



Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy

Ratified by Governors: September 2026

Review: September 2027

1. Introduction and aims

This policy sets out the policy and practice which informs the school's use of suspension and permanent exclusion. It is underpinned by the shared commitment of all members of the school community to achieve two important aims:

- To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school, and to maintain an appropriate education environment in which all can learn and succeed.
- To realise the aim of reducing the need to use suspension or permanent exclusion as a sanction, using them only as a last resort and in a way that is lawful, reasonable and fair.

The decision to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil will only be taken:

- 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.

Suspension and permanent exclusion will never be used as a first response to a behaviour incident, and will never be applied because a pupil has special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND) that the school feels unable to support, because of a pupil's academic performance, or because a pupil has failed to meet a specific condition (for example, not attending a reintegration meeting). Any exclusion imposed on those grounds would be treated as unlawful 'off-rolling' (see section 4).

2. Statutory basis

This policy has regard to, and should be read alongside:

- DfE, 'Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement' (statutory guidance, in force from 26 July 2026)
- DfE, 'Behaviour in Schools: advice for headteachers and school staff'
- Education Act 2002, section 51A (as amended)
- The School Discipline (Pupils' Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)
- Equality Act 2010
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years
- The school's Behaviour Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, and SEND Policy

3. Grounds for suspension or permanent exclusion

Suspension and permanent exclusion are extreme sanctions, only administered by the Headteacher (or a delegated deputy in their absence). Suspension or permanent exclusion may be considered for any of the following, all of which constitute infringements of the school's Behaviour Policy. This is not an exhaustive list, and there may be other circumstances in which the Headteacher judges suspension or exclusion to be an appropriate and proportionate sanction.

- Verbal abuse to staff and others
- Verbal abuse to pupils
- Physical abuse or attack on staff
- Physical abuse or attack on pupils
- Indecent behaviour
- Damage to property
- Theft
- Misuse of other substances
- Serious actual or threatened violence against another pupil or a member of staff
- Sexual abuse or sexual harassment, including child-on-child abuse
- Carrying an offensive weapon
- Arson
- Upskirting
- Sexting
- Unacceptable behaviour which has previously been reported and for which school sanctions and other interventions have not been successful in modifying the pupil's behaviour

Carrying an offensive weapon: offensive weapons are defined in the Prevention of Crime Act 1953 as 'any article made or adapted for causing injury to the person, or intended by the person having it with him for such use by him'.

The school will consider referral to the police for any of the above offences. This list is not exhaustive but indicates the severity of such offences and the fact that such behaviour seriously affects the discipline and well-being of the school.

4. Off-rolling and unlawful exclusion

Off-rolling — removing a pupil from the school roll without a formal, recorded exclusion, or encouraging a parent to remove their child, when this is primarily in the interests of the school rather than the best interests of the pupil — is unlawful. In line with the updated statutory guidance, this includes (but is not limited to):

- Sending a pupil home 'to cool off' informally, without following the formal suspension process (an unofficial or unrecorded exclusion is unlawful in all circumstances, even where a parent agrees to it)
- Placing a pupil on a part-time timetable for behavioural reasons
- Moving a pupil to alternative provision where this is not in the pupil's best interests
- Using a 'trial' managed move or 'trial' admission as a disguised exclusion (see section 10)

Any member of staff with concerns that a pupil may be being off-rolled should raise this with the Headteacher and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay.

5. Suspension procedure

Most suspensions are of short duration (usually between 1 and 3 days). The Headteacher may suspend a pupil for one or more fixed periods, not exceeding 45 school days in total in any one school year.

Following a suspension, parents are contacted immediately wherever possible. A letter will be sent by post giving details of the suspension and the date it ends. Parents have a right to make representations to the Governing Body and, where relevant, the local authority, as directed in the letter.

A return-to-school meeting will be held following the expiry of a suspension. This will involve a member of the Senior Leadership Team and other staff where appropriate.

Where a suspension is greater than five school days, or where an accumulation of suspensions exceeds five school days in a term, a Pastoral Support Plan will be drawn up. This must be agreed with the school, the pupil and the parents, and will be frequently monitored and reviewed to support the pupil's reintegration.

During a suspension where the pupil is to remain at home, parents are advised that the pupil is not permitted on school premises, and that daytime supervision during the first five school days of a suspension is the responsibility of parents/carers, in line with the requirement to make suitable full-time education available from the sixth school day.

6. Governors' review of suspensions

The Governing Body has established arrangements to review promptly:

- All permanent exclusions;
- All suspensions that would result in a pupil being excluded for more than 15 school days in a term, or that would mean the pupil missing a public examination or national curriculum test; and
- Suspensions of more than 5 but not more than 15 school days in a term, where a parent has requested that the Governing Body consider the suspension.

7. Permanent exclusion

The decision to permanently exclude a pupil is a serious one. It will only be taken:

1. As a final, formal step in a concerted process for dealing with disciplinary offences, following the use of a wide range of other strategies which have been tried without success. This is an acknowledgement that all available strategies have been exhausted and permanent exclusion is used as a last resort. This includes persistent and defiant misbehaviour, including bullying (which would include racist or homophobic bullying), or repeated possession and/or use of an illegal drug on the school premises; or
2. Where there are exceptional circumstances such that it is not appropriate to implement other strategies, and it could be appropriate to permanently exclude a pupil for a first or 'one-off' offence. These might include:
 - Serious actual or threatened violence against another pupil or a member of staff
 - Child-on-child abuse
 - Sexual abuse or sexual harassment
 - Vandalism or arson
 - Carrying or supplying an offensive weapon or illegal drugs

8. General factors the school will consider before deciding to suspend or exclude

Suspension or exclusion will not be imposed instantly unless there is an immediate threat to the safety of others in the school or the pupil concerned. Before deciding whether to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil, the Headteacher will:

- Ensure appropriate investigations have been carried out
- Consider all the evidence available to support the allegations, taking into account the Behaviour Policy, Equality Policy and Race Equality Policy
- Allow the pupil to give their version of events

- Check whether the incident may have been provoked, for example by bullying, or by racial or sexual harassment
- Consider whether the pupil has unmet SEND needs, a disability, or safeguarding needs that may have contributed to the behaviour, and whether reasonable adjustments or additional support could avoid the need to exclude
- Where the pupil is looked after, or has a social worker, consider these factors and involve the Virtual School Head and/or social worker as appropriate

If the Headteacher is satisfied that, on the balance of probabilities, the pupil did what they are alleged to have done, suspension or permanent exclusion will be considered as set out above.

9. Separation of pupils for safeguarding reasons

The school may, in limited circumstances, need to temporarily prevent a pupil from attending the school premises for safeguarding reasons — for example, following an allegation of harm by one pupil against another, where it is necessary to keep pupils apart while the matter is investigated.

This is not a disciplinary sanction and is not the same as a suspension or permanent exclusion. However, any such decision must still be lawful, reasonable, proportionate, and compliant with the school's safeguarding, equality and human rights obligations. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be involved in any such decision, parents will be informed without delay, and the Governing Body will be notified without delay. The arrangement will be kept under review and ended as soon as it is safe to do so.

10. Off-site direction and managed moves

Off-site direction: the school (and, where applicable, the academy trust) may direct a pupil to attend another education setting off-site, on a temporary basis, to improve their behaviour where it would otherwise be at risk of leading to suspension or permanent exclusion. Any off-site direction will have clear objectives and timescales, will be regularly reviewed, and parents and the local authority will be given written notice setting out the reasons, the setting, the duration and the arrangements for the pupil's education.

Managed moves: a managed move may be used, with the agreement of the parents, pupil and receiving school, as a planned, permanent transfer where this is judged to be in the pupil's best interests — for example, to secure a fresh start. In line with the updated statutory guidance:

- Managed moves must never be used as a 'trial' or informal exclusion, and 'trial managed moves' or 'trial admissions' are not lawful.
- A managed move must not be used to avoid or circumvent the formal suspension or permanent exclusion process.
- Where a temporary, rather than permanent, placement is needed to support behaviour improvement, the school will use an off-site direction (see above) rather than a managed move.
- A pupil will not be deleted from the school's admission register until the receiving school has confirmed the pupil's place and the move has taken effect.
- Relevant information will be shared with the receiving school or provider to support the pupil's successful transition, alongside appropriate safeguarding considerations.

11. Vulnerable pupils

Where suspension or permanent exclusion is being considered for a pupil with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, the SENCO will review whether the provision in the plan is being delivered and remains appropriate, and whether an emergency review of the plan is required.

Where the pupil is a looked-after child, the school will consider whether an interim review of the pupil's Personal Education Plan (PEP) is needed, and will work closely with the Virtual School Head. Pupils with a social worker will also be treated as a vulnerable group requiring particular care, in recognition of their increased vulnerability to suspension and exclusion.

12. Governing Body oversight

The Governing Body will routinely monitor and evaluate data on suspensions, permanent exclusions and off-site direction, including patterns, trends and any disproportionate impact on particular groups of pupils (for example pupils with SEND, looked-after children, and pupils from particular ethnic or socio-economic backgrounds). The Governing Body will provide effective challenge to school leaders on suspension, exclusion and pupil-movement practice as part of this oversight.

13. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if there is a change in relevant legislation or statutory guidance, and is due for its next full review no later than one year from the date below.