decide when staff may need additional support?
- Do senior leaders use the records to decide when pupils may need additional support?
- How does learning continue in the 'remove room'?

If a primary school, special school, or pupil referral unit regularly removes pupils from lessons, similar questions apply.

### **Learning Support Units**

Learning support units are an in-school provision intended to be used for planned intervention for pupils displaying behavioural or sometimes emotional difficulties. This may involve the pupil attending the learning support unit for an extended period, sometimes several weeks. If a school has a learning support unit, find out about its purpose and ask for evidence of its impact:

- Does pupils' behaviour improve during their time in the unit? What is the evidence for this?

- Is this maintained once the pupil returns to their usual timetable?
- How suitable is the curriculum while pupils are in the learning support unit?
- What academic progress do pupils in the learning support unit make?

[www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/learningsupportunits/](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/learningsupportunits/)

## Nurture groups

These are mainly found in primary schools and special schools, although the model is increasingly used in secondary schools. Nurture groups are intended for vulnerable pupils who may also display behavioural difficulties.

A nurture group:

- is a small supportive class, providing a secure, predictable environment with an emphasis on catering for individual needs and focusing on emotional and social development as well as academic progress
- is traditionally staffed by two adults, usually a teacher and a learning support assistant.
- is attended by the pupils for a substantial part of each week, though some time is spent in the mainstream class to maintain links.

If a school has a nurture group or **any other provision to manage behaviour which results in pupils spending significant time away from their main class**, consider the following:

- What is the impact of the provision on pupils' social, emotional, behavioural and academic progress?
- How successfully do pupils reintegrate into their mainstream class?
- How does the school involve parents to ensure continuity of approaches between school and home?

[www.nurturegroups.org/](http://www.nurturegroups.org/)

## Alternative/off-site provision

In order to match the curriculum to the particular needs of the pupils it is becoming more and more common for secondary schools to use alternative providers to help provide their curriculum. These include college placements as well as vocational and work placements. Inspectors should evaluate:

- how the school identifies appropriate provision that will match a pupil's needs and interests as well as enable them to gain knowledge and skills
- how the school initially assesses the quality and safety of the provision

- how the school monitors and evaluates pupils' **attendance and achievement**
- the progress which pupils are making while attending alternative provision
- the care, guidance and support pupils are receiving while attending provision off-site.

The school's monitoring of attendance is an important part of safeguarding responsibilities.

## **Behaviour and special educational needs and/or disabilities**

Key to ensuring a consistency of approach in managing behaviour is a clear and concise behaviour policy. In schools where behaviour policies are not planned, managed or organised well their impact is minimal. Successful behaviour management involves senior leaders seeing it as part of school improvement. All these factors are particularly important for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities as many will have a need for **clear structures and systems, clear expectations, as well as additional support** to manage their behaviour.

The term special educational needs and/or disabilities covers a very wide range of pupils and includes those with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. These pupils require robust arrangements for personal and social development. They respond particularly well to help with their friendships and resolving their conflicts. The impact of learning mentors may be important.

A general culture of poor behaviour is likely to have a **disproportionate impact on more vulnerable pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities**, for example through bullying, and would have serious implications for their well-being.

In all inspections, consider the following.

- How does the school **support its most behaviourally challenging pupils**, even where there is only a small number? This reveals much about a school's ethos and its approach to equality and diversity.
- For pupils with behavioural, social or emotional difficulties, or identified disabilities such as ASD, are **'reasonable adjustments'** made to help them to be included in school (a requirement of the disability discrimination act – DDA) or is exclusion the only or main response to their behaviour?
- Do pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities feel safe in school (particularly from bullying)?
- What do observations around the school at break and lunchtime, and conversations with pupils, show about the way in which pupils treat **all** others?

- How can I find out answers to some of the questions about special educational needs and/or disabilities and behaviour, especially if behaviour is a concern?

Note: The school should be able to provide all this information readily. If they cannot this raises concerns.

- Exclusions: look at the breakdown of exclusion data in the SEF. If necessary, ask the school to provide further exclusions data, clarifying which pupils are on the special educational needs and/or disabilities list and at which stage (school action, school action plus, statement) – does this look reasonable or disproportionate? This is important to do whether or not there is a general concern about behaviour in the school.
- Links between behaviour and low literacy levels: if this may be a concern, in a secondary school look at the end of KS2 English scores for those who have the most exclusions in Years 7 and 8 or in a primary school the end of Key Stage 1 scores for current Key Stage 2 pupils. If these scores are low, explore the links – how robust is the school's action to address literacy difficulties? How good is this in lessons other than English?
- Links between behaviour and achievement: look at the school's tracking data – choose a group of frequently excluded pupils or those who have the poorest behaviour records. Ask the school to provide information about their attainment and progress, and the guidance and support they are receiving for their behaviour. Is this good enough?
- Behaviour in lessons: spend 10 minutes in a series of lessons with bottom sets and groups that have a large number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities – does the school recognise the vulnerability of some of these pupils who may spend much of their time with those with the most challenging behaviour, and is support appropriate? Are teachers able to manage the most challenging groups?
- Vulnerable pupils' experiences: speak to a group of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities about their school experiences.
- Excluded pupils' experiences: speak to a group of pupils who are frequently excluded.

## Exclusion

There are no average figures for exclusion on a school-by-school basis, so it can be difficult to decide what 'high' exclusions look like. However the following extracts from Statistical First Release 2007/8 (SFR 18/2009) may be useful.

- 0.55% of primary school pupils and 5.63% of secondary school pupils received at least one fixed-term exclusion in 2007/8. This gives inspectors a guideline when considering the rate of exclusion.

- The average length of a fixed period exclusion in state funded secondary schools in 2006/7 was 2.7 days.
- For primary schools it was 2.2 days.
- The vast majority of fixed period exclusions (around 97%) lasted one week or less.
- Overall, 61.39% of pupils who received a fixed period exclusion were only excluded once, 18.79% of pupils received two fixed period exclusions.
- In 2006/7 the percentage of those attending primary schools who were permanently excluded was 0.02%. For secondary it was 0.21%, and for special 0.19%.

### **Exclusions of secondary aged pupils (including from pupil referral units and special schools)**

- **High exclusions** either overall or of a particular group of pupils are likely to indicate insufficiently effective systems and structures to support pupils, including basic behaviour management to prevent low level disruption.
- Poor behaviour may indicate **unmet learning needs** (which would have an impact on the judgements on curriculum and/or teaching and learning), a lack of guidance or a lack of support, a poor ethos, low expectations, or bullying.
- Poor behaviour may also indicate learning difficulties which the school has not identified.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in mainstream schools are still over-represented in fixed and permanent exclusion figures. In particular, those with special educational needs and no statement account for 63% of all permanent exclusions. Pupils with a **statement of special educational needs account for 9% of all permanent exclusions** even though pupils with statements only account for around 2.5% of the school population.
- Inspectors need to be aware that nationally, exclusions of pupils of Black Caribbean and mixed White/Black Caribbean heritage are also disproportionately high.

Inspectors should **ask schools for their own analysis of exclusions data** and consider:

- the groups represented in the exclusions figures in comparison with the groups in the school – are any over-represented?
- the exclusion of looked after children – statutory exclusions guidance states that this should be avoided if at all possible
- whether pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement, are being excluded

- whether fixed term exclusions are repeated. If exclusions look fairly high but each pupil excluded is excluded only once for a short period (one or two days) this may indicate that exclusion is being effectively used as a 'short, sharp shock', particularly if rates are reducing. Repeated exclusion of the same pupils shows it is not an effective sanction and support for improving behaviour may be lacking
- how aware the school is of any patterns and trends.

Where exclusions are high or repeated **or** exclusions are not high but behaviour is a concern, during the inspection, consider the following.

- In lessons, are all pupils engaged well in learning? Do pupils receive additional support when they need it?
- Are pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties given enough support and structure (in lessons and around school) to allow them to engage successfully for a reasonable proportion of the time, and therefore to succeed?
- Is there an appropriate focus on literacy in lessons for those pupils who need it? If pupils are entering the school with low literacy levels are these addressed or does pupils' frustration deteriorate into a behavioural difficulty? If in any doubt, cross reference behaviour tracking data with attainment and progress data for a selected group of pupils.
- Do pupils with specific needs, such as autistic spectrum disorder (ASD), have good, clear routines which are understood by all staff?
- Do exclusion figures indicate that a disproportionate number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or from any other group in the school, are being excluded?
- If exclusion is used, does it have an impact? Repeated exclusions indicate that, for that pupil, exclusion is not an effective working.

### Exclusions from primary schools

A recent Ofsted survey (2009) found that the vast majority of primary schools do not exclude children from the **Early Years Foundation Stage** or **Key Stage 1**. However, some schools were excluding children of this age, sometimes repeatedly. A number of these children had special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils are over represented in mainstream schools in fixed and permanent exclusion figures. Pupils with a **statement of special educational needs account for 9% of all permanent exclusions**, even though pupils with statements only account for around 2.5% of the school population

A number of exclusions of young children were for 'sexually inappropriate behaviour'. Some schools had not made the appropriate referrals to social services.

Fixed term exclusion of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 should be extremely rare. However, ‘unofficial exclusion’, where a child is sent home and this is not recorded as an exclusion **must not be used** as it contravenes legislation. If children are being excluded from a nursery or Reception class, find out:

- the frequency with which this occurs
- the number of children involved
- the reasons given for the exclusion(s)
- the range of strategies used to prevent exclusion
- the relationships the school has with parents
- parents’ views.

Frequent use of exclusion with this age group is likely to be an indicator of serious issues with care, guidance and support, curriculum, leadership and management or all of these. If exclusion has been used for an incident of ‘sexually inappropriate behaviour’, **investigate if child protection procedures were instigated**.

The questions in the bullet points above (secondary section) are also largely relevant in a primary school.

### **Internal exclusion (see also ‘remove room’ above)**

Schools sometimes call this ‘seclusion’ – it is used as an alternative to a formal exclusion from school. If the school uses this strategy, its effectiveness in improving behaviour should be evaluated. Ask similar questions to those you would ask about exclusion from school, bearing in mind different groups of learners.

### **Day six provision**

Schools are required to make full-time and suitable education for pupils from day six of a fixed-term exclusion. This may be within a partnership of schools, or may sometimes be in a pupil referral unit. It should not be on the site of the excluding school unless the provision is also open to other schools. On **every** inspection, especially where exclusion is used frequently, or records show the school has excluded a pupil for more than five days, inspectors should find out from the school:

- what provision they make from day six of an exclusion
- how they monitor the suitability and quality of this, including the safeguarding aspects
- what impact it has on improving behaviour.