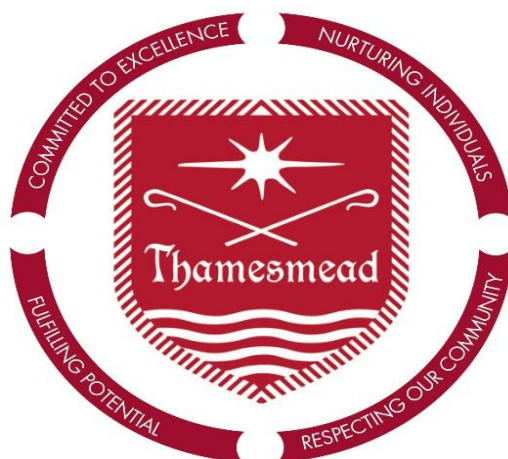


THAMESMEAD SCHOOL



Exclusions Policy

Person Responsible	P Watson
Committee	Personal Development Behaviour and Welfare
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1. Aims

Thamesmead School aims to ensure that all decisions about suspension, permanent exclusion and related pupil movement are lawful, reasonable, fair, proportionate and in the best interests of maintaining a calm, safe and supportive school community.

- The suspensions and permanent exclusions process is applied fairly and consistently.
- Governors, staff, parents/carers, and students understand the process and their rights and responsibilities.
- Students in school are safe, happy, and able to learn free from disruption.
- Students at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion are supported through early, appropriate, and well-documented intervention.
- Students do not become NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) as a result of suspension, permanent exclusion, or pupil movement.
- The school complies with statutory guidance, equality duties, safeguarding duties, and duties towards students with SEND.

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on statutory guidance from the Department for Education: Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement

It is based on the following legislation, which outline schools' powers to exclude students:

- Section 52 of the Education Act 2002, as amended by the Education Act 2011
- The School Discipline (Student Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012

In addition, the policy is based on and cross referenced where relevant with:

- Part 7, chapter 2 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, which looks at parental responsibility for excluded students.
- Section 579 of the Education Act 1996, which defines 'school day.'
- The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Students) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended by The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Students) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014
- Education (Educational Provision for Improving Behaviour) (Application to Academies and Pupil Referral Units and Minor Amendments) Regulations 2026
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- SEND Code of Practice
- Human Rights Act 1998
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

This policy complies with the Thamesmead School's funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Scope, terminology and definitions

This policy applies to all students at Thamesmead School. It should be read alongside the Behaviour for Learning Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, SEND Policy, Equality Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Uniform Policy and Attendance and Punctuality Policy.

Term	Meaning in this policy
Suspension	A temporary exclusion on disciplinary grounds. Legislation refers to this as an exclusion for a fixed period. A student may be suspended for one or more fixed periods, up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year.
Permanent exclusion	A decision that a student is no longer allowed to attend Thamesmead School unless they are reinstated.
Exclusion	A suspension or permanent exclusion on disciplinary grounds. It does not include situations where a student is asked not to attend for non-disciplinary reasons, such as safeguarding separation.
Cancelled exclusion	An exclusion that the Headteacher cancels before the governing board has met to consider reinstatement.
School day	Any day on which there is a school session. INSET days, staff training days and school holidays do not count as school days.
Parent/carers	Includes birth parents, any person with parental responsibility, and any person who has care of the child. Where practical, all those with parental responsibility should be involved.
Relevant person	The parent/carers if the student is under 18, or the excluded student if aged 18 or over.
Off-site direction	A temporary requirement for a student to attend another education setting to improve future behaviour. It is not a sanction or punishment for past misconduct.
Managed move	A voluntary, planned, and permanent transfer to another mainstream school, agreed by all relevant parties and only where it is in the student's best interests.
Safeguarding separation	A rare, temporary non-disciplinary arrangement to keep students apart for safeguarding reasons. It is not a suspension or permanent exclusion.

4. The decision to exclude

4.1 Who can suspend or permanently exclude.

Only the Headteacher, or acting Headteacher, can suspend or permanently exclude a student from Thamesmead School. The decision must be made on disciplinary grounds and in line with the principles of administrative law: the decision must be lawful, reasonable, fair, and proportionate.

The Headteacher will apply the civil standard of proof: on the balance of probabilities, it is more likely than not that a fact is true. The Headteacher will also take account of their duty of care when sending a student home following an exclusion.

Thamesmead School is aware that off-rolling is unlawful. Ofsted defines off-rolling as:

“...the practice of removing a pupil from the school roll without a formal, permanent exclusion or by encouraging a parent to remove their child from the school roll, when the removal is primarily in the interests of the school rather than in the best interests of the pupil.”

A decision to exclude a student will be taken only:

- In response to serious or persistent breaches of the school's Behaviour for Learning Policy
- If allowing the student to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others

4.2 Permanent exclusion

The decision to exclude a student **permanently** is a serious one and is only taken where the basic facts have been clearly established on the balance of probabilities. It will usually be the final step in a process for dealing with disciplinary offences following a wide range of other strategies, which have been tried without success.

Permanent exclusion is an acknowledgement by the school that it has exhausted all available strategies for dealing with the child and should normally be used as a last resort.

There will, however, be exceptional circumstances where, in the Headteacher's judgement, it is appropriate to permanently exclude a child for a first or 'one off' offence. These might include:

- Serious actual or threatened violence against another student or a member of staff
- Sexual abuse or assault
- Supplying an illegal drug
- Carrying an offensive weapon

The school will consider informing the police where such a criminal offence has taken place and will also consider informing other agencies if deemed necessary. These include Youth Offending Teams, Social Workers, etc.

4.3 Threshold for suspension and permanent exclusion

Suspension may be used where it is warranted as part of a clear and proportionate behaviour system. Permanent exclusion will only be used as a last resort.

The decision to permanently exclude will only be taken:

- in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's Behaviour for Learning Policy; and
- where allowing the student to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the student or others, including staff and students.

Where suspensions are becoming a regular occurrence for a student, the Headteacher and relevant pastoral/SEND staff will consider whether suspension alone is an effective sanction and whether further support, intervention, reasonable adjustments, or alternative provision are required.

4.4 Before making a decision.

Before deciding whether to suspend or permanently exclude a student, the Headteacher will, where it is appropriate and practicable to do so:

- consider all relevant facts and evidence, including whether the incident was provoked and whether wider context or contributing factors are relevant;
- allow the student to give their version of events and take the student's views into account in light of their age and understanding;
- support the student to express their views where needed, including through parents/carers or, where relevant, a social worker;
- consider the student's SEND, disability, medical, mental health, social care and safeguarding needs;
- consider whether reasonable adjustments have been made or whether additional adjustments are required;
- consider whether the Behaviour for Learning Policy, PSP process, pastoral intervention, restorative practice, SEND support, external agency involvement or alternative provision could appropriately address the behaviour;
- where a student has an EHC plan, contact the local authority at an early stage about behavioural concerns and consider whether an early annual review is required before making a decision to suspend or permanently exclude, unless the seriousness or immediacy of the incident makes this impracticable;
- where a student has a social worker, inform the social worker, DSL, and parents/carers as early as possible when the student is at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion;
- where a looked-after child is likely to be suspended or permanently excluded, ensure the Designated Teacher contacts the Virtual School Head as soon as possible.

4.5 Examples of behaviour that may result in suspension or permanent exclusion.

The following are examples only. The Headteacher will consider each case on its individual facts and circumstances.

- serious or persistent breach of the Behaviour for Learning Policy;
- physical assault against a student or adult;
- verbal abuse, threatening behaviour, or intimidation against a student or adult;
- bullying, including online, prejudicial, racist, homophobic, biphobia, transphobic or disability-related abuse;
- sexual abuse, sexual assault, sexual harassment or harmful sexual behaviour;
- use, threat of use, possession or supply of an offensive weapon or prohibited item;
- supplying, possessing or being under the influence of illegal drugs, or serious incidents involving legal drugs, vapes or alcohol;
- serious damage to property, theft, violence, serious disorder, or behaviour creating a serious safeguarding risk;
- persistent defiance, disruption, or refusal to follow reasonable instructions where other strategies have been tried and have not been successful.

4.6 One-off incidents

There may be exceptional circumstances where, in the Headteacher's judgement, it is appropriate to permanently exclude a student for a first or one-off offence. Examples may include serious actual or threatened violence, sexual abuse, or assault, supplying an illegal drug, carrying an offensive weapon or any other incident where allowing the student to remain in school would seriously harm education or welfare.

The school will consider informing the police and other agencies where a criminal offence or safeguarding concern may have taken place, including social care, Youth Justice services or other appropriate services.

4.7 Drug-related exclusions

In deciding whether to suspend or permanently exclude for a drug-related incident, the Headteacher will have regard to the Behaviour for Learning Policy and relevant drugs procedures. The decision will depend on the seriousness of the incident, the circumstances, and needs of those involved, the evidence available, safeguarding considerations and any previous behaviour or support.

5 When exclusion is not appropriate

Students whose behaviour at lunchtime is disruptive may be excluded from the school premises for the duration of the lunchtime period. A lunchtime exclusion is a suspension (deemed to be equivalent to one half of a school day) and should be treated as such, and parents have the same right to be given information and to make representations.

Lunchtime suspensions are not affected by the regulations on providing students with education from the sixth day of their exclusion. A lunchtime suspension for an indefinite period, like any other indefinite exclusion, would not be lawful. Arrangements should be made for students who are entitled to free school meals to receive their entitlement which may mean, for example, providing a packed lunch.

Exclusion should not be used for:

- Minor incidents such as failure to do homework or to bring the necessary equipment
- Poor academic performance
- Lateness or truancy
- Pregnancy
- Breaches of school uniform rules or rules on appearance (for example, relating to jewellery, body-piercing, hairstyles, etc), except where these are persistent and in open defiance of such rules.
- Students may be sent home, their parents first having been contacted, on recorded authorised absence to change clothes without being excluded; this should be for no longer than is necessary, otherwise it may amount to an unofficial exclusion.
- Punishing students for the behaviour of their parents, for example where parents refuse, or are unable, to attend a meeting. Guidance on dealing with difficult parents is contained in the school policy, 'Dealing with unacceptable parent behaviour'.
- Protecting victims of bullying by sending them home.

6 Strategies to avoid exclusion

The school uses a number of strategies to address any inappropriate behaviour which may lead to a student being excluded. These are identified in our Behaviour for Learning Policy which is widely publicised so that students, all school staff and parents are aware of the expected standards of behaviour.

Strategies used by the school include:

- Engaging with parents
- Use of Behaviour for Learning Policy (rewards and sanctions)
- Mediation and restorative work
- Changing classes or teaching sets

- Internal exclusion
- Temporary Alternative Provision (TAPs)
- Alternative curriculum provision at Key Stage 4, including attendance at a further education college or another form of alternative provision
- Managed move to another school, with consent of all parties involved
- Assessment of Special Educational Needs, including possible placement in a special school
- Allocation of a key worker such as a member of staff acting as a mentor, Educational Inclusion Officer or member of Inclusion Team
- Referral to a specific support service, such as the Education Welfare Service, Social Services or the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service.
- Pastoral Support Programmes (PSPs) to help students better manage their behaviour

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for deciding whether to suspend or permanently exclude a student and for ensuring that all statutory duties are met. The Headteacher will:

- make exclusion decisions lawfully, reasonably, fairly and proportionately;
- ensure the students' views are considered and that relevant evidence is gathered;
- consider SEND, equality, safeguarding, social care, and looked-after child duties;
- ensure records accurately state the reasons for suspension or permanent exclusion;
- monitor the 45-day maximum for suspensions in an academic year, including known suspensions from other schools where relevant;
- ensure work is set and marked during the first five school days where the student is attending alternative provision;
- ensure all required notifications are made without delay;
- ensure reintegration is planned, following a suspension, cancelled exclusion, off-site direction, or safeguarding separation.

7.2 Informing parents/carers

Whenever the Headteacher suspends or permanently excludes a student, parents/carers, or the student if aged 18 or over, will be notified without delay of the period and reasons. Initial notification should normally be in person or by telephone, followed by written notification without delay.

The written notification will include:

- the reason(s) for the suspension or permanent exclusion;
- the length of the suspension or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent;

- parents'/carers' right to make representations to the governing board and how the student may be involved;
- parents'/carers' right to request that a governing board meeting or IRP is held via remote access, and how to make the request;
- how representations should be made;
- where there is a legal requirement for the governing board to consider reinstatement, the right to attend, be represented at their own expense and bring a friend;
- the days on which parents/carers must ensure a student of compulsory school age is not present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification;
- arrangements made to enable the student to continue their education prior to any alternative provision or return to school;
- whether the student will be able to sit any public examination or national curriculum test occurring during the suspension or permanent exclusion;
- sources of impartial advice, including DfE guidance for parents/carers, Surrey SENDIAS or current local SENDIAS details, Coram Child Law Advice, and IPSEA.

For the first five school days of a suspension or permanent exclusion, or until the start of full-time alternative provision or the end of the suspension if earlier, parents/carers are legally required to ensure that the student is not present in a public place during school hours without good reason. Failure to comply may result in a fixed penalty notice or prosecution.

If alternative provision is being arranged, parents/carers will be given the start date, session times, the address, and reporting arrangements where this information can reasonably be obtained. If not available by the end of the afternoon session on the first day, it will be provided without delay and no later than 48 hours before the provision starts, unless provision starts before the sixth day and parents/carers consent to shorter notice.

7.3 Informing social workers, the Virtual School Head, the governing board, and local authority.

The Headteacher will, without delay:

- notify the student's social worker where the student has one of the suspension or permanent exclusion and the reasons;
- notify the Virtual School Head where the student is looked-after;
- notify Surrey Local Authority of all suspensions and permanent exclusions, regardless of length;
- notify the student's home authority where a permanently excluded student lives outside Surrey;
- notify the governing board of any permanent exclusion; any suspension or permanent exclusion that takes the student's total to more than five school days or ten lunchtimes in a

term; and any suspension or permanent exclusion that would result in the student missing a public examination or national curriculum test.

Notifications will include the reason(s), duration of suspension or confirmation that the exclusion is permanent. If a student is suspended again following an original suspension, or is subsequently permanently excluded, a new exclusion notice will be issued without delay.

7.4 Informing the governing body and local authority.

The Headteacher will immediately notify the governing body and Surrey Local Education Authority of all:

- A permanent exclusion, including when a suspension is followed by a decision to permanently exclude a student.
- Exclusions which would result in the student being suspended for more than 5 school days (or more than 10 lunchtimes) in a term
- Exclusions which would result in the student missing a public examination

For a permanent exclusion, if the student lives outside the local authority in which the school is located, the Headteacher will also immediately inform the student's 'home authority' of the exclusion and the reason(s) for it without delay.

For all other exclusions, the Headteacher will notify the Governing Body and Surrey Local Education Authority once a term.

7.5 The Governing Body

The governing board, acting through the appropriate committee or panel in line with Thamesmead's governance arrangements, is responsible for considering reinstatement where required, monitoring the lawful use of exclusion and scrutinising pupil movement.

The governing board will:

- consider reinstatement within statutory timescales;
- ensure that meetings are fair, transparent, and procedurally sound;
- invite and hear from all required parties, including parents/carers, the student where appropriate, the Headteacher, social worker where there is one, VSH where the student is looked-after, and local authority representatives where required or appropriate;
- consider whether the Headteacher's decision was lawful, reasonable, and procedurally fair, including consideration of equality, SEND, safeguarding and welfare duties;
- keep clear minutes and retain evidence;
- notify parties of its decision and reasons in writing without delay;
- ensure correct admission register processes are followed following permanent exclusion;
- routinely review suspension, permanent exclusion, attendance, off-site direction, removals from roll, safeguarding separation, and other pupil movement data.

Responsibilities regarding exclusions or the reinstatement (see section 8) of an excluded student is delegated to a panel of governors from the school.

7.6 Local Authority

Surrey Local Authority will be notified of exclusions in line with statutory requirements. For permanent exclusions, the student's home authority is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education to begin no later than the sixth school day after the first day of the permanent exclusion. Where the student has an EHC plan, the local authority may need to review the plan or reassess needs, in consultation with parents/carers, to identify a new placement.

7.7 Parents

Parents are expected to comply with the Headteacher's decision to exclude or follow the information in this policy to contest the decision. If a parent does not comply with an exclusion, for example by sending the excluded child to school, or by refusing to collect, or arrange collection of their child at lunchtime, the school must have due regard for the student's safety in deciding what action to take. An exclusion should not be enforced if doing so may put the safety of the student at risk. If efforts to resolve the issue with the parents are unsuccessful the school should consider whether to contact the Education Welfare Service and seek the advice of the Local Authority about available legal remedies.

If the school or local authority considers that parental influence could be better brought to bear in improving the behaviour of the student, a parenting contract may be offered. It may help parents take responsibility for their children and strengthen their ability to do so. This can engender a productive relationship with parents and provide individualised support. It provides an early intervention to deal with emerging behaviour problems or after an exclusion of any duration. A parenting contract is a written voluntary agreement between the school governing body or the local authority and the parent under which the parent agrees to comply with certain requirements, and the school or local authority agrees to provide, or help the parent access, the support that they need. Parenting contracts are appropriate where the parent is willing to engage with the school or local authority but is in need of (and will accept) support in order to help improve their child's behaviour. A school cannot require a parent to sign a parenting contract as a condition of his or her child being reinstated, being admitted to a school or not being excluded from it.

If the parent refuses or fails to engage with the school or local authority in attempting to improve his or her child's behaviour and the requisite standard of misbehaviour is met, the school or LA may consider applying to the magistrates' court for a parenting order to compel the parent to comply with certain requirements including attendance at parenting classes. The kind of misbehaviour that can trigger a parenting order is behaviour that has or could have resulted in exclusion.

For further information on parenting contracts or orders, please refer to the Guidance on Education-Related Parenting Contracts, Parenting Orders and Penalty Notices which also contain copies of the Regulations.

8. Considering the reinstatement of a student

A panel of governors will consider the reinstatement of an excluded student within 15 school days of receiving the notice of the exclusion if:

- The exclusion is permanent.
- It is a suspension which would bring the student's total number of school days of exclusion to more than 15 in a term.
- It would result in a student missing a public examination.

If requested to do so by parents, the panel of governors will consider the reinstatement of an excluded student within 50 school days of receiving notice of the exclusion if the student would be excluded from school for more than 5 school days, but less than 15, in a single term.

Where an exclusion would result in a student missing a public examination a panel of governors will consider the reinstatement of the student before the date of the examination. If this is not practicable, the Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare Committee will consider the exclusion and decide whether to reinstate the student, or not.

The panel of governors can either:

- Decline to reinstate the student, or
- Direct the reinstatement of the student immediately, or on a particular date.

In reaching a decision, a panel of governors will consider whether the exclusion was lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair and whether the Headteacher followed their legal duties. They will decide whether or not a fact is true '*on the balance of probabilities*', which differs from the criminal standard of '*beyond reasonable doubt*', as well as any evidence that was presented in relation to the decision to exclude.

Minutes will be taken of the meeting, and a record of evidence considered kept. The outcome will also be recorded on the student's educational record.

The panel of governors will notify, in writing, the Headteacher, parents and the LA of its decision, along with reasons for its decision, without delay.

Where an exclusion is permanent, a panel of governors' decision will also include the following:

- The fact that it is permanent.
- Notice of parents' right to ask for the decision to be reviewed by an independent review panel, and:
 - The date by which an application for an independent review must be made.
 - The name and address to whom an application for a review should be submitted.

- That any application should set out the grounds on which it is being made and that, where appropriate, reference to how the student's SEND are considered to be relevant to the exclusion.
- That, regardless of whether the excluded student has recognised SEND, parents have a right to require the Local Authority to appoint a SEND expert to attend the review.
- Details of the role of the SEND expert and that there would be no cost to parents for this appointment.
- That parents must make clear if they wish for a SEND expert to be appointed in any application for a review.
- That parents may, at their own expense, appoint someone to make written and/or oral representations to the panel, and parents may also bring a friend to the review.
- That if parents believe that the exclusion has occurred as a result of discrimination, they may make a claim under the Equality Act 2010 to the first-tier tribunal (special educational needs and disability), in the case of disability discrimination, or the county court, in the case of other forms of discrimination. A claim of discrimination made under these routes should be lodged within 6 months of the date on which the discrimination is alleged to have taken place.

9. Off-site direction and temporary alternative provision

Off-site direction is a temporary measure requiring a student to attend another education setting to improve future behaviour. It must not be used as a punishment for past misconduct, as a substitute for a formal exclusion, or as a way of moving a student off roll.

Any off-site direction or temporary alternative provision will be arranged in accordance with the governing board/academy trust's legal duties, the Education (Educational Provision for Improving Behaviour) Regulations as applied/amended by the 2026 Regulations and Arranging Alternative Provision: A Guide for Local Authorities and Schools.

9.1 When off-site direction may be considered.

Off-site direction may be considered where interventions or targeted support in school have not been successful, or are not appropriate, and a time-limited placement at another mainstream school or alternative provision is judged likely to improve behaviour and support reintegration.

Before any off-site direction, the school will be able to evidence that appropriate initial intervention has been conducted, including multi-agency support or statutory assessments where relevant.

9.2 Planning and notice

The nature of the intervention, objectives, expected duration, curriculum arrangements, safeguarding arrangements, SEND support and reintegration plan will be clearly defined in advance and kept under review. The student's views will be sought and considered.

Parents/carers, or the student if aged 18 or over, and the local authority where the student has an EHC plan, will be notified in writing as soon as practicable and no later than two school days before the relevant day. The notice will include:

- the address of the educational provision;
- the person to whom the student should report on first attending;
- the number of days for which the requirement is imposed;
- the reasons for, and objectives of, the off-site direction;
- the times of the morning and afternoon sessions, including breaks, or the start and finish times of a single session per day;
- how attendance, behaviour, welfare, safeguarding, SEND provision and curriculum access will be monitored;
- review arrangements and how parents/carers and the student can contribute views.

9.3 Reviews

The governing board/academy trust will keep the placement under review for as long as the requirement remains in effect. Parents/carers, the student, where appropriate, the provider, the school and relevant agencies will be involved. Where the student has an EHC plan, the local authority will be included.

Parents/carers, or the student if aged 18 or over, and the local authority where the student has an EHC plan, may request a review meeting in writing. A review will be held as soon as reasonably practicable unless a review has already taken place within the previous 10 weeks.

At least six days before a review meeting, the school/governing board will invite parents/carers to attend or to submit written views. The decision as to whether the off-site direction should continue, and if so for what period, will be notified in writing no later than six days after the review meeting.

Where an off-site direction was arranged before 26 July 2026 and continues after that date, the school will follow the transitional notice and review requirements in the July 2026 statutory guidance.

10. Managed moves

A managed move is used to initiate a process that leads to the permanent transfer of a student to another mainstream school. It is a planned intervention intended to prevent suspension or permanent exclusion and must be voluntary, agreed with all relevant parties and in the student's best interests.

The law does not allow trial admissions or trial managed moves. If a temporary move is needed to improve behaviour, this must be dealt with as off-site direction. If a managed move is later agreed, the student's name will be removed from the original school's admission register in line with the required process when the move becomes permanent.

Before a managed move is agreed, Thamesmead School will:

- ensure parents/carers and the student understand that the move is voluntary and permanent;
- ensure all relevant parties agree, including the receiving school and admission authority;
- share relevant information with the receiving school and, where appropriate, the local authority, including prior and current attainment, academic potential, safeguarding information, a current risk assessment, SEND information and effective support strategies;
- evidence appropriate initial intervention, including multi-agency support or statutory assessments where relevant;
- where the student has an EHC plan, contact the local authority before any move; the statutory process for amending the plan must be followed;
- where the student has a social worker, notify the social worker, DSL and, unless this would create a safeguarding risk, parents/carers as soon as a managed move is contemplated;
- where the student is looked-after, notify the relevant Virtual School Head and review/amend the Personal Education Plan if the move is agreed.

A student must not be permanently excluded because a parent/carer or student refuses to agree to a managed move. Parents/carers who feel pressured into a managed move may use the school's complaints procedure and may raise the issue with the local authority where appropriate.

Any move must comply with the School Admissions Code, the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and, where relevant, EHC plan processes. Managed moves are separate from the Fair Access Protocol.

11. Safeguarding separation

In rare circumstances, the school may need temporarily to forbid a student from attending the premises for safeguarding reasons, for example where there is an allegation of harm by one student against another and physical separation is essential. This is not an exclusion on disciplinary grounds and must not be recorded or described as a suspension or permanent exclusion.

Safeguarding separation will only be used where separation is essential and cannot practicably be achieved while allowing the student to remain on the school premises. The DSL or deputy DSL will take a lead role, working with the Headteacher and other agencies such as children's social care and the police where required.

When safeguarding separation is used, the school will:

- inform parents/carers of the reason why the student has been temporarily forbidden from attending the premises;
- notify the governing board without delay;
- consider the Human Rights Act 1998, Equality Act 2010, public law principles, Keeping Children Safe in Education and Working Together to Safeguard Children;
- complete and review any risk and needs assessment required by safeguarding guidance;
- ensure education arrangements are made or liaise with the local authority where the legal duty to arrange education applies;
- keep the arrangement under regular review and plan reintegration when safe and appropriate.

12. An independent review

If parents apply for an independent review, the Local Authority will arrange for an independent panel to review the decision of the governing body not to reinstate a permanently excluded student.

Applications for an independent review must be made within 15 school days of notice being given to the parents by school governors of its decision to not reinstate a student.

A panel of 3 or 5 members will be constituted with representatives from each of the categories below. Where a 5-member panel is constituted, 2 members will come from the school governor's category and 2 members will come from the Headteacher category.

- A lay member to chair the panel who has not worked in any school in a paid capacity, disregarding any experience as a school governor or volunteer.
- School governors who have served as a governor for at least 12 consecutive months in the last 5 years, provided they have not been teachers or Headteachers during this time.
- Headteachers or individuals who have been a Headteacher within the last 5 years.

A person may not serve as a member of a review panel if they:

- Are a director/member of the Local Authority or governing body of the excluding school.
- Are the Headteacher of the excluding school or have held this position in the last 5 years.
- Are an employee of the Local Authority, or the governing body, of the excluding school (unless they are employed as a Headteacher at another school).
- Have, or at any time have had, any connection with the Local Authority, school, governing body, parents or student, or the incident leading to the exclusion, which might reasonably be taken to raise doubts about their impartiality.
- Have not had the required training within the last 2 years.

A clerk will be appointed to the panel.

The independent panel will decide one of the following:

- Uphold the governing board's decision.

- Recommend that the governing board reconsiders reinstatement.
- Quash the governing board's decision and direct that they reconsider reinstatement (only when the decision is judged to be flawed)

The panel's decision can be decided by a majority vote. In the case of a tied decision, the chair has the casting vote.

12.1 Cancelling an exclusion

The Headteacher may cancel a suspension or permanent exclusion that has already begun or has not yet begun, but only before the governing board has met to consider whether the student should be reinstated. Where an exclusion is cancelled:

- parents/carers, the governing board, the local authority, and the student's social worker and/or Virtual School Heads (VSH) where applicable, will be notified without delay and given the reason for cancellation.
- parents/carers will be offered the opportunity to meet the Headteacher to discuss the circumstances.
- The student will be allowed back into school without delay.
- the governing board's duty to consider reinstatement ceases.
- any days spent out of school before cancellation will count towards the 45-school-day maximum for suspensions.

A permanent exclusion cannot be cancelled if the student has already been excluded for more than 45 school days in the school year or would have been by the time the cancellation takes effect.

13. Governor consideration of reinstatement

A panel of governors will consider the reinstatement of a suspended or permanently excluded student within 15 school days of receiving notice of the exclusion if:

- the exclusion is permanent;
- the suspension would bring the student's total number of school days out of school to more than 15 in a term, including suspensions totaling 15.5 days;
- the suspension or permanent exclusion would result in the student missing a public examination or national curriculum test.

Where a suspension would result in the student being out of school for more than five but not more than 15 school days in a term, the panel will consider reinstatement within 50 school days of receiving notice if parents/carers make representations. If no representations are made, the panel is not required to meet and cannot direct reinstatement.

Where the suspension or permanent exclusion would result in the student missing a public examination or national curriculum test, the panel will, so far as reasonably practicable, consider reinstatement before the date of the examination or test.

The panel may:

- decline to reinstate the student;
- direct reinstatement immediately;
- direct reinstatement on a particular date.

In reaching its decision, the panel will consider whether the Headteacher's decision was lawful, reasonable, and procedurally fair. The panel will consider the welfare and safeguarding of the student and others, the Headteacher's legal duties, equality and SEND duties, and evidence presented in relation to the decision.

Minutes will be taken and a record of evidence kept. The outcome will be recorded on the student's educational record. The panel will notify the Headteacher, parents/carers, the local authority and, where relevant, the social worker and/or VSH of its decision and reasons in writing without delay.

13.1 Remote access meetings

Parents/carers, or an excluded student aged 18 or over, may request that a governor reinstatement meeting or IRP is held via remote access. Remote meetings are not the default and will only be used where the statutory conditions are met and the meeting can be held fairly and transparently.

Where no remote meeting is requested, meetings will be held in person unless this is not reasonably practicable due to extraordinary events or unforeseen circumstances. If safeguarding concerns identified through risk assessment mean that a remote meeting would not allow full participation or would not be fair and transparent, the request may be refused and an in-person meeting arranged.

Social workers and VSHs must be allowed to join a governing board meeting or IRP remotely, regardless of the overall meeting format, where they can participate effectively and doing so will not prevent the meeting from being fair and transparent.

13.2 If permanent exclusion is upheld

Where the panel decides not to reinstate a permanently excluded student, the written decision will include:

- confirmation that the exclusion is permanent;
- notice of parents'/carers' right to ask for the decision to be reviewed by an independent review panel;
- the date by which an application for review must be made;
- where and to whom an application, and any written evidence, should be submitted;
- the right to request that the IRP is held via remote access and how to make the request;
- that the application should set out the grounds for review and, where appropriate, how the student's SEND is considered relevant.

- the right to request a SEN expert, regardless of whether the student has recognised SEN, and confirmation that there is no cost to parents/carers for this appointment.
- the right to appoint someone, at parents'/carers' own expense, to make written or oral representations and the right to bring a friend.
- information about discrimination claims under the Equality Act 2010 and the relevant six-month time limit.

14. Education during suspension or permanent exclusion

The school will take reasonable steps to minimise disruption to education. During the first five school days of a suspension or permanent exclusion, where the student is not attending alternative provision, work will be set and marked. Work may be provided through online pathways, but it must be accessible and achievable, including for students with SEND or disabilities.

For suspensions of more than five school days, the governing board must arrange suitable full-time education for students of compulsory school age to begin no later than the sixth consecutive school day of the suspension. Consecutive suspensions count cumulatively for this duty.

For permanent exclusions, the student's home local authority must arrange suitable full-time education to begin no later than the sixth school day after the first day of permanent exclusion. In the case of a looked-after child or a child with a social worker, the school and local authority should work together to arrange alternative provision from the first day following suspension or permanent exclusion wherever possible.

Where a student has an EHC plan, the local authority may need to review the plan or reassess needs. Where a looked-after child is excluded, the provision of immediate suitable education should be documented in the student's Personal Education Plan.

15. Reintegration following suspension, off-site direction, or safeguarding separation

Following a suspension, cancelled exclusion, off-site direction or safeguarding separation, the school will support the student to reintegrate successfully into school life and full-time education. Reintegration should offer a fresh start, help the student understand the effect of their behaviour, teach how to meet high expectations, foster belonging, and rebuild engagement with learning.

A reintegration meeting will normally be held before or at the beginning of the student's return to school. Where possible, this will include the student, parents/carers, a member of senior or pastoral staff, and other staff such as the Head of Year, SENDCO, DSL, key worker, or external professionals as appropriate.

A student must not be prevented from returning to mainstream lessons solely because parents/carers are unable or unwilling to attend a reintegration meeting.

Measures following return may include:

- agreement of expectations using the Behaviour for Learning Policy;
- a behaviour contract, report card or personalised targets;
- daily contact with a designated pastoral professional or trusted adult;
- restorative work and relationship repair;
- a short period in the Internal Exclusion Unit to support reintegration and reflection, where appropriate;
- temporary removal from a specific class or lesson, involving key staff, to restore expectations and repair relationships before full return;
- pastoral, SEND, mental health, safeguarding, or external agency support;
- regular review meetings with the student and parents/carers to praise progress and address concerns early.

16. School registers, attendance codes, and transfer of records

The governing board must ensure that a permanently excluded student's name is removed from the school admission register only when:

- 15 school days have passed since parents/carers were notified of the governing board's decision not to reinstate and no IRP application has been made: or
- parents/carers have stated in writing that they will not be applying for an IRP.

The deletion cannot be backdated to the date the exclusion began. Where an IRP application is made within 15 school days, the school must wait until the review is determined or abandoned and any required reconsideration has been completed before removing the student's name from the register.

When a student's name is deleted from the admission register because of permanent exclusion, the school will make the required return to the local authority, including the information required by the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

While a permanently excluded student remains on roll, the school will mark attendance using the appropriate code. Where alternative provision has been arranged and the student attends it, Code D or Code B may be used as appropriate. Where the student is not attending alternative provision, Code E will be used.

Where a student is directed off-site to another school, Code D will be used where the student is dual registered. Other attendance codes will be used in accordance with the attendance regulations and Working Together to Improve School Attendance.

Where a student leaves the school, including following permanent exclusion or in-year transfer, the DSL will ensure that the child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, separately from the main pupil file, securely and with confirmation of receipt. For in-year transfers this should be within five days. Common Transfer Files and other records will be transferred in line with statutory requirements.

17. Monitoring arrangements

Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) monitors the number of exclusions every term and reports back to the Headteacher and the Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare Committee. This will include and analysis the trends and patterns of suspensions, permanent exclusions, off-site directions, managed moves, safeguarding separation and removals from roll by protected characteristic and key vulnerability groups.

The school will liaise with the local authority to ensure suitable full-time education for excluded students.

This policy will be reviewed by the Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) every two years. At every review, the policy will be shared with the Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare Committee.

18. Links with other policies

This exclusions policy is linked to the following policies

- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equality Policy
- Uniform Policy
- Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Educational visit

Appendix 1: Parent/carer notification checklist

When issuing a suspension or permanent exclusion notice, staff preparing the letter should check that it includes all required information. This checklist is for internal use and does not replace statutory guidance or local authority/trust templates.

Requirement	Included / notes
Reason(s) for suspension or permanent exclusion.	
Period of suspension or statement that exclusion is permanent.	
Right to make representations to the governing board and how the student may be involved.	
How representations should be made.	
Right to request remote access meeting and how to request it.	
Where governor consideration is required, right to attend, be represented at own expense and bring a friend.	
Public place duty for first five school days or until AP/end of suspension if earlier.	
Work/education arrangements before return or AP starts.	
Alternative provision start date, times, address, and reporting arrangements where known.	

Exam or national curriculum test arrangements where relevant.	
Sources of impartial advice: DfE parent guidance, Surrey SENDIAS/current local SENDIAS, Coram Child Law Advice, IPSEA.	
Notification copied to social worker/VSH/local authority/governing board where required.	

Appendix 2: Off-site direction checklist

Before using off-site direction, the school should be able to evidence the following:

- Reason(s) why off-site direction is being considered and why it is intended to improve future behaviour.
- Evidence of previous in-school intervention, outreach, PSP, SEND support, restorative work, or multi-agency input, unless inappropriate in the circumstances.
- Student views gathered and considered.
- Parent/carers discussion and written notice prepared.
- Local authority included where the student has an EHC plan.
- Provider suitability, safeguarding checks, curriculum arrangements, and attendance monitoring completed.
- SEND, equality, medical and mental health needs considered, including reasonable adjustments or other therapeutic or pastoral support
- Transport and accessibility
- Curriculum continuity
- Equality impact to the off-site direction
- Risk assessment completed and shared as appropriate.
- Objectives, proposed duration, and review points agreed.
- Reintegration plan agreed and reviewed.
- Six-day invitation and six-day outcome notification timescales for review meetings built into tracking system.

Appendix 3: Summary of 2026 updates incorporated

This draft incorporates the following key updates from the July 2026 DfE statutory guidance:

- Updated terminology: suspension rather than fixed-term exclusion, while retaining the legislative meaning.
- Clarification that exclusion means disciplinary exclusion only and does not include non-disciplinary safeguarding separation.
- New section on safeguarding separation, including DSL/deputy oversight, parent notification, governor notification, and legal/safeguarding considerations.
- Expanded off-rolling and unlawful exclusion examples, including informal exclusions, behavioural part-time timetables, and inappropriate off-site AP.
- Detailed off-site direction process under the 2026 Regulations, including notice, review, and information-sharing requirements.
- Clarified managed move process, including no trial managed moves or trial admissions.
- Stronger SEND, EHC plan, social worker, looked-after and previously looked-after student safeguards.
- Updated duties to notify the local authority of all exclusions without delay, regardless of length.
- Updated parent notification to include remote access rights and sources of impartial advice.
- Remote meeting safeguards, including safeguarding risk assessment and remote access for social workers/VSHs.
- Strengthened governor scrutiny of all pupil movements, including off-site direction and safeguarding separation.