

INTRODUCTION

This report examines exclusion and suspension data from across the local area.

The period chosen for the report allows comparison between two census periods (Autumn 2020 and 2021) and the most recently completed term (Spring). In this way the author has been able to discount the lockdown period with greatest limits for onsite attendance.

Statistical neighbour and wider comparisons are based on the nationally released dataset for 2018-19 as this is the last full year. Data extracted from the local authority interactive tool may include AY 2019-20. It should be noted that full opening of schools was only possible for 65% of this academic year.

Local information is provided from Capita One. The author has indicated where this data is for a specific period and/or has comparable national data.

KEY DOCUMENTS, TERMS, AND ASSUMPTIONS

The key guidance that governs the powers to Suspend and Exclude is laid down within:

[Exclusion from maintained schools, academies, and pupil referral units in England \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

And is supported by the following:

[Behaviour and Discipline in Schools - A guide for headteachers and school staff final draft.docx \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Significant work has already been done at a national level in reviewing exclusions and correlations with need. This is best exemplified by the Timpson Review:

[The Timpson Review](#)

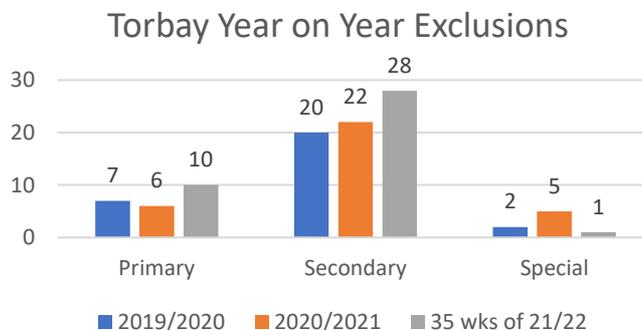
The terms below require definition as do assumptions made in comparing data across the change in guidance.

Suspension – The exclusion of a child from a school for a fixed period.

Exclusion – The permanent removal of a child from a school roll for reasons related to exceptional poor behaviour.

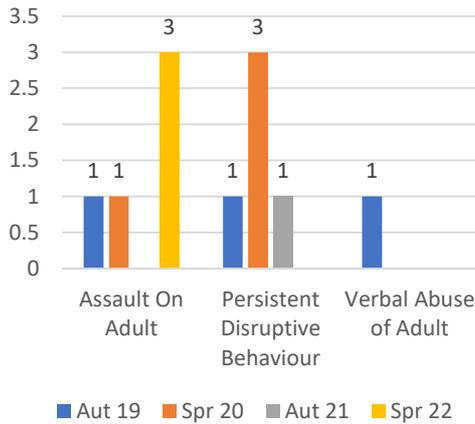
Prior to September 2020 these were defined as Permanent Exclusion and Fixed Term Exclusion. At the same time, the reasons schools can give for both were redefined. This makes year on year comparison of reasons difficult. It also requires analysis to assume that suspensions equate to fixed term exclusions and exclusions equate to permanent exclusions.

In September 2020 new reasons for exclusion were also added including, breach of public health instructions, abuse of gender ID or sexual orientation and abuse on disability grounds. At the same time some existing reasons were renamed. Where there is a logical link, the data in this report treats the changed wording as the same reason to allow comparison.



REASONS FOR EXCLUSION

Primary Exclusions - Aut/Spr 19/20 and Aut/Spr 21/22



Secondary phase has approximately three times the exclusion rate of primary. This is consistent across the local area for the last three years.

As with primary phase, persistent disruptive behaviour is most often the reason for a permanent exclusion. This is also true nationally. Torbay is an outlier for assaults on peers and it remains to be seen whether this is a moment in time after the return to full attendance or a new pattern of behaviour. (Local Authority Capita One data - May 2022)

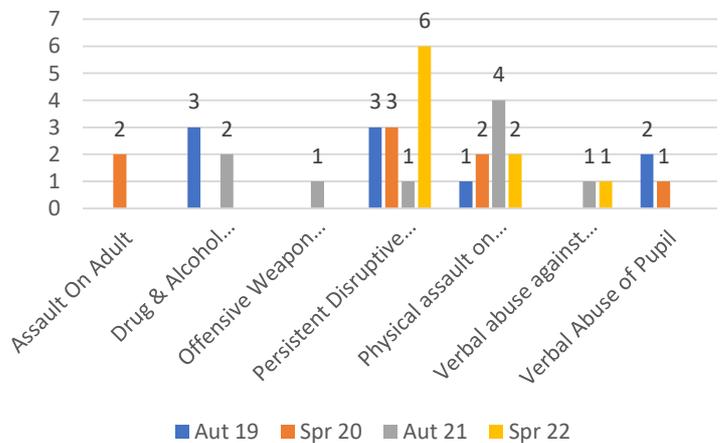
Anecdotally, since lockdown, the nature of persistent disruption has changed for many children. The phase is seeing more non-compliance without escalation to confrontation. This is seen through internal truancy and refusal to follow instruction.

Across the given period, primary school exclusions and suspensions for children who are subsequently excluded, have followed a pattern of increasing suspensions for persistent disruptive behaviour. As schools work to address these needs, the dysregulation increases, and the child assaults the adults in the room.

The Mayfield Behaviour Outreach team works alongside schools on referral to demonstrate effective practice, train staff and review in school systems. This work, and the work of school staff faces the following challenges,

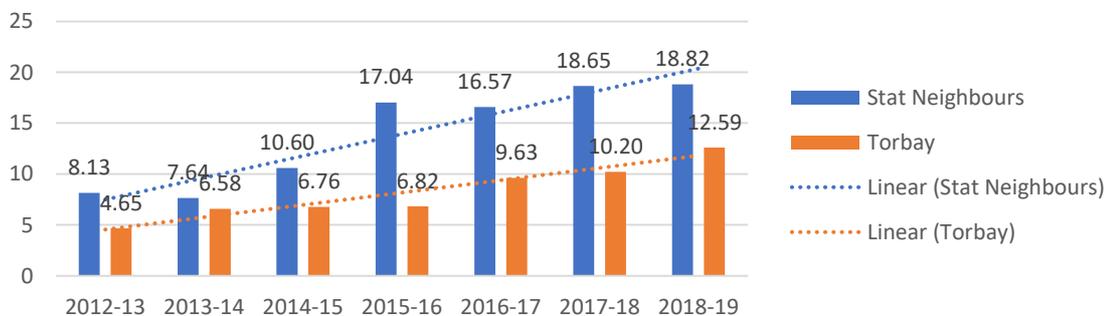
- The team often finds schools do not believe they can nominate staff to work alongside them due to staffing or funding limitations.
- Recruitment and retention have been challenging and staff are often recruited from the team into the schools they have worked in.
- Parents are often reluctant to consent to an Early Help offer to support a consistent home/school approach.

Secondary Exclusions - Aut/Spr 19/20 and Aut/Spr 21/22



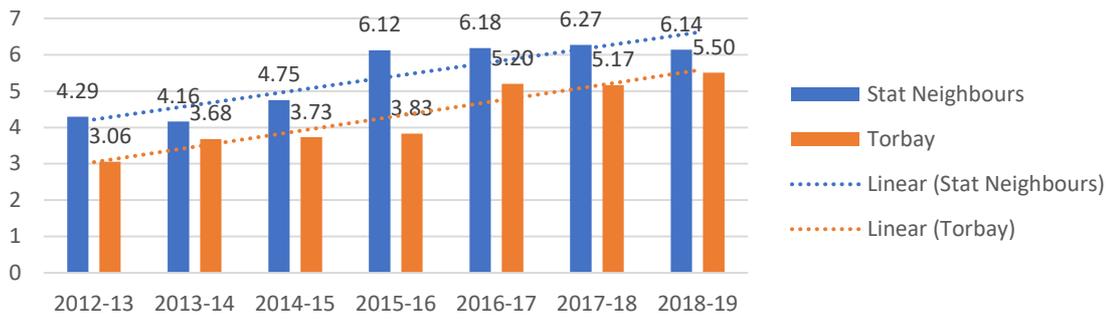
SUSPENSION

Secondary Suspension Rate



Secondary suspension rates place Torbay 87th of 152 LAs and 77th for repeat suspensions. (Local Authority Interactive Tool - May 2022)

Secondary >1 Suspension Rate

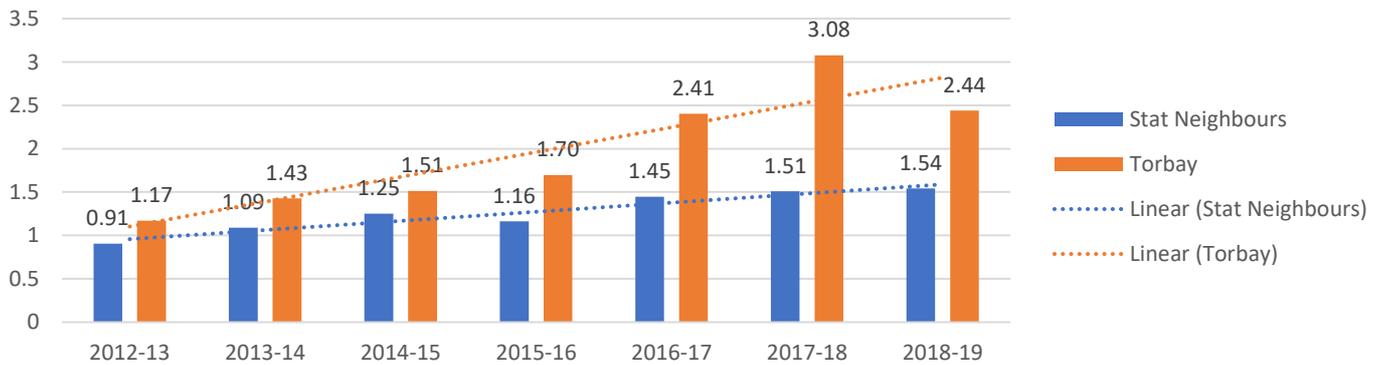


Secondary suspensions across this period are low compared to SN and in line with national figures.

There is a concerning trend for local repeat suspensions to be converging with the SN figure whilst at the same time single suspension rates are diverging. This would suggest that those children with most need expressed as dysregulation are the same children who are being most frequently sanctioned.

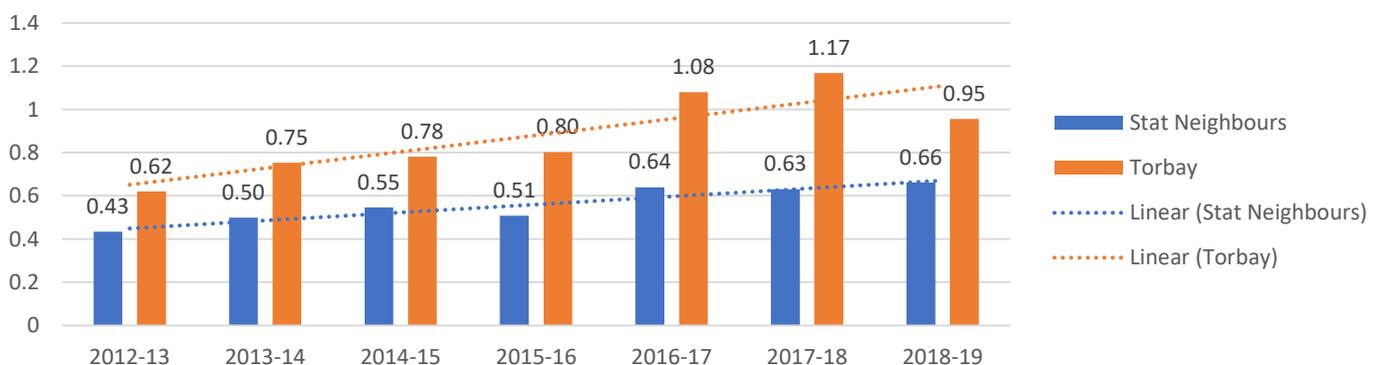
As will be shown later, the trends to 2018-19 are not representative of the current pattern.

Primary Suspension Rate



Primary suspension rates place Torbay 147th of 152 LAs and 147th for repeat suspensions. (Local Authority Interactive Tool - May 2022)

Primary >1 Suspension Rate



For the primary phase, suspensions are at a higher rate than statistical neighbours and the trend is for a diverging rate of suspension. It is of particular concern that Torbay is starting from a position of being 147th in the rank order and comparative data shows this is worsening.

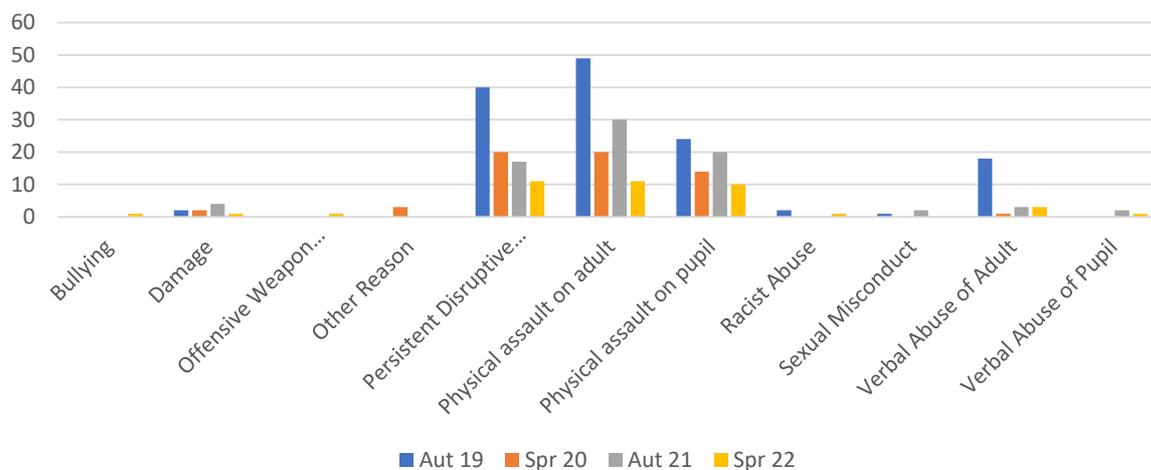
Some gains were made in 2018-19. These were initially lost in the return to full on-site education, but data below shows declining pattern of suspension in the primary phase which gives rise to some optimism that the situation is returning to normality, albeit with the normal situation being of worryingly high suspension rates.

SUSPENSIONS SINCE 2018-19

The data within the graphs and commentary below, are drawn from local authority data. This data has been verified for the autumn terms against national census data. The spring terms' data is checked against school information systems, but the figures may change when checked against national databases.

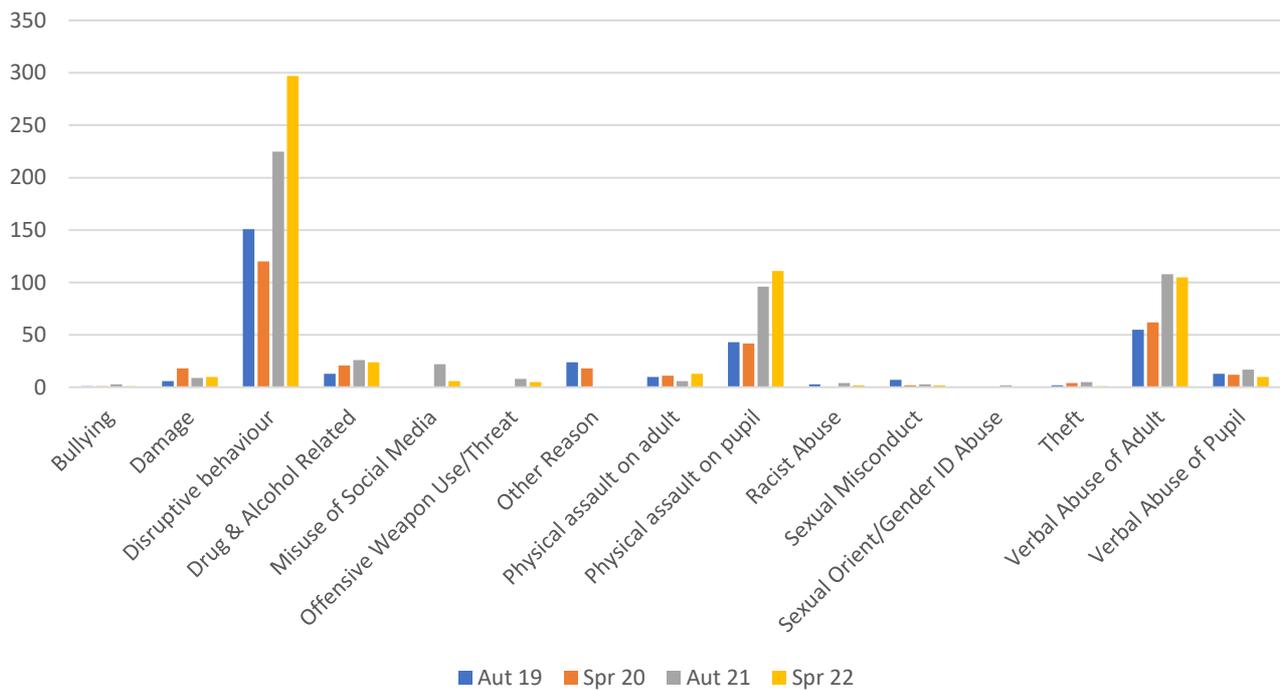
School level information and analysis are provided below to inform targeting of resources and support. This information is not included to draw conclusions about any one school's practise.

Primary Suspensions Aut/Spr 19/20 and Aut/Spr 21/22



Primary schools have been able to reduce overall suspensions across the reporting period. There is large variance across year groups. Those children who have started their compulsory education during the last two years are demonstrating difficulty in adapting to school routines and processes.

Secondary Suspensions Aut/Spr 19/20 and Aut/Spr 21/22



Secondary schools have seen a rise in suspensions across the period. There was a short window of reducing overall suspension in the autumn term 2021, but the increasing use of suspension has continued in the spring term 2022. This is of concern as spring term 2022 had particularly high absence rates so fewer children were in school, but the absolute numbers of suspensions increased.

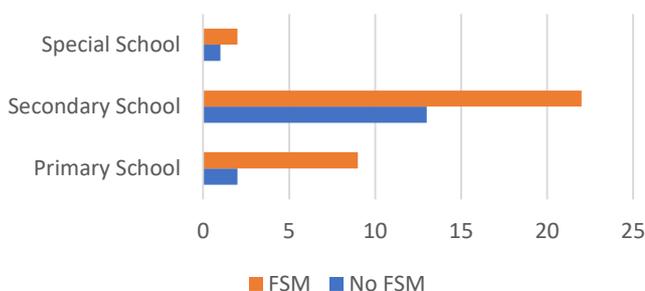
The three areas of significant increase are persistent disruption, assault on a peer, and verbal abuse of an adult. Conversations with school staff suggest that the increase in persistent disruption and verbal abuse were because of disrupted staffing due to COVID related absence.

Assaults on peers are usually a significant factor in secondary school suspension within Torbay. It is worthy of note that despite significant numbers of assaults on peers and subsequent sanction there are no reported exclusions and single figures of suspensions for bullying.

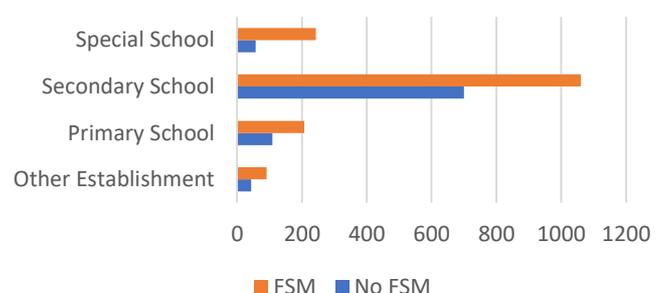
Reviewing the school level data included in the annex, suggests that there is not an even pattern of suspension across the local area. Children who live in the TQ1 area seem to have elevated levels of suspension. This would accord with known data regarding poverty, disadvantage, criminality, substance misuse and other societal challenges.

EXCLUSION AND SUSPENSION AGAINST DISADVANTAGE (FSM)

Exclusion for Aut/Spr 19/20 and Aut/Spr 21/22



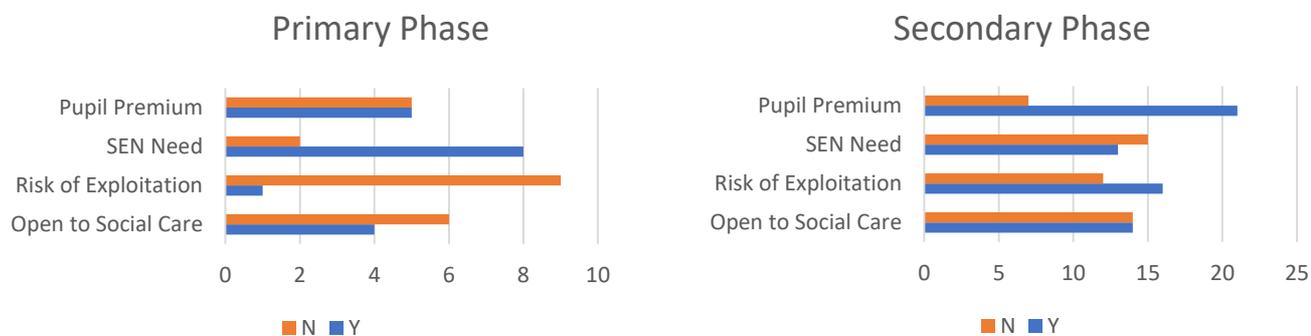
Suspension for Aut/Spr 19/20 and Aut/Spr 21/22



When using free school meals as the indicator of disadvantage it is immediately apparent that in all types of school children with free school meals are more likely to be suspended or excluded.

Caution should be taken when reviewing the special school data as over 80% of all exclusions and suspensions originate from a single setting.

EXCLUSION AGAINST DISADVANTAGE (SOCIAL)



Of the thirty-one children excluded in the academic year to date their need can be shown as below:

Exclusion in primary phase is most often linked to SEN. Schools often point to a rapid decline in behaviour linked to SEN or societal need that cannot be met within the schools existing resources. This leads to requests for additionality outside of any EHCP process.

At secondary phase, it is far more common for children supported through pupil premium to be excluded than their peers. Equally, children at risk of exploitation are 1.4% of all children of compulsory school age but represent 43.5% of exclusions from secondary school.

Similarly, children open to social care at child in need or with a child protection plan are subject to exclusion at a rate beyond the proportion of such children compared to the number of children without social care involvement.

ACTIONS

As a response to the figures within the report the following actions have been taken or are planned for academic year 2022/23.

CASE CONFERENCES

The Written Statement of Action provides for case conferences before exclusion. These are being trialled this term with both primary and secondary phases. The case conference includes these partners:

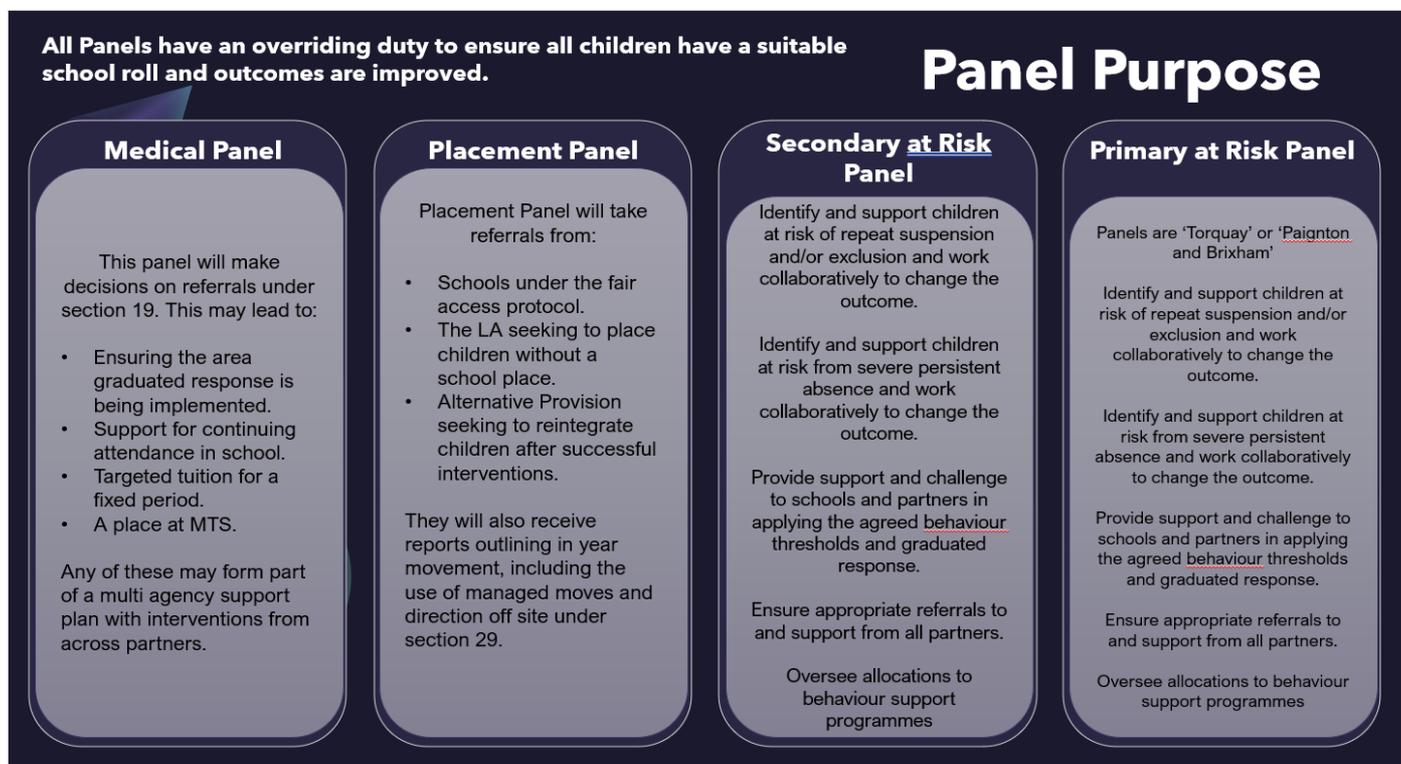
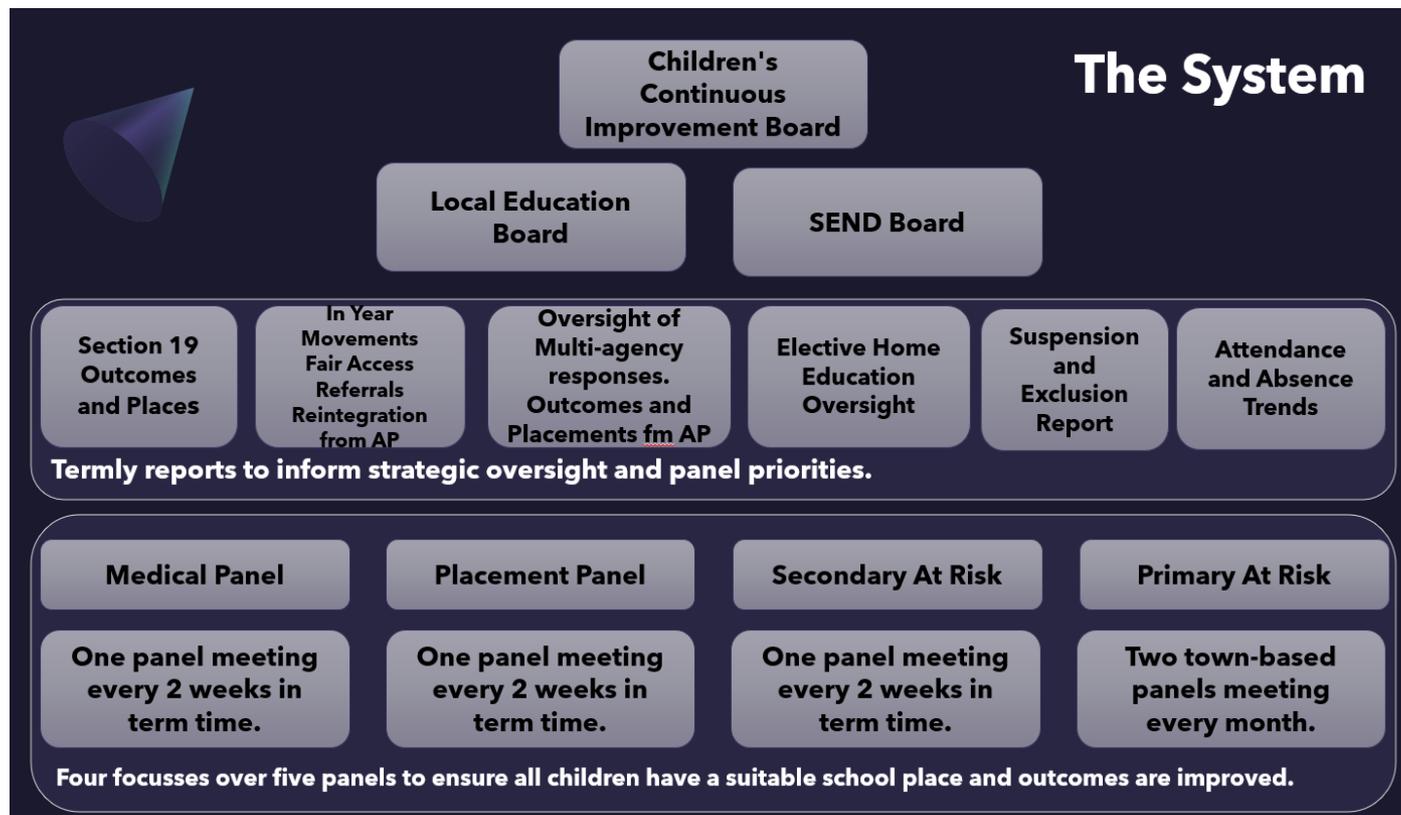
- School staff
- Vulnerable Pupils Team
- SEN Team
- Education Psychology
- Virtual School Advice and Guidance Officers
- Social Care Senior Leaders
- Behaviour Outreach Leadership
- Early Help Senior Leaders

These partners meet, outline their team's involvement and actions, and then work together to map this work against the child and their family's needs. They then plan to cover any gaps in provision and in doing so seek to avoid an exclusion.

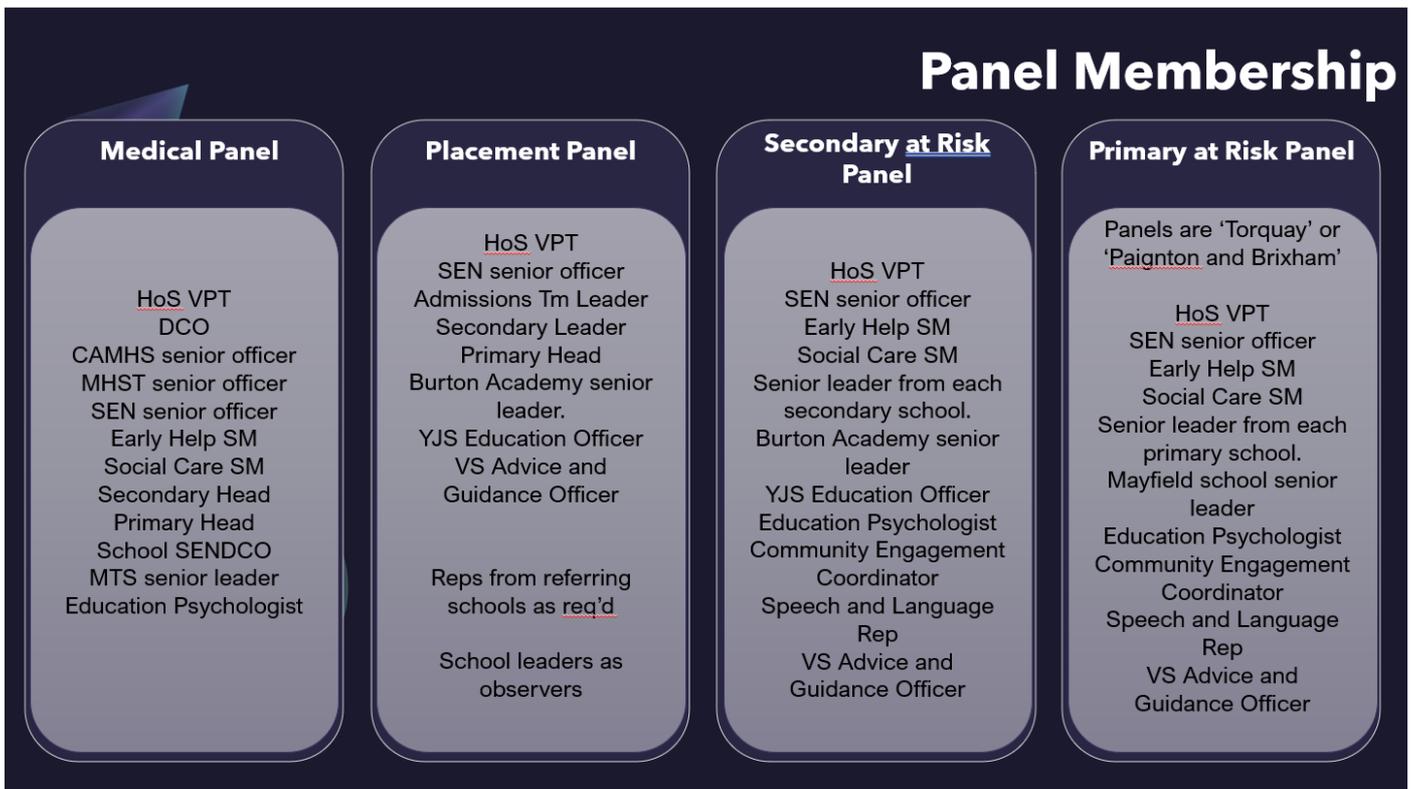
REMODELLED PUPIL PANELS

With effect from September 2022 the existing pupil placement panel and associated peer groups of schools will be remodelled to increase multi agency presence and engagement with children at risk of missing out on education.

The revised panels and membership are below:



Panel Membership



WORKING ACROSS PARTNERS

As part of our ongoing WSOA work we are seeking to answer the following questions by looking at best practice elsewhere and examining themes and trends locally.

1. What is the link between Pupil Premium entitlement and exclusion at secondary phase?
What support is available, specific to maintaining school places, from partners?
2. Why are children with SEN overrepresented in both phases but exceptionally so in primary phase?
 - a. Is this a systemic problem with assessment of need / diagnosis?
 - b. Are there common needs that could be addressed through targeted multi agency support?
 - c. Are schools clear on the universal and enhanced expectation and the effective implementation of the graduated response.?
 - d. Is sufficient resource earmarked for emerging need within existing schools budgets, is there an equality of offer across all schools?
3. How can children at risk of exploitation be effectively supported to remain in education?
 - a. Does the education offer match the aspirations and needs of this group?
 - b. Should there be a specific offer to children at risk of exploitation who are also at risk of exclusion?
4. How can the over representation of children open to social care be addressed through our new ways of working?
5. What is the link between in year movement and suspension and exclusion?

DEVELOPING AN AREA WIDE EXCLUSION AND SUSPENSION STRATEGY

Using the above lines of enquiry, we are developing a multi-agency, area wide strategy to reduce exclusion and suspension. This will be co-created by December 2022 for full implementation in September 2023.

DATA SHARING AGREEMENTS

To ensure that the above strategy is based on near live information, we are renewing our data sharing agreements with all schools in Torbay. This will allow us to review its impact at Area, Phase, School and Individual level

