

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 15 January 2025

Subject: Inclusion Approaches and Exclusions Data 2022/2023 and 2023/2024

Report of: Director of Education

Summary

The report provides an update on the development of our Inclusion support for all Manchester schools. It also looks at available exclusions data held internally in Manchester for 2023/24 and validated Department for Education (DfE) published school exclusions data for 2022/23.

Recommendations

Members are asked to consider the contents of this report, the evolution of the inclusion offer and the exclusions data for 2022/2023 and 2023/2024.

Members are asked to note the early data in 2024/2025 and the reduction in exclusions so far this academic year.

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment -the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city	
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments	

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Reducing exclusions across the city will contribute to improving educational outcomes and to Manchester’s young people becoming happy, safe and highly skilled.

A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	Improving educational outcomes and reducing the exclusion rate amongst the Manchester school population is essential for young people to gain qualifications and contribute to Manchester's economic success.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Vulnerable groups including Free School Meals and Special Educational Needs & Disability as well as certain ethnic groups are overrepresented in exclusions. Reducing exclusions is a key priority to ensure all young people have the best possible opportunity to succeed.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	An improving school system will make Manchester an attractive place to live and work. Curriculum emphasis on climate change and low carbon will engage young people.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	An improving school system will make Manchester an attractive place to live and work. An improving education system contributes to generating future growth by a highly skilled workforce and young people committed to reducing the carbon footprint.

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Background documents (available for public inspection)

- Update on Exclusions to Children and Young person's Scrutiny, 27th February 2018
- Children and Young Person's Scrutiny report on Manchester's Promoting Inclusion and Preventing Exclusion Strategy, June 2019
- Manchester Inclusion Strategy, November 2019
- Children and Young Person's Scrutiny report on The Manchester Inclusion Strategy - Preventing Exclusion and Supporting Children and Young People to Thrive Implementation Update – January 2020

- Children and Young Person's Scrutiny update report on The Manchester Inclusion Strategy, June 2022
- Children and Young Person's Scrutiny update report on The Manchester Inclusion Strategy, September 2023
- 'Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement Guidance for maintained schools, academies, and pupil referral units in England', August 2024
- Manchester Education Strategy, 2024

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Local Authorities have a statutory duty to provide full time education for excluded pupils from the sixth day following the Headteacher's recommendation to permanently exclude.
- 1.2 This report summarises the trends in permanent exclusions and suspensions from the 2023/24 academic year. It also includes the latest available national and statistical neighbour data from the 2022/23 academic year. The Department for Education (DfE) will publish 2023/24 exclusions data in July 2025.
- 1.3 Reducing both permanent exclusions and suspensions is a long-standing priority for Manchester Children's Services with a commitment to ensure improved experiences and outcomes for all children and young people through 'Our Children and Young People's Plan', our Manchester Education Strategy and our Inclusion Strategy 2022 - 2025.
- 1.4 In 2017/18, following a four-year increase in permanent exclusions there was an acknowledgement of the need to approach reducing exclusions differently and a commitment to a multi-agency response and this approach has continued and has gone from strength to strength.
- 1.5 Manchester's Inclusion Strategy was launched on 8th November 2019 and revised in August 2022, to be re-reviewed in August 2025. The current strategy can be accessed via [Policies and strategies - Manchester Inclusion Strategy | Manchester City Council](#)

Manchester Inclusion Strategy 2022-2025

Building a safe, happy, healthy, successful and independent future for children and young people



Our Inclusion Statement:

We believe it is important that every child and young person in our early years settings, schools and post-16 provisions, whatever their age, identity, circumstance or ability, has a sense of belonging, feels respected and is valued for who they are.

Our Priorities

- Work in partnership in strength-based ways to support inclusive practice
- Listen and respond to children, young people and their families
- Promote equality and diversity with a particular focus on race, LGBTIQ+ and disability (BHMFC)
- Reduce health inequalities
- Develop the aspirations and skills of children and young people
- Improve social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing
- Positive transitions between settings, schools and post-16 provisions
- Identify needs early and protect vulnerable children and young people
- Maintain a highly skilled and well-supported workforce
- High-quality continuum of intervention, use of alternative provision and specialist support
- Promote good attendance
- Exclusion as a last resort.

Guiding Principles for Inclusion. We believe:

- Relationships lie at the heart of inclusive practice. We put relationships first, working with an ethos across all education settings that promotes strong relationships with all parties.
- It is important to take a non-judgemental, curious and empathetic attitude towards behaviour and learning, regarding children and young people presenting with additional needs as vulnerable and not troublesome.
- We all have a duty to explore children and young people's needs and provide appropriate support.
- Finding solutions is often a complex process. It is important we are open to learning and willing to share knowledge and effective practice.
- Being fair is not about everyone getting the same (equality), but about everyone getting what they need (equity).
- Exclusion should be the absolute last resort.

1. Inclusive Universal Provision

We will:

- Improve approaches to listening and responding to children and young people.
- Deliver the Inclusion Strategy Toolkit, providing a cycle of thematic training.
- Promote whole-setting nurturing principles and trauma-informed approaches.
- Develop model relationship-based behaviour policies.
- Promote equality and diversity, particularly inclusion to race, gender, sexual orientation and disability.
- Implement virtual school duties for the education of children and young people with a social worker.
- Research our approach to school attendance.
- Further promote good-quality assessment and planning for children with disabilities and physical and mental health needs.
- Continue to expand our SEND community offer.
- Clarify the ordinarily available provision in school for children with additional needs.
- Develop a co-ordinated response and support for refugee children.
- Further promote approaches to address poverty and health inequalities.
- Implement statutory changes to elective home education.
- Consolidate the multi-agency THRIVE Framework to promote emotional health and mental wellbeing.
- Develop a headteacher wellbeing offer with the Manchester Schools Alliance.
- Further reduce the number of young people not in education, employment, or training.
- Ensure high-quality careers education, information, advice and guidance.
- Embed citywide approaches to support transitions at every stage.
- Relaunch Skills for Life.
- Become a UNICEF Child-Friendly City and promote school and settings becoming Rights Respecting Schools.
- Enhance good practice guidance for the use of the internet and social media.

2. Early Intervention – identify needs and protect vulnerable children and young people

We will:

- Embed timely conversations and effective partnerships with parents and carers.
- Embed the All About Me conversation to ensure children, young people and families only tell their story once.
- Promote and monitor the new Alternative Provision Framework.
- Commission and implement the SAFE Tackles intervention.
- Develop good practice guidance and quality assurance for on-site alternative provision and inclusion spaces.
- Review practice guidance on the use of managed moves.
- Monitor use of reduced timetables and share good practice.
- Promote multi-agency approaches to reduce persistent school absence.
- Review school cluster arrangements to strengthen links to social care and early help.
- Embed multi-agency approaches to promote the education, employment and training of young people supported by the Youth Justice Service.
- Embed Mental Health in School Support Teams model and promote the M-Theme approach.
- Embed the Team Around the School approach.
- Monitor Section 19 medical offer and pilot other approaches.
- Continue supervision for Designated Safeguarding Leads.
- Review specialist outreach offer, targeting where it is most needed, eg. at transition points.

3. High-quality continuum of provision and specialist support

We will:

- Implement the PRU restructure, repurposing and accommodation plan.
- Implement Phase 2 of special school places expansion.
- Define continuum of provision for children and young people with social, emotional and mental health needs.
- Improve commissioning of provision for children and young people with a high level of need.
- Implement with social care a specialist locality offer for children with SEND.
- Review and commission our specialist short breaks offer.
- Deliver a citywide positive behaviour support approach.
- Commission and grow the post-16 and post-19 specialist offer.

4. Exclusion as a last resort

We will:

- Share school exclusion data and monitor use of suspension and exclusion.
- Monitor the number of children returning to school from Pupil Referral Units following exclusion.
- Utilise the learning from the AP Tackles.
- Review the use of Inclusion Panels.
- Review exclusion training for governors.
- Work with parent/carer champions to develop an exclusion advocacy offer for other parent/carer.
- Develop best practice in the prevention of post-16 exclusion and withdrawal.



Our Manchester Behaviours in everything we do we'll make sure that... > We work together and trust each other > We're proud and passionate about Manchester > We take time to listen and understand > We 'own' it and aren't afraid to try new things > We show that we value our differences and treat people fairly

2.0 Context

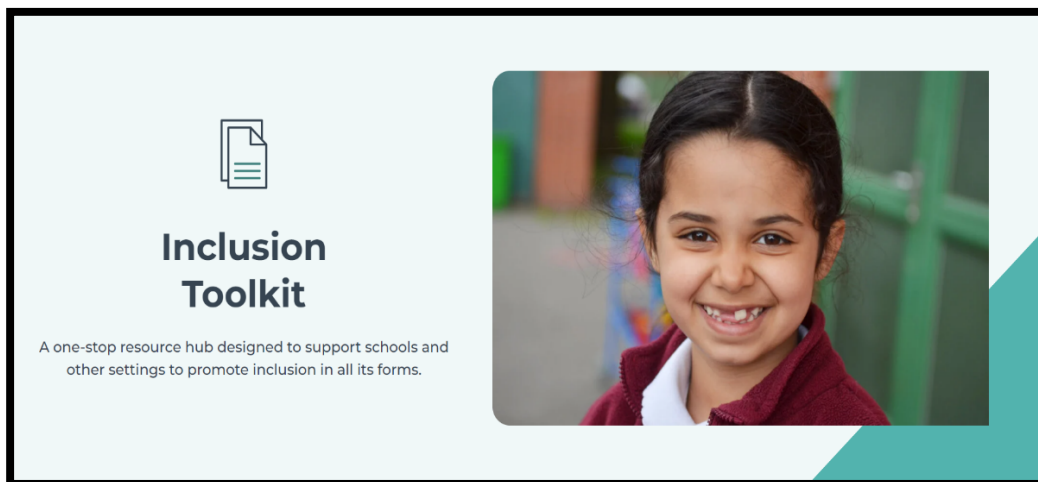
The revised Manchester Inclusion Strategy captured ongoing and new activity across the city, being implemented to further promote inclusion. All activity was developed in support of Manchester's Inclusion Statement:

"We believe it is important that every child and young person in our early years' settings, schools and post 16 provisions, whatever their age, identity, circumstance or ability, has a sense of belonging, feels respected and is valued for who they are."

2.1 Launch of the Manchester Inclusion Strategy Toolkit

A key development was the launch of Manchester Inclusion Strategy Toolkit in September 2022. One of the main asks from education settings during the 2018-19 citywide consultation, was that a comprehensive toolkit was developed containing links to advice, guidance and resources to support robust, inclusive practice. The online, digital Inclusion Toolkit was developed by One Education's Educational Psychology Service on behalf of Manchester City Council. It is freely available via [Inclusion Toolkit | One Education](#).

Since September 2022, the Inclusion Strategy Toolkit has been updated on an annual basis with a menu of related face-to-face and online briefings and training sessions being provided to education settings and services.



2.2 The Director of Education working with both the primary strategy group and high school heads to engage with schools to focus on reducing exclusions in the city.

The Director of Education and/or the Assistant Director of Education attends all primary strategy group meetings, high school headteacher meetings, special school headteacher meetings and has engaged the school system in increasing the consistency of inclusion across schools.

2.3 'Support and Challenge' Meetings

Schools and Multi Academy Trusts with high exclusion rates are invited to 'Support and Challenge' meetings with the Director of Education. This has provided an opportunity for school leaders and governors to explain their plan to both improve educational outcomes and reduce exclusions.

All schools and Multi Academy Trust who have been invited to a Support and Challenge meetings have seen a reduction in the use of exclusions and a commitment to work with Manchester City Council to promote inclusion. Outcomes of the Support and Challenge meetings vary according to the needs of the school and Multi Academy Trust and have included the LA brokering support from other Manchester schools/trusts and also support in implementing a multi agency 'Team Around the School' approach.

2.4 Multi Agency Team Around the School

Since 2018 Manchester City Council have used the model of 'Team around the school' to respond to a number of presenting issues including schools which have been identified as having a high number of suspensions or permanent exclusions. The 'Team around the school' includes colleagues from social care, early help, attendance, education, health and neighbourhoods. The membership of the team is determined by the issues which are being presented by the school. Each 'Team around the school' has been welcomed by school or academy leaders and multi-agency actions have been agreed which target the issues experienced by the school. The 'Team around the school' approach is highly valued by our school and trust leaders and has been cited as a factor in many schools' improvement journeys.

2.5 Improving Consistency of Inclusion in Mainstream schools

Manchester, as the North-West Lead Authority for the DfE's SEND Change Programme, has committed to developing, testing, and refining reforms related to inclusion, SEND, and alternative provision. Its strategic direction aligns with the DfE SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan, building on the Manchester Inclusion Strategy.

Strategies and approaches promoting inclusion are part of the DfE 3-Tier Graduated Response model and Manchester's development includes:

Tier 1 (Targeted support in the mainstream):

Primary Enhanced Outreach Support:

- Introduction of three specialist Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTA) to deliver intensive support in mainstream settings through a partnership between Bridgelea Primary and Bowker Vale Resource Provision.
- Wider outreach consultation and training offer.
- Partnership with the Wellspring Academy to deliver 'Meeting the Generational Need' training to promote responsive inclusion.

- Primary Transition Mentors to support Year 6 children as they move into secondary settings.

Secondary Enhanced Outreach Support:

- Partnership with Remedi to deliver support from four 'At-Risk' Mentors for students at-risk of permanent exclusion.
- Wider outreach consultation and training offer
- 'SEMH in the mainstream' training programme

Tier 2 (Use of time-limited placements in Alternative Provision):

- Development of Manchester Inclusive Alternative Provision Strategy (MIAPS) to support the quality and sufficiency of all Alternative Provision accessed by Manchester children.
- Development of Manchester Guidance for schools commissioning Alternative Provision.
- Implementation of IRIS Adapt (an IT software package) to increase oversight of Alternative Provision places.
- Development of the MIAPS Quality Assurance Framework
- Time-Limited 3 R's Pilot to capture Alternative Provision use as an intervention

Tier 3 (Transitional placements in Alternative Provision):

- Development of robust reintegration protocol at MSPRU
- Reintegration Mentor to deliver targeted interventions and support reintegration to mainstream
- APST Outreach Pilot to provide multi-agency support to mainstream schools
- Wider quality assurance and school improvement offer for full-time, registered Alternative Provision

Further promotion of inclusion is based on:

- Strong partnership working between all schools (including academies) and Manchester City Council. This is fronted by the Senior Schools Quality Assurance (SSQA) team who work in conjunction with all services in the directorate.
- Our quality assurance process which includes support and challenge meetings with schools where their rate of exclusions and/or suspensions are high.
- Our Virtual school which promotes the education of children looked after and children known to social care and Youth Justice services.

2.6 Early Help practitioners working with families where pupils have experienced exclusion

While prevention of exclusion will always be the focus of Early Help, there is also support for excluded pupils through the Early Help Inclusion Team. This is a team of Early Help practitioners and one team leader working alongside,

and co-located in, our primary and secondary PRUs. The team provides whole family support. The Early Help Inclusion Team have been in place for four years with several pupils, particularly at Primary, having been supported to return to a mainstream or appropriate setting.

2.7 Improving Communication and Language skills

Manchester Schools Quality Assurance and Strategic SEND team have commissioned Speech and Language Therapy service since 2018 to deliver training for primary and secondary schools in Manchester, with the aim of developing a network of ELKLAN champions. There is good evidence from previous ELKLAN training delivered at Bridgelea School and the Youth Justice service, that improving children and young people's communication skills improves their emotional wellbeing and reduces the likelihood that poor behaviour becomes their method of communication.

Almost every school in Manchester now has at least one 'ELKLAN Champion'. Evaluations of the programme demonstrate significant impact on staff confidence and practice, children and young people's progress, behaviour and resilience. This year, Manchester City Council have also commissioned ELKLAN 0-5 training for professionals working with younger children and Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) ELKLAN to develop the skills of those working with children with SEMH needs.

2.8 SAFE Taskforce and Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforce (APST)

SAFE Taskforce

The Manchester SAFE taskforce is grant funded by the Government and provides mentoring as an early intervention offer to all secondary schools and some primary schools in the city. The overall aim of the taskforce is to prevent disengagement from education because of exclusion and poor attendance and, subsequently, reduce the risk of involvement in serious youth violence. 29 secondary schools and 93 primary schools receive support from the taskforce, with an added layer of support via Primary Transition Mentors who support Year 6 children for the duration of their transition to Year 7. 98.5% of the SAFE cohort are maintained in mainstream schools with an average of 86% attendance.

Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforce (APST)

The Manchester APST programme began in 2021 and is led by Manchester Secondary Pupil Referral Unit (MSPRU). This is also partly grant funded by the Government. The taskforce involves partners across health, justice, social care and youth work and aims to support the most vulnerable young people through a multi-disciplinary approach. The Manchester APST has supported young people attending Section 19 Alternative Provision and commissioned Alternative Provision and has developed a mainstream outreach pilot to capture the impact of the holistic support offer.

Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforce (APST) Reintegration to Mainstream

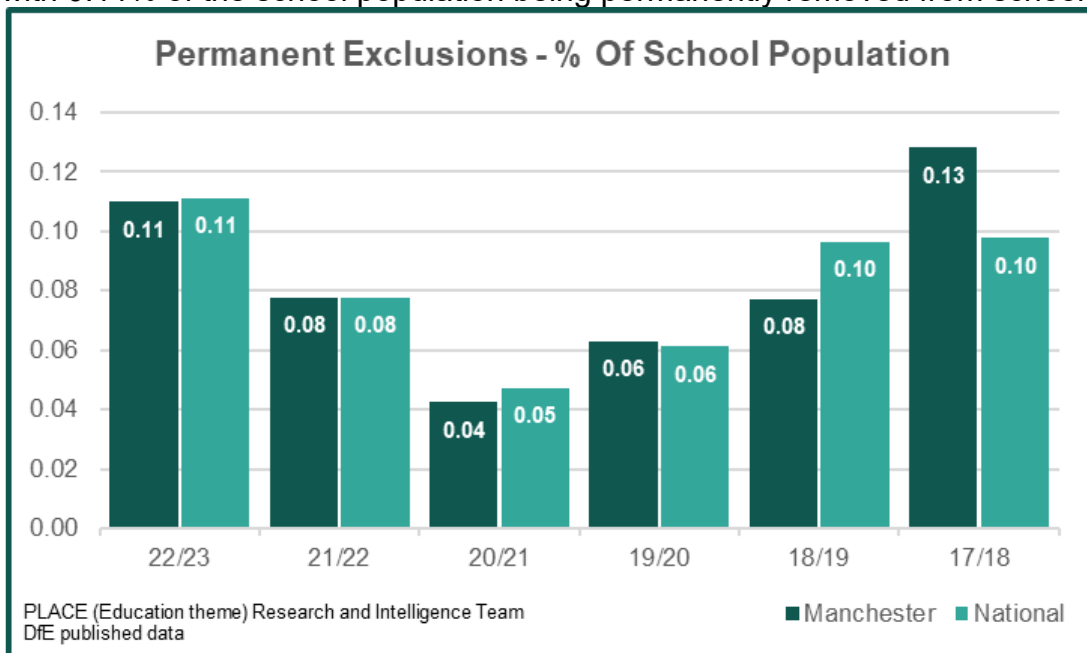
The APST focus on outreach support to mainstream schools has led to an internal restructure and enhanced reintegration support. Since the implementation of the programme, MSPRU have seen an increase in young people reintegrating to mainstream year on year. From the academic year 22/23 to 23/24, re-integration has increased by 50%, with this forecasted to increase a further 25% in the 24/25.

3.0 DATA: Summary of Permanent Exclusions 2022/2023 & 2023/2024

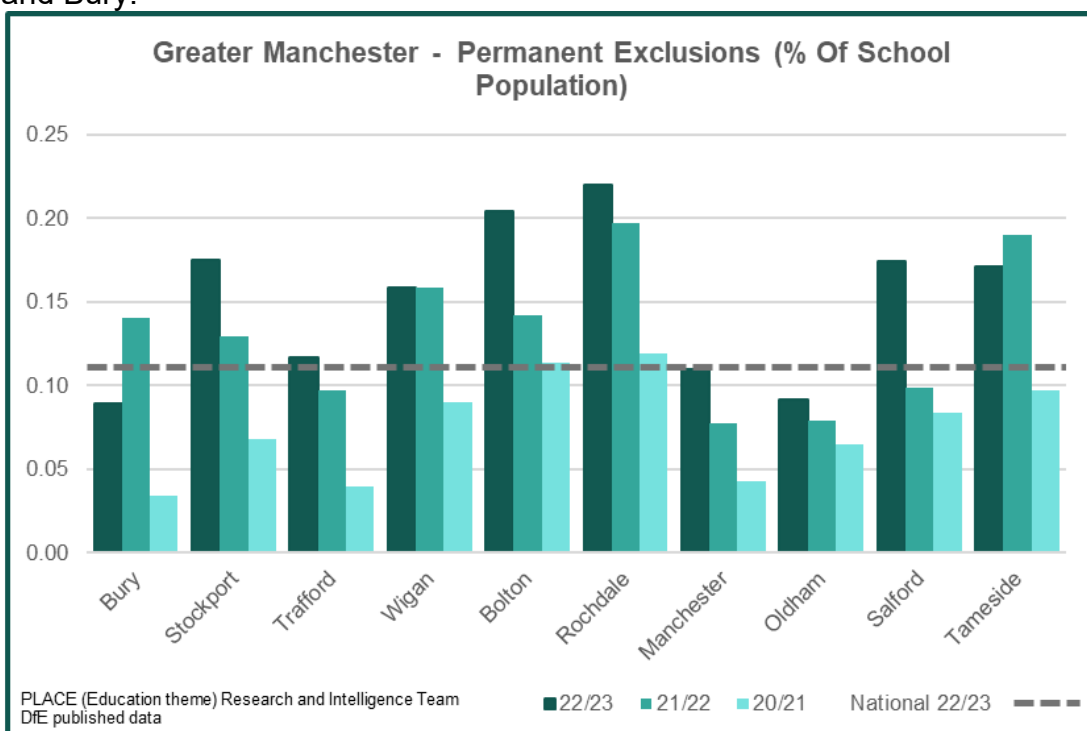
(Note: Validated data is only available at a national level for 22/23. The Manchester data for 23/24 is internally held information)

- 3.1 Permanent Exclusions have been on the rise both locally and nationally since the disrupted school months of the pandemic. Validated data for 2022/2023 shows that Manchester is in line with national rates of permanent exclusions

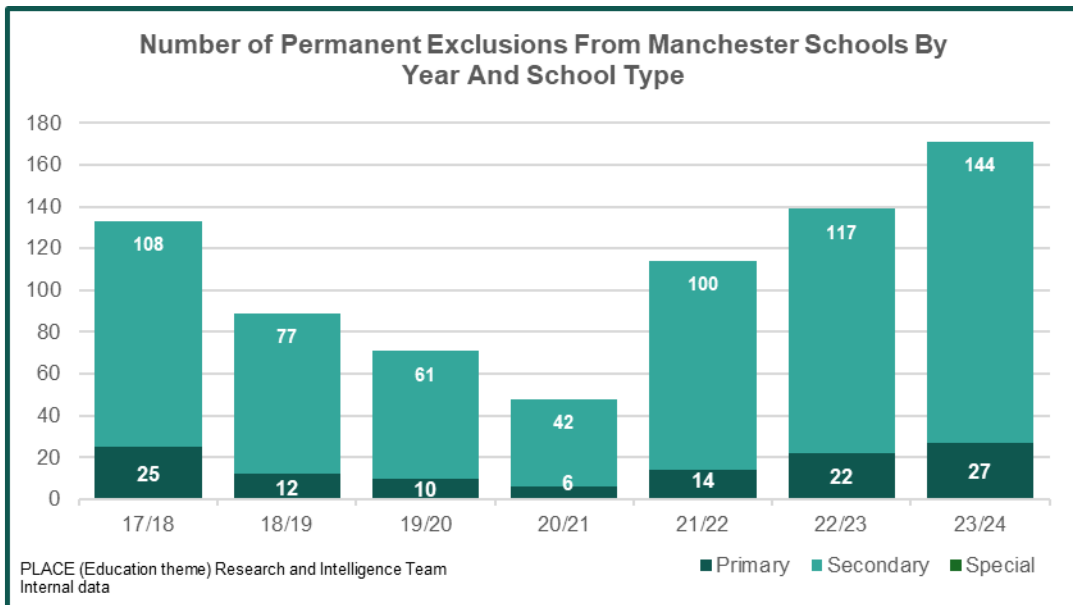
with 0.11% of the school population being permanently removed from school.



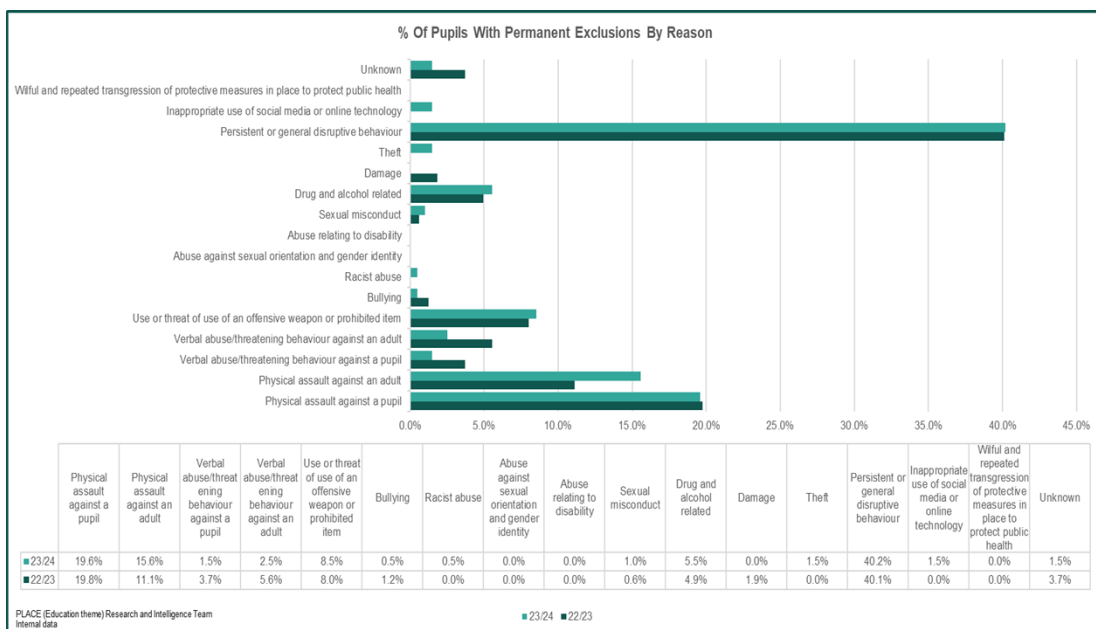
3.2 The data for 2022/2023 also indicates that the rise in permanent exclusions in Manchester has also been experienced regionally. There were only two boroughs in Greater Manchester with less exclusions in 2022/2023- Oldham and Bury.



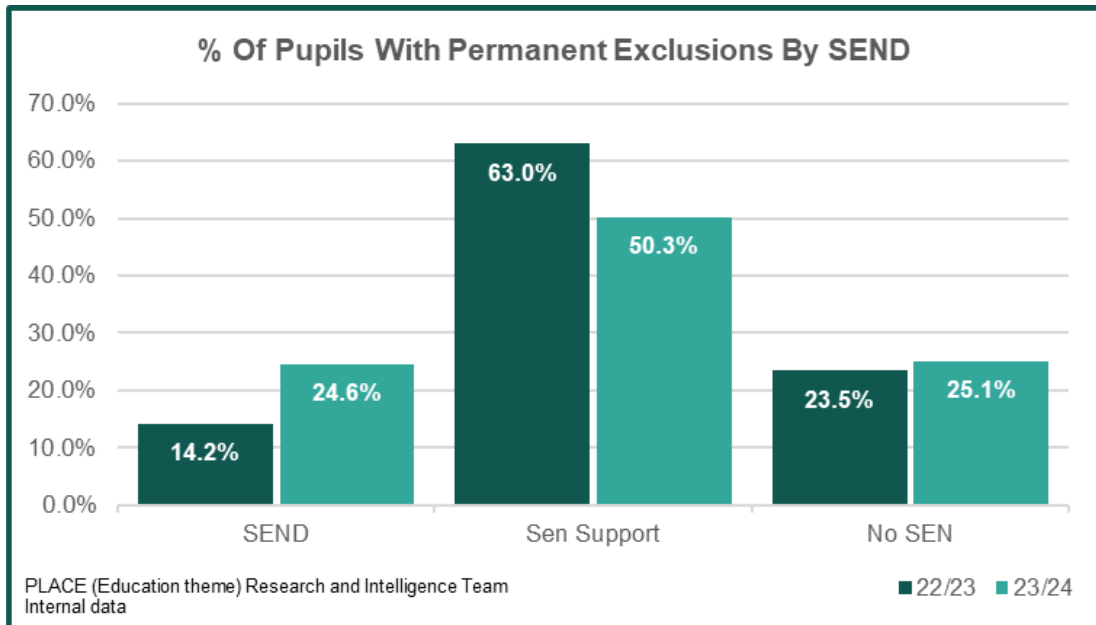
3.3 The upward trend in Permanent Exclusions continued in Manchester for the academic year 2023/2024 with 171 exclusions from Manchester schools compared to 139 the previous year- a rise of 23%.



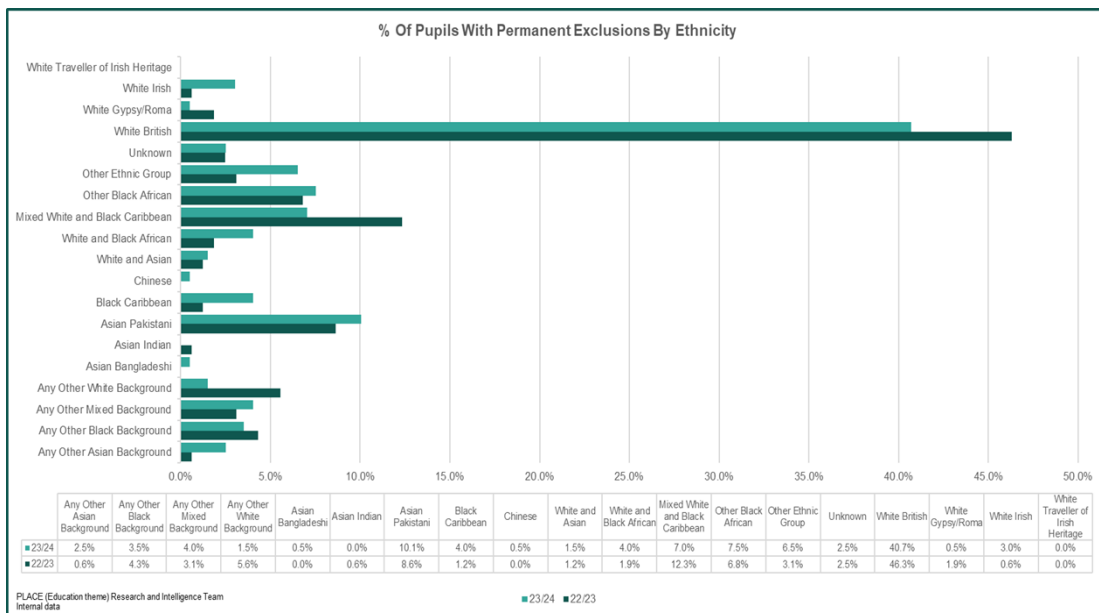
3.4 The most common reason for permanent exclusion continues to be ‘persistent disruptive behaviour’ with approximately 40% of all exclusions falling into this category. This has historically been the biggest category both locally and nationally. When combined together physical assaults on adults and children made up 35.2% of permanent exclusions in 23/24, a rise of 4.3% on the previous year. The next biggest reason for permanent exclusion in 23/24 was for ‘use (or threat of use) of an offensive weapon’ covering 8.5% of all exclusions.



3.5 Special Educational Need (SEND) continues to be prevalent in all permanent exclusions but there was a particular rise in pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) of 10.4%, in 23/24. Overall, 75% of all pupils excluded have some form of support around SEND



3.6 The disproportionality in permanent exclusions for particular ethnic groups has long been a concern both nationally and locally. The table below shows that, by numbers, white British pupils make up 40.7% of all permanent exclusions in 2023/24. If we look at rate against population size we know that white British pupils were excluded at a rate of 0.34% (90 PEX by number) whilst black Caribbean pupils were at 0.67% (8 PEX by number) and mixed white/black Caribbean pupils were at 0.63%(14 PEX by number).



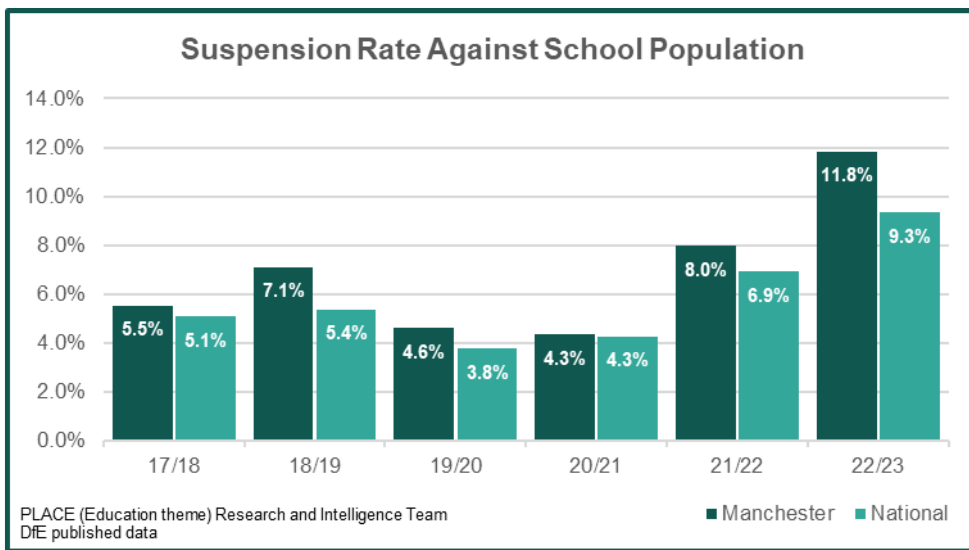
3.7 Boys are more likely to be permanently excluded than girls by a proportion of around two thirds to one third and this trend has continued at approximately the same levels throughout 22/23 with the rate higher in 23/24 at 75% to 25%. Similarly, the rate of permanent exclusions amongst those pupils in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) is high both nationally and locally. In Manchester

81% of all permanent exclusions in 23/24 were for pupils in receipt of FSM. In 22/23, this rate was 73% of all exclusions, a rise of 8%.

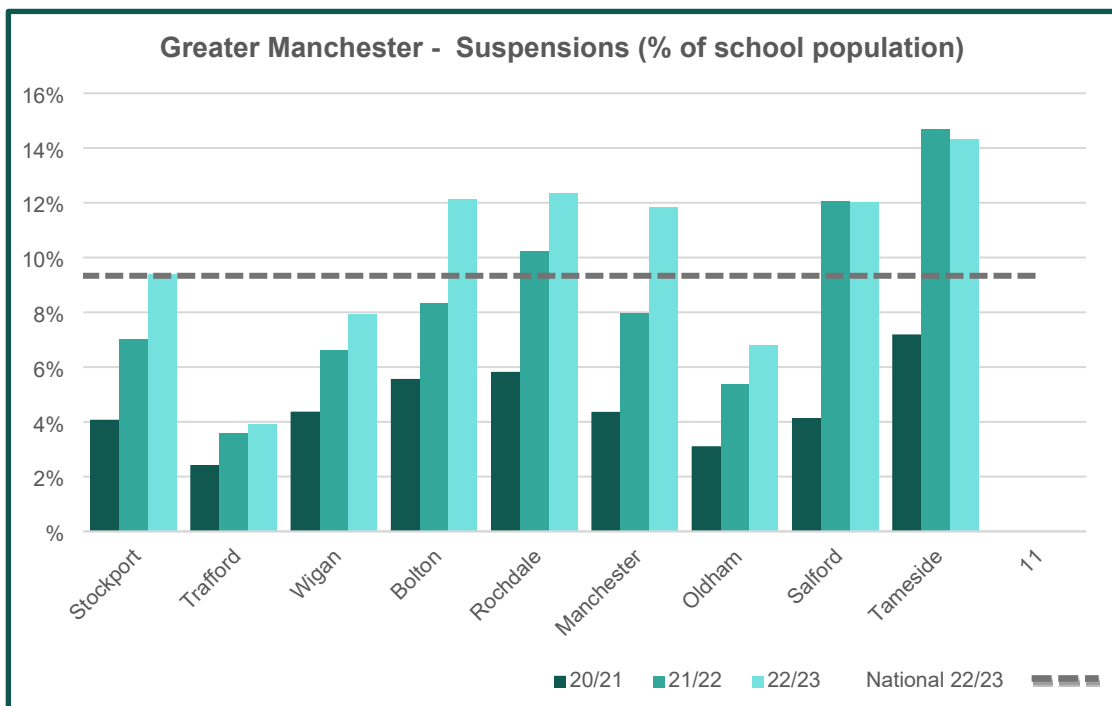
4.0 DATA: Summary of Suspensions in 2022/2023 & 2023/2024

(Note: Validated data is only available at a national level for 22/23. The Manchester data for 23/24 is internally held information)

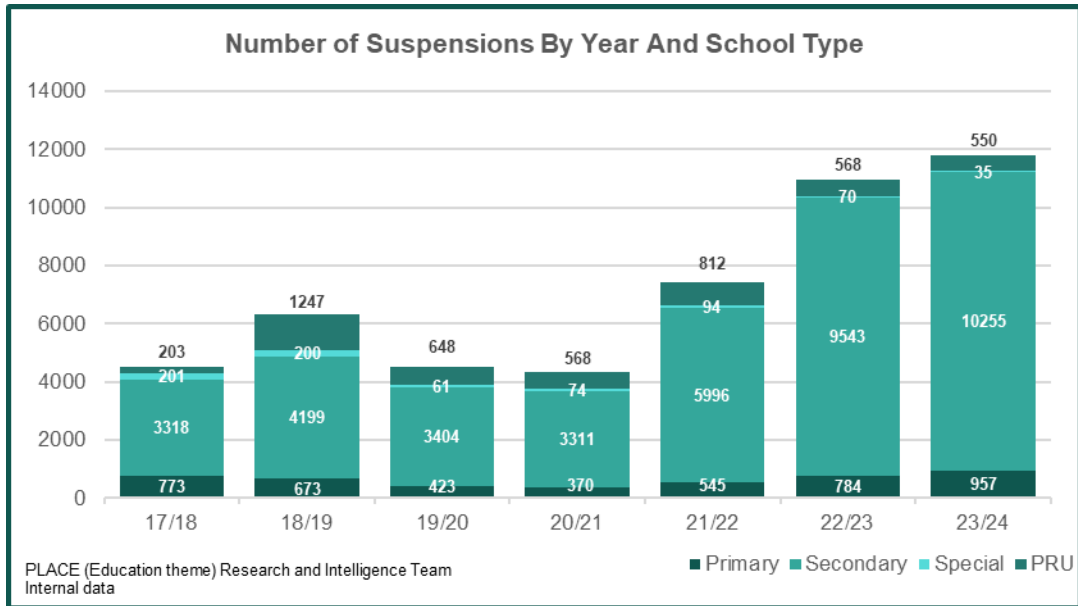
4.1 Manchester has seen a much higher use of suspension (previously fixed term exclusion) since 2020 and as a result our rate of suspension is higher than national averages by 2.5% as the table below demonstrates. We also see a lot of repeat suspensions in Manchester with approximately half (48%) of all suspensions being repeat suspensions. This means that around 1 in 20 pupils experienced at least one suspension in 2022/2023.



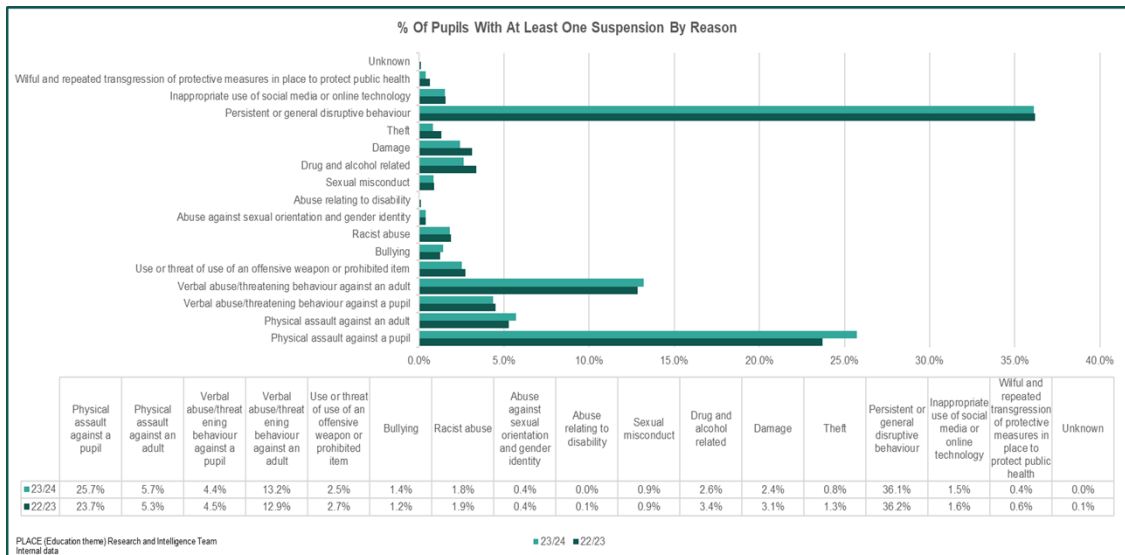
4.2 Suspensions across the region have also increased significantly, doubling in most boroughs since the pandemic. Four boroughs have had higher rates of suspension in 22/23 but the Manchester average is still above the regional average.



4.3 In 2023/2024 Manchester saw a further rise in suspensions compared to 2022/2023 with 11,797 suspensions, an increase of 7%. The vast majority of suspensions occurred in secondary school with nearly 1 in 10 pupils experiencing at least one suspension.

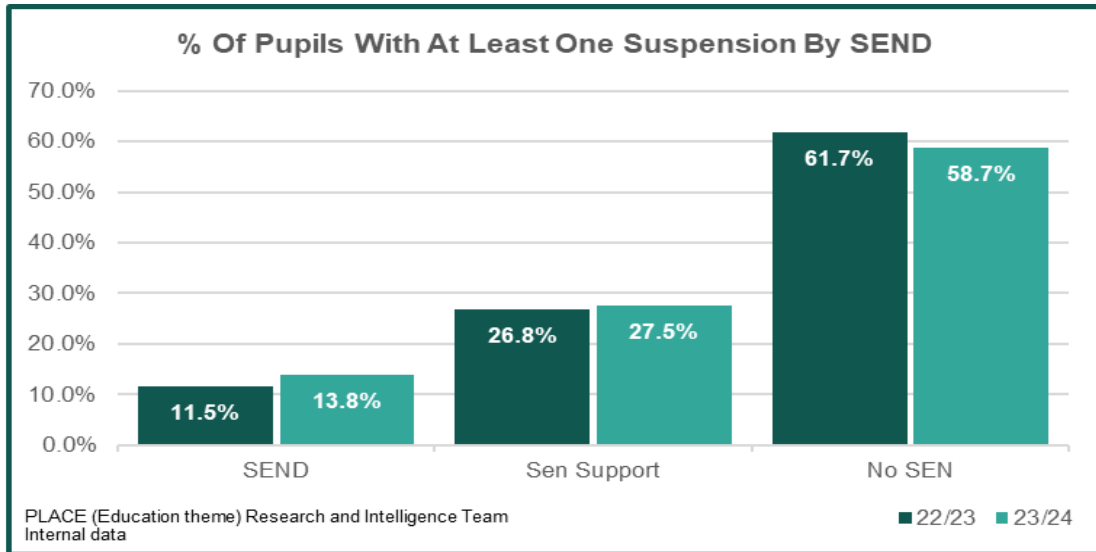


4.4 Similarly to Permanent Exclusions the majority of suspensions are for 'persistent disruptive behaviour' and the rate has remained consistent across the two years of 22/23 & 23/24 at just above 36% of all suspensions. The next most common reason in both years was a 'physical assault against a pupil' with around a quarter of all suspensions falling into this category.

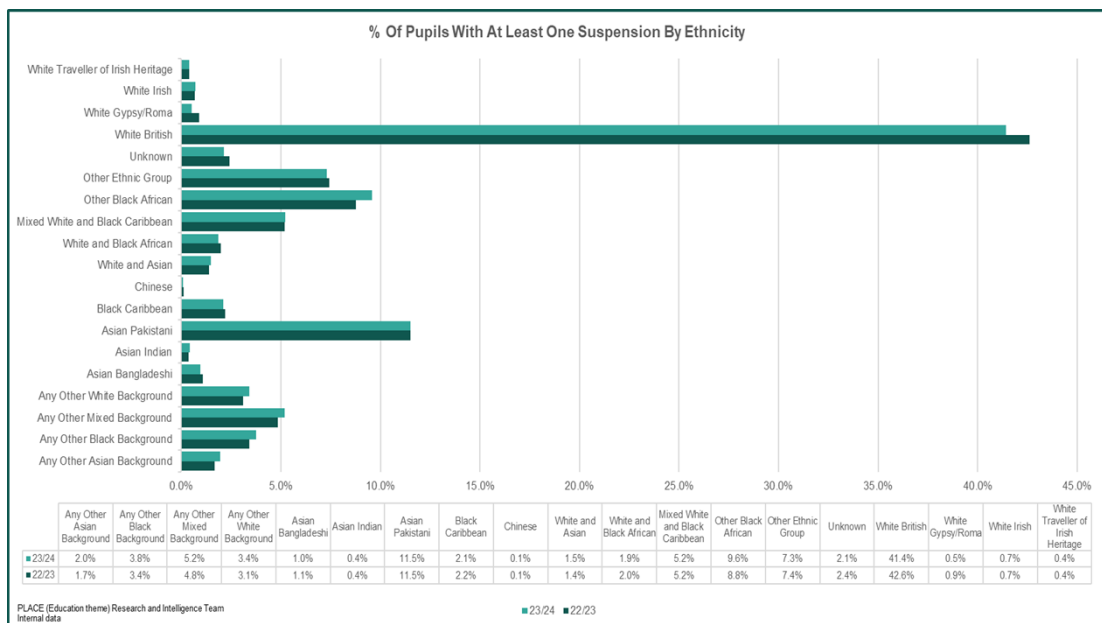


4.5 The majority of suspensions were issued for pupils *without* any SEND – 58.7% in 2023/2024. 13.8% of suspensions in 2023/2024 were experienced by pupils with an EHCP. Permanent Exclusion data and Suspension data

often follow similar patterns, but the opposite is true in this area as highlighted in paragraph 3.5.



4.6 By numbers white British pupils experienced more suspensions in 23/24 than any other group. However, similarly to permanent exclusions we can see a disproportionate amount of temporary exclusions amongst some ethnic groups. Those with a suspension rate higher than the City average (around 5% or 1 in 20 pupils) are mixed white/black Caribbean at 10.28% (or 1 in 10 pupils), black Caribbean at 7.62% (or 1 in 15 pupils) and any other mixed background at 7.25% (or 1 in 15 pupils).



4.7 The proportions of suspensions impacting boys/girls is approximately the same rates we see in permanent exclusions of two thirds to one third. There were 7,421 suspensions of boys in 2023/24.

4.8 Pupils on Free School Meals (FSM) made up 75% of all suspensions in 23/24 which was a rise of 12% on the previous year at 63%.

5.0 In **2024/2025**, early indications are that the work described in section 2, but particularly the Inclusion Model described in 2.5, are having a positive impact this academic year. Secondary school permanent exclusions have more than halved compared to the same point last year – 27 permanent exclusions compared to 60 whilst primary exclusions have stabilised and not increased further. With much of the academic year ahead of us the strategic inclusion support put in place has been well received by schools and this is reflected in a significant reduction in permanent exclusions.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 The rise in permanent exclusions and suspensions is a national trend that can be seen locally in both the academic year 2022/23 and 2023/2024. Although Manchester saw a rise in permanent exclusion in this period, the overall rate of exclusion is in line with national averages and Manchester is not an outlier.

6.2 Continuing to reduce both permanent exclusions and suspensions is a key priority for Manchester City Council through the Inclusion Strategy which emphasises improving inclusion in the broadest sense including early intervention.

6.3 In addition, the Manchester Inclusion Strategy has been supported by new approaches described in section 2 with the enhanced outreach offer for both primary and secondary schools being particularly impactful. Early indications are that this has led to a reduction in exclusions in 24/25.

7.0 Recommendations

Members are asked to consider the contents of this report, the evolution of the inclusion offer and the exclusions data for 2022/2023 and 2023/2024.

Members are asked to note the early data in 2024/2025 and the reduction in exclusions so far this academic year