



Exclusions Policy

Monitoring and Review of this Document

The Trust shall be responsible for reviewing this document from time to time to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice.

Document Controls

Policy Document:	Exclusions Policy
Legislation/Category: Academy Schools	Legally required
Lead Staff Member:	Headteacher
Approved by:	Executive
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Version	Date	Author	Changes
1.0	July 23	Trust Central Services	BLP Format & Review
2.0	Aug 24	Trust Central Services	BLP Annual Review & Approval
3.0	Sept 25	Trust Central Services	
4.0	July 26	Trust Central Services	Updated in line with DfE Suspension and Permanent Exclusion guidance (published 26 May 2026, in force 26 July 2026).



Aims

This policy aims to: outline that the suspensions and permanent exclusions process must be applied fairly and consistently; explain how the process is to be understood by local governing body members, staff, parents/carers and pupils; and ensure pupils in school are safe and happy.

Behaviour Principles

Our approach to managing behaviour is underpinned by our Behaviour Principles: all pupils, staff and visitors have the right to feel safe; appropriate behaviour is the foundation for progress; our Schools are inclusive and free from discrimination; all policies are underpinned by our Trust values of Equality, Resilience and Integrity; sanctions are consistently applied with dignity and respect; violence, threatening behaviour or abuse towards staff will not be tolerated.

Culture and Standards

BLP Schools are built on strong, welcoming, warm and inclusive cultures. Our Headteachers know that suspension or permanent exclusion can have a negative impact on a pupil's life chances. For this reason, our Schools only use suspensions and permanent exclusions where the Headteacher deems it absolutely necessary.

Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy is based on the following statutory guidance from the Department for Education: Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement (published 26 May 2026, in force from 26 July 2026), which replaces the September 2023 version.

It is based on the following legislation, which outlines schools' powers to exclude pupils and must be followed where applicable:

- Section 52 of 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; and
- the Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended by the 2014 Amendment Regulations.
- the Education (Educational Provision for Improving Behaviour) (Application to Academies and Pupil Referral Units and Minor Amendments) Regulations 2026, which extend off-site direction powers to academies and PRUs on a statutory footing equivalent to maintained schools.

The Decision to Suspend or Permanently Exclude

Only the Headteacher, or acting Headteacher, can suspend or permanently exclude a pupil from school.



Permanent exclusion is a distinct and more serious sanction than suspension. It will only be used as an absolute last resort, once other alternatives have been shown to be unsuitable, all avenues for further support have been tried and evidenced, and the statutory conditions for permanent exclusion set out below have clearly been met. A suspension does not, of itself, indicate that permanent exclusion is the next or inevitable step; each decision is made separately on its own evidence.

We are committed to following all statutory suspension and permanent exclusion procedures to ensure that every child receives an education in a safe and caring environment.

Where a suspension or permanent exclusion is being considered, our Headteachers take the following investigatory actions:

- Accounts are collected from pupils involved, other witnesses and staff.
- Parents do not need to be notified in advance that interviews are taking place, and their consent is not required (although they may be invited to attend in the case of potentially serious breaches, where the School deems it appropriate).
- The pupil will be asked to make a statement, and/or a written record of the interview will be made and signed/dated by the pupil confirming it is true and accurate.
- CCTV footage may be viewed and pupils' desks, lockers and personal belongings may be searched during an investigation.
- Where the incident is serious/complex and cannot be fully investigated on the day, the pupil may be removed from the classroom while enquiries continue, or, where it is not appropriate for the pupil to remain on site, formally suspended pending further investigation for the minimum period required.
- Before a suspension pending investigation is imposed, the Headteacher must be satisfied a prima facie case has already been established. A notification letter with all mandatory information will be sent to parents.
- Once the investigation is complete, the Headteacher may impose a further suspension or permanent exclusion to run consecutively with the original suspension; a second notification letter will be sent.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead is consulted on whether an exclusion will place a pupil at risk.

If the pupil being considered for exclusion has SEND or any disability, the school must consider whether reasonable adjustments have been made to the provision offered, referencing the SEND Code of Practice (May 2015) and the Equality Act 2010.

A decision to consider permanent exclusion will be taken only when both of the following conditions have been met: it is in response to serious or persistent breaches of the School's behaviour policy, and allowing the pupil to remain would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others.

Our Schools will work with the cluster, AIP and Trust once a pupil is identified as at risk of permanent exclusion, to try to prevent this.

Safeguarding Separations

Separately from disciplinary suspension and permanent exclusion, a Headteacher may need to temporarily forbid a pupil from attending the school premises purely for safeguarding reasons — for



example, where an allegation of harm by one pupil against another means the two pupils must be kept apart while an investigation or referral is carried out. This is a distinct safeguarding measure introduced by the DfE's 2026 suspension and exclusion guidance and must not be treated, recorded or communicated as a disciplinary exclusion.

- A safeguarding separation is not a suspension or exclusion and is not recorded on the pupil's behaviour record as such, though it must still be recorded, with the reason, duration and review dates, and shared with the local governing body.
- It must be time-limited, kept under regular review, and lifted as soon as it is no longer necessary for safeguarding purposes. The pupil continues to be entitled to full-time education throughout.
- Parents/carers of all pupils affected will be informed of the reason for the separation as far as is consistent with safeguarding requirements, and of the expected duration.

Cancelled suspensions/exclusions

A Headteacher may cancel an exclusion that has not been reviewed by the governing body, or one that has not yet started provided the governing board has not yet met to consider reinstatement.

In the case of a cancelled suspension/exclusion: the board's duty to consider reinstatement ceases; parents, the governing body and local authority (and, if relevant, the social worker and Virtual School) are notified with reasons; parents are offered a meeting with the Headteacher; the pupil returns to school without delay; and any days out of school before cancellation count towards the 45-day maximum in a school year. A permanent exclusion cannot be cancelled if a pupil has already been suspended for more than 45 days in a school year.

Definition

For the purposes of suspensions and permanent exclusions, a school day is statutorily defined as any day on which there is a school session. INSET or staff training days do not count as a school day.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher

Informing parents/carers: when notifying parents about a suspension or permanent exclusion, the Headteacher will draw attention to relevant sources of free and impartial information, including: the reason(s) for the sanction; its length, or that it is permanent; parents'/carers' right to make representations to the local governing body and how the pupil may be involved; and, where applicable, the right to attend, be represented at, and bring a friend to a reinstatement meeting.

- Where a decision concerning suspension, permanent exclusion, off-site direction or managed move is being made, the pupil's own views will be sought and recorded as part of the process, in addition to those of their parents/carers.

If a parent/carer is asked to collect their pupil from school for a behaviour-related reason, the Headteacher must record this as a suspension and follow this policy.

Parents/carers are legally required to ensure their child is not present in a public place during school hours without good reason for the first 5 school days of a suspension or permanent exclusion (or until



any earlier alternative-provision start date); failure to do so may lead to a fixed penalty notice or prosecution.

Headteachers must ensure work is set and marked for the first five school days of a suspension, in line with duties to pupils with disabilities or SEN. The local governing body ensures full-time alternative provision is arranged from the sixth day of a suspension; the Local Authority arranges this from the sixth day of a permanent exclusion. Required notice periods for alternative provision start dates, times and reporting arrangements are set out in the statutory guidance and will be followed.

Registers must be coded correctly with 'E' for each session of absence unless the pupil is attending alternative provision.

Notification of exclusion or suspension should be in person or by telephone in the first instance. Headteachers should consider: whether parents (and the child's social worker, where relevant) understand the type/scale of the behaviour; accessible and clear communication, including for disability or EAL needs; sufficient detail in the notice letter, including all information required by the statutory guidance; whether the pupil can sit any national curriculum test or public examination during the sanction; and whether parents have been informed of their right of representation.

- Parents/carers must also be told, in writing, of their right to request that a governing board reinstatement meeting be held via remote access, and how to make that request (via the Headteacher or clerk to the panel in the first instance).
- Where full-time alternative provision is being arranged, parents/carers will be notified in writing, without delay: by the end of the afternoon session on the first day of the suspension or permanent exclusion, where possible; and in any event no later than 48 hours before the provision is due to start. The only exception is where alternative provision begins before the sixth day of the suspension/exclusion, in which case less than 48 hours' notice may be given with the parent's/carer's consent.

Informing the local governing body and local authority

The Headteacher will immediately notify the local governing body and local authority of: a permanent exclusion; a suspension of any length; suspensions resulting in more than 5 school days (or 10 lunchtimes) excluded in a term; and suspensions or permanent exclusions resulting in a pupil missing a public examination. For a permanent exclusion where the pupil lives outside the LA in which the school is located, the Headteacher will also immediately inform the pupil's 'home authority'.

The Local School Committee

Responsibilities regarding suspension and permanent exclusion are delegated to the local governing body, which convenes a pupil discipline panel as required. The panel is established in line with the requirements set out in the current DfE suspension and permanent exclusion guidance and has a duty to consider reinstatement of an excluded pupil. Within 14 days of a request, the local governing body will provide the Secretary of State with information about any exclusions in the last 12 months. For a suspension of more than 5 school days, the local governing body ensures the school arranges suitable full-time education beginning no later than the sixth day.

The Local Authority (LA)



For permanent exclusions, the LA is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education to begin no later than the sixth day of the exclusion.

Considering the Reinstatement of a Pupil

A pupil discipline panel made up of members of the local governing body will consider the reinstatement of an excluded pupil within 15 school days of receiving notice of the exclusion if: the exclusion is permanent; or it is a fixed-term suspension bringing the pupil's total suspension days to more than 15 in a term; or it would result in a pupil missing a public examination or national curriculum test.

If requested by parents/carers, the local governing body will consider reinstatement within 50 school days of receiving notice of a suspension of more than 5 but less than 15 school days in a single term.

Where a pupil has a social worker or is looked after, the social worker and/or Virtual School Headteacher must be informed when the panel is meeting and invited to attend if they wish.

Where a suspension or permanent exclusion would result in a pupil missing a public examination, the panel will consider reinstatement before the exam date; if impracticable, the Chair of Governors will decide.

The panel can decline to reinstate, or direct reinstatement immediately or on a particular date. In reaching a decision the panel will consider whether the suspension or exclusion was lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair, and whether the Headteacher followed their legal duties, deciding facts on the balance of probabilities. Minutes and a record of evidence will be kept, and the outcome recorded on the pupil's educational record.

- Where the pupil discipline panel and, on review, an independent review panel reach different conclusions on the same facts, the governing board will record the reasons for any difference to maintain consistency across future decisions, in line with the 2026 guidance's clarifications to the statutory review process.

The panel will notify, in writing, the Headteacher, parents/carers and the LA of its decision and reasons without delay. If the pupil has a social worker or is looked after, they will also be informed.

Where an exclusion is permanent, the decision will also include: the fact that it is permanent; notice of the right to ask for an independent review, the deadline, and the address for applications; that any application should set out its grounds and, where relevant, reference how the pupil's SEN are considered relevant; that parents/carers have a right to require BLP to appoint an SEN expert (at no cost) regardless of whether the pupil has recognised SEND, and details of that role; and that parents/carers may, at their own expense, appoint a representative and bring a friend to the review.

If parents/carers believe the permanent exclusion resulted from discrimination, they may claim under the Equality Act 2010 to the First-tier Tribunal (SEND), for disability discrimination, or the County Court, for other discrimination, within 6 months of the alleged discrimination.

An independent review

If parents/carers apply for an independent review, a panel will review the pupil discipline panel's decision not to reinstate a permanently excluded pupil, following the process set out in the current DfE suspension and permanent exclusion guidance.



Applications must be made to the school via charmaine@educationgp.co.uk within 15 school days of the panel's decision being notified. The independent panel will either: uphold the pupil discipline panel's decision; recommend it reconsiders reinstatement; or quash the decision and direct reconsideration (only where judged flawed). Decisions are by majority vote, with the chair having the casting vote in a tie.

School Registers

A pupil's name will be removed from the admissions register if 15 school days have passed since parents/carers were notified of the panel's decision not to reinstate and no independent review application has been made, or parents/carers have stated in writing they will not apply. Where an application has been made, the school waits until the review concludes. Code B (education off-site) or D (dual registration) is used where alternative provision is attended; code E (absent) is used where it is not.

Returning from a Fixed-Term Suspension

A reintegration meeting will be arranged for the pupil and parents/carers with a member of senior staff and other staff as appropriate. This includes pupils returning after a fixed-term suspension, and pupils reinstated following a cancelled suspension/exclusion (see Cancelled suspensions/exclusions, above) or an exclusion overturned on independent review.

Supportive measures may include: maintaining regular contact and welcoming the pupil back; daily contact with a designated pastoral professional; a report card with personalised targets and rewards; ensuring an equivalent curriculum or academic catch-up support; planned pastoral interventions; mentoring; regular reviews with the pupil and parents/carers; and information on potential external support. If parents/carers do not attend the reintegration meeting, it will still take place and notes of actions will be sent to them.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Suspensions and permanent exclusions data will be analysed regularly by School leaders and reported to the local governing body, including patterns and trends by gender, ethnicity, SEND, disadvantage (pupil premium eligibility), age and, where known, other protected characteristics.

- School leaders will check whether any pupil group is disproportionately affected by suspensions or permanent exclusions and, where a disparity is identified, will investigate the cause and agree an action plan to address it.
- The Trust Executive Team will receive a summary of Trust-wide suspension and exclusion trends, including any disproportionality findings, to inform support and challenge to School leaders.

Links with other policies

This exclusions policy is linked to the following policies: Behaviour policy; SEN policy and information report; Anti-bullying Policy.