



Love Learning, Love Life.

Our school is part of the Embark Federation.

The shared vision for our trust is to “create schools that ‘stand out’ at the heart of their communities.” Our trust has four core beliefs; Family, Integrity, Teamwork and Success that are integral to everything we do.

The purpose is to enable everyone to be able to ‘Love Learning, Love Life.’

Our policies are underpinned by our vision, beliefs and purpose.

Exclusion and Suspension Policy



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Introduction

An exclusion is the legal power a headteacher has to remove a young person from the school site either for a fixed period (a suspension) or permanently. Only the headteacher (including an acting headteacher appointed in the headteacher's absence) may suspend or permanently exclude a young person on disciplinary grounds.

It is a statutory obligation to have an Exclusion Policy that complies with the Department for Education's Guidance on Suspension and Permanent Exclusion of July 2026. This Policy should be read in conjunction with that Guidance.

Expectations

Every headteacher is expected to provide a safe, calm and supportive environment for young people to learn effectively and to thrive. Sometimes it will be necessary to remove a young person on a fixed term or permanent basis to achieve this. A young person may be suspended for one or more fixed periods up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year, and a suspension need not be for a continuous period.

Neither suspension nor exclusion is to be used without investigation and proper consideration of possible alternatives. Permanent exclusion will be the last resort.

The Policy and attached procedures will set out how the suspension and/or exclusion process will operate. The 'Exclusion and Suspension Policy' supports the principles set out in the 'Behaviour Policy'.

Prior to an Exclusion or Suspension

The individual young person's background, circumstances and needs must be considered on a case-by-case basis. Where appropriate, the headteacher should consider the support, strategies and interventions already used or available to support the young person and reduce the likelihood of further incidents. However, the seriousness of a single incident may mean that suspension or permanent exclusion is considered, even where prior interventions have not been appropriate or sufficient.

If a young person has a disability, identified SEN or Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) needs, consideration will be given to whether and how these needs may have contributed to the behaviour.

Where there is involvement from social care or health services, consultation with the relevant agencies may form part of the evidence-gathering and decision-making process.

Suspensions are to be used as part of a strategy to improve behaviour and will be supported by reintegration meetings focused on reducing the likelihood of further incidents and supporting a successful return to school.

A young person's behaviour outside school may be taken into account, including online and physical actions. The headteacher may consider reports of behaviour outside school when determining whether a young person has brought the school into disrepute.

Prior to considering a permanent exclusion, the headteacher will consider whether other strategies and interventions may be appropriate, including pastoral support, reasonable adjustments, internal interventions, off-site direction, alternative provision or a managed move. The reasons for any intervention considered, implemented or discounted will be recorded as part of the decision-making process.

In some cases, the matter may be so serious that a single incident leads to a permanent exclusion.

Managed Moves and Off-Site Direction

Before considering a permanent exclusion, the headteacher will consider whether alternative interventions may be appropriate and in the best interests of the young person. This may include a managed move or off-site direction, where permitted by law and statutory guidance.

Managed Moves

A managed move is a voluntary and permanent move to another school as part of a planned intervention to support a young person at risk of permanent exclusion. A managed move will only be considered where it is in the best interests of the young person and with the informed agreement of the parent/carer and the receiving school.

A young person will not be suspended or permanently excluded solely because a parent/carer does not agree to a managed move. Any managed move must comply with admissions legislation and the School Admissions Code.

Off-Site Direction

Where appropriate, and in accordance with statutory guidance and relevant regulations, the school may direct a young person to attend alternative provision off-site to improve behaviour and reduce the likelihood of further incidents. Off-site direction is a preventative intervention and does not constitute a suspension or permanent exclusion.

Breaches of the Behaviour Policy

If a young person's behaviour has a detrimental effect on other young people in the class and school this is a breach of the behaviour policy. The examples below are not exhaustive, it is the impact of the behaviour that will be taken into consideration.

Such behaviour prevents staff delivering the best teaching and learning for the class as resources are diverted to manage pupil movement and control an individual at the expense of other young people's learning opportunities.

Behaviour that is disruptive, in and outside of lessons can lead to either fixed term suspensions, or in some cases a permanent exclusion.

Examples of disruptive behaviour can include:-

- verbal, online or physical bullying
- aggressive behaviour to others in school
- disruption of lessons as a result of poor behaviour
- refusal to follow instructions or directions from school staff
- use or threats of weapons
- damage to school property
- threatening behaviour

Serious Single Incidents

A single, one off, serious incident can result in a permanent exclusion.

Examples of such a serious matter are:-

- physical assault against a young person
- physical assault against an adult
- verbal abuse or threatening behaviour against a young person
- verbal abuse or threatening behaviour against an adult
- use, or threat of use, of an offensive weapon or prohibited item that has been banned by a school's behaviour policy
- bullying
- racist abuse
- abuse against sexual orientation or gender reassignment

- abuse relating to disability
- making serious false allegations about another person

The list is not exhaustive. The headteacher can take other factors into account when deciding if a single incident is so serious to require a permanent exclusion.

Removal from Site for Safeguarding Purposes

In exceptional circumstances, a school may temporarily require a young person not to attend the school site or separate a young person from another young person or group of young people, where this is necessary to safeguard and promote welfare. This is a safeguarding measure and not a suspension or permanent exclusion.

Any decision must be made in consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL and supported by a recorded safeguarding rationale and risk assessment. It must not be used as a behaviour sanction, to facilitate disciplinary investigations, to remove a young person from roll informally, or to avoid the statutory exclusion process.

Parents/carers will be informed of the reasons for the arrangement, educational provision, review arrangements and plans for reintegration. The Chair of the Local Governing Team and the Trust will be notified in line with safeguarding procedures.

The arrangement will be reviewed regularly, remain in place only for the shortest period necessary, and include plans for reintegration. The school will take reasonable steps to minimise disruption to education and, where appropriate, liaise with the local authority regarding alternative provision.

Attendance will be recorded in accordance with current legislation and DfE guidance. In safeguarding separation cases where no alternative provision is in place, code Y7 may be appropriate. Where a young person attends local authority arranged provision, code K would normally be used. Any uncertainty regarding attendance coding should be referred to the Trust Inclusion Lead.

Decision Making

The headteacher must be satisfied that the behaviour was in breach of the Behaviour Policy. This may be on the grounds of persistent disruptive behaviour or a single one-off incident (or a combination of both). When establishing the facts, the headteacher must apply the civil standard of proof — that is, on the balance of probabilities it is more likely than not that the behaviour occurred — rather than the criminal standard of ‘beyond reasonable doubt’.

A headteacher has the power to issue permanent exclusion. If the head is absent for a significant period, an acting headteacher can be authorised to make an exclusion decision.

Only the headteacher, or an acting headteacher carrying out the headteacher’s functions in their absence, can issue a suspension or permanent exclusion. This decision cannot be delegated to another member of the senior leadership team.

A decision to exclude a young person permanently will only be taken:

- in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy, and;
- where allowing the student to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the young person or others in the school.

A headteacher can cancel any sanction before it is reviewed by the Governing Board (GB).

Decisions must be:-

- Lawful
- Fair
- Reasonable
- Proportionate
- Follow the evidence gathered

- Rational

In the headteacher's absence, the decision passes to whoever is formally appointed to act as headteacher; this will not necessarily be the deputy headteacher.

Notification of the sanction

The headteacher must notify the parent/carers of the excluded young person without delay of the reasons for the sanction.

If the young person is Looked After by the Local Authority (LA) or has a social worker, then relevant people at the LA must be notified. The LA must be notified of all suspensions and exclusions.

The notification will set out what will happen next, and how and when the sanction can or will be reviewed by the GB.

Details about how work will be set, how it will be marked and returned to the young person will be explained in the notice. Work will be set and marked for the first five school days of a suspension. Where a suspension is for more than five consecutive school days, the governing board (for a maintained school) or the school (for an academy) must arrange suitable full-time education from the sixth school day; for a permanent exclusion the local authority must arrange this provision from the sixth school day. If Alternative Provision education is to be provided, details of this will be in the notice.

Reviews of the decision to suspend or exclude

The table sets out the how parent/carers can seek a review of the headteacher's decision

Sanction	Right to Review
5 school days or fewer in a term	Written representations can be made to the Governing Body (GB). The GB must consider the submissions and consider if any note is to be placed on the file. There is no time limit for such consideration.
More than 5 but not more than 15 school days suspension in a term	Representations can be made to the GB. The GB does not have to meet with the parents/carers. It may be on written submissions alone. This must be done within 50 school days of the decision that triggers the timeline. The GB must consider the representations and can put a note on the file and overturn the suspension and direct reinstatement but may only do so where the parents have made representations.
More than 15 school days suspension in a term (i.e. 16+/permanent exclusion)	The GB must convene a meeting within 15 school days to consider reinstatement. Parent/carers (and usually the young person) will be invited to attend the meeting and make representations. The GB can direct reinstatement or determine that the head teacher has acted appropriately. However, if the effect of the sanction is to miss a public exam or national curriculum test, the GB must seek to review the decision ahead of that event.
Permanent Exclusion	The GB must convene a meeting within 15 school days to consider reinstatement. Parent/carers (and usually the young person) will be invited to attend the meeting and make representations.

	The GB can direct reinstatement or determine that the head teacher has acted appropriately.
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The Review meeting (GBR)

The meeting date will be shared by the clerk. The school will be required to provide evidence of the reasons for the suspension or exclusion.

Parent/carer(s) (and the young person) have the opportunity to make representations. They can be accompanied by a friend or representative.

The GB can consider inviting parent/carer(s) and school representatives to reviews of suspensions up to 15 days. However, it is not a requirement that parent/carer(s) are invited to the GB meeting that will discuss the suspension. If the parent/carer(s) are not in attendance, then the headteacher will not be physically present for that discussion. The headteacher will be invited to submit any submissions also.

If the GB meeting is to review a suspension of 16 or more days, or to review a decision to permanently exclude a young person, then parent/carer(s) and the headteacher will be invited to a specially convened meeting. Where the young person has a social worker, the social worker must be invited; where the young person is looked after by the local authority, the Virtual School Head must be invited; and for a maintained school or young person referral unit a representative of the local authority must also be invited. These parties may attend and make representations.

The clerk will make arrangements for the meeting and notify all parties of the date, time and venue. The clerk will liaise to secure a mutually convenient time if possible.

Where parent/carer(s) request that a governing board review meeting or Independent Review Panel is held using remote access, the request will be considered in line with the current DfE statutory guidance and any applicable legal requirements. Face-to-face meetings will normally be encouraged, and remote access will not be treated as the default arrangement unless the relevant criteria are met.

All material that has been provided to the clerk will usually be shared with all parties 5 school days before the meeting.

The meeting panel will be comprised of governors who have no connection with the incidents or events. It may be necessary to use governors or trustees from other schools or trusts to demonstrate suitable independence.

The panel can uphold the headteacher's decision or direct reinstatement.

After the GBR meeting

The clerk must notify all parties of the outcome. The actual decision can be shared by a telephone call to the parent/carer(s) and the school. A letter setting out the reasons in plain English must follow. The letter must also explain what other options are available.

If the decision is to uphold a permanent exclusion, the letter must set out that parents can request an Independent Review Panel within 15 school days of the GB decision.

Independent Review Panel (IRP)

If parent/carer(s) (or the young person) request an IRP to review the GB decision it must usually be held within 15 school days. If a request is received outside the 15 days, it will not be accepted as the legal timeline is very clear.

The IRP members will have no vested interest or connection with the school. An independent panel will be convened by the Trust. The IRP members must be suitably trained.

The parent/carer(s) can request that an SEN expert attends. This person is funded by the school or trust but must be independent of them.

The IRP can uphold the decision, recommend a review or quash the decision.

Removal from Roll

A young person can be removed from the school roll following a permanent exclusion if:-

- a) the parent/carer(s) makes no application for an Independent Review Panel within 15 school days of being notified of the meeting of the GB review.
- b) the parent/carer(s) notifies the school that they will not be pursuing an IRP
- c) at the conclusion of the IRP hearing if the IRP upholds the decision to exclude
- d) following a reconsideration meeting following an IRP hearing, the GB still decides to uphold the decision to permanently exclude a young person

Removal from the school roll must be in compliance with the current version of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

Police and Criminal Investigations

A young person and his or her family have the right to contact the police if they feel that a criminal offence has been committed.

Unless specifically directed by the police not to share statements or if they are concerned that the school's processes would significantly prejudice an investigation, the exclusion process should proceed. The significant difference in procedure and legal standard of proof means that the two processes should continue in tandem.

Department for Education Exclusion Reporting Codes

The Department for Education have specific categories of behaviour that may warrant a suspension or exclusion. When reporting to the LA or the DfE a school can select up to three categories.

DfE Exclusion code:

- Abuse against sexual orientation and gender identity - LG
- Abuse relating to disability - DS
- Alcohol related - DA
- Arson - DM
- Bullying - BU
- Challenging/unacceptable behaviour - DB
- Damage - DM
- Disobedience/disrespect to staff - DB
- Drug dealing - DA
- Drug related - DA
- Graffiti/obscene drawing - DM
- Hair/dress not in school code - DB
- Inappropriate use of social media or online technology - MT
- Indecent exposure - SM
- Lewd behaviour - SM
- Non-acceptance of school code of conduct - DB
- Non-attendance at detentions - DB
- Persistent disruptive behaviour - DB
- Physical assault/violent behaviour against a young person - PP
- Physical assault/violent behaviour against an adult or staff - PA
- Racist abuse - RA
- Refusal of punishment - DB
- Selling/dealing in stolen property - TH

- Setting off fire alarm - DB
- Sexual abuse - SM
- Sexual bullying - SM
- Sexual graffiti - SM
- Sexual harassment - SM
- Sexual misconduct - SM
- Sexual/indecent assault - SM
- Smoking - DA
- Stealing from local shops on school trip - TH
- Stealing personal property - TH
- Stealing school property - TH
- Substance abuse - DA
- Theft - TH
- Truancy/absconding from lessons - DB
- Use or threat of use of an offensive weapon or prohibited item (incl. possession) - OW
- Vandalism - DM
- Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against a young person - VP
- Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against an adult or staff - VA
- Willful and repeated transgression of protective measures in place to protect public health – PH

Law and Guidance

At each stage the relevant decision makers must ensure that each decision is:-

- Lawful
- Fair
- Reasonable
- Proportionate
- Follow the evidence gathered
- Rational

The principles of Natural Justice, protections of the Human Rights Act 1998 and where relevant the Public Sector Equality Duty must be applied.

The principal legislation to which this guidance relates is:

- The Education Act 2002, as amended by the Education Act 2011
- The School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education Act 1996
- The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended by the Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, and as modified and amended by the Education (Educational Provision for Improving Behaviour) (Application to Academies and Pupil Referral Units and Minor Amendments) Regulations 2026
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

Statutory Guidance

The school and Trust will have regard to the current Department for Education statutory guidance on suspension and permanent exclusion, including pupil movement, as published on GOV.UK. The policy

should also be read alongside current guidance on behaviour in schools, Keeping Children Safe in Education, Working together to improve school attendance, SEND and equality duties.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>