



Thringstone Primary School

Believe and Achieve Together

Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy

Approved by the governing body: 10.09.26

Last reviewed on: 10.09.26

Next review due by: Autumn 28

1. Purpose and principles

At Thringstone Primary School, we are committed to maintaining a calm, safe and inclusive environment in which all children can learn and succeed.

Our approach to behaviour is based on high expectations, strong relationships, clear routines and appropriate support. Our school expectations are:

- **Be Ready**
- **Be Respectful**
- **Be Safe**

Behaviour is taught, modelled and reinforced throughout the school. Where behaviour falls below expectations, staff respond consistently and seek to help children understand, repair and improve their behaviour.

Suspension and permanent exclusion are important behaviour management measures, but they are not used lightly. For most children, appropriate behaviour can be secured through the strategies, support and interventions set out within the school's Behaviour Policy.

Suspension may be necessary where other approaches have not been successful or where the seriousness of an incident requires a significant response.

Permanent exclusion will only be used as a last resort.

The school does not operate a 'no exclusion' policy. There may be circumstances where suspension or permanent exclusion is necessary to maintain the safety, welfare and education of children and staff. National guidance specifically recognises that a blanket 'no exclusion' approach can itself create safeguarding risks.

Our approach will always seek to balance:

- the needs and circumstances of the individual child;
- the impact of behaviour on other children and staff;
- the school's duties in relation to SEND, disability, safeguarding and equality;
- the need to maintain high expectations of behaviour; and
- the safety and effective education of the wider school community.

This policy should be read alongside the school's Behaviour Policy, which establishes that behaviour may reflect underlying need while maintaining clear and consistent expectations for all children.

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based upon the Department for Education's statutory guidance:

Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement, July 2026.

The guidance applies to academies and replaces the previous 2024 version.

It should be read alongside relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- the **Education Act 2002** and related exclusion regulations
- the **Education and Inspections Act 2006**
- the **Education Act 1996**
- the **Equality Act 2010**
- the **Children and Families Act 2014**
- statutory guidance on **Behaviour in Schools**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education**
- the **SEND Code of Practice**
- **Working Together to Improve School Attendance**
- guidance on **Alternative Provision**

Nothing within this policy overrides the school's statutory responsibilities.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

Suspension

A **suspension** is where a child is temporarily removed from school for disciplinary reasons for one or more fixed periods.

A child may be suspended for a maximum total of **45 school days in a single academic year**.

A suspension may also apply to part of the school day. For example, a child may be suspended during lunchtime. The statutory suspension procedures still apply and a lunchtime suspension counts as half a school day when determining whether trustee consideration is required.

Permanent exclusion

A **permanent exclusion** is where a child is permanently removed from the school's roll following the statutory exclusion process.

Parent

For the purposes of this policy, **parent** includes:

- a child's birth parent;
- anyone with parental responsibility for the child; and
- anyone who has care of the child.

Where practical, the school will seek to involve all those with parental responsibility.

Governing board

The Department for Education uses the term **governing board** to include an academy trust.

For Thringstone Primary School, the relevant responsibilities rest with the **Trust Board or a committee or panel acting under authority properly delegated by the Trust Board**, in accordance with the academy's Articles of Association and Scheme of Delegation.

In this policy, this is referred to as **the Trust Board**.

Off-site direction

An **off-site direction** is a temporary placement at another education setting to improve a child's behaviour.

Managed move

A **managed move** is a voluntary and permanent transfer to another mainstream school, agreed by all relevant parties and undertaken because it is in the child's best interests.

4. Authority to suspend or permanently exclude

Only the **Headteacher** may suspend or permanently exclude a child on disciplinary grounds.

Where the Headteacher is absent, this power may be exercised by the person formally acting as Headteacher.

A suspension or permanent exclusion may relate to behaviour:

- within school;
- while travelling to or from school;
- while representing the school;
- during a school visit or activity; or
- outside school where there is a sufficient connection between the behaviour and the school or where the behaviour affects the safety, welfare or orderly running of the school.

National guidance confirms that behaviour outside school can constitute grounds for suspension or permanent exclusion.

The Headteacher's decision must be:

- lawful;
- reasonable;
- fair; and
- proportionate.

5. Suspension

Suspension is a significant disciplinary response.

It may be used in response to:

- serious behaviour;
- persistent breaches of the Behaviour Policy;
- behaviour which places another person at risk;
- serious physical aggression;
- significant disruption to education;
- discriminatory or prejudicial behaviour;
- serious bullying;
- serious damage to property;
- bringing a prohibited or dangerous item into school;
- serious verbal abuse or threatening behaviour;
- behaviour which seriously undermines the safe and orderly running of the school; or
- other behaviour which the Headteacher determines warrants suspension.

This list is illustrative rather than exhaustive.

A child does not need to have progressed through every stage of the school's usual behaviour procedures before suspension is considered.

The Behaviour Policy makes clear that staff may move directly to a higher level of response where behaviour is unsafe, aggressive or significantly disruptive.

Suspension may therefore be appropriate following a **single serious incident**.

Where suspension becomes a repeated response for an individual child, the school will review whether suspension alone is changing behaviour and whether further support or intervention is required.

6. Permanent exclusion

Permanent exclusion is a serious decision and will only be used as a **last resort**.

A permanent exclusion should only be considered:

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

A permanent exclusion may arise from a single extremely serious incident or from persistent behaviour over time.

There is no requirement for a child to have received a particular number of suspensions before permanent exclusion can be considered.

Equally, a child will not be permanently excluded merely because a previous strategy has not worked. The statutory threshold above must be met.

7. Establishing what happened

Before making a decision to suspend or permanently exclude, the Headteacher will establish the facts as fully as reasonably possible.

The Headteacher will apply the civil standard of proof:

on the balance of probabilities.

This means considering whether it is more likely than not that something occurred. The criminal standard of proof, 'beyond reasonable doubt', does not apply.

As appropriate, the Headteacher will:

- consider written and verbal accounts;
- speak with relevant children and adults;
- review available evidence;
- consider whether there are inconsistencies in the evidence;
- consider relevant safeguarding information;
- consider whether behaviour may have been provoked;
- consider the child's age and level of understanding;
- allow the child an opportunity to give their account;
- take account of any communication needs; and
- consider relevant contextual or mitigating factors.

The child should be supported to express their views.

Where a child has difficulty communicating their views, appropriate support may be provided, for example through:

- a trusted adult;
- SEND support;

- visual communication;
- a parent;
- a social worker; or
- another appropriate advocate.

The Headteacher will not automatically accept the account of an adult over that of a child. Evidence will be considered objectively.

8. Factors considered before a decision

The Headteacher will consider the circumstances of each case individually.

This may include:

- the seriousness and nature of the behaviour;
- whether anyone was injured or placed at risk;
- the effect on other children;
- the effect on staff;
- the effect on teaching and learning;
- previous incidents or patterns;
- interventions already used;
- the child's age and maturity;
- known SEND or disability;
- communication needs;
- whether reasonable adjustments were in place;
- social, emotional or mental health needs;
- safeguarding information;
- whether the child has a social worker;
- whether the child is looked after or previously looked after;
- any known trauma or adverse experiences;
- significant changes within the child's family or circumstances;
- whether another child or adult contributed to the circumstances;
- whether additional support could reasonably prevent recurrence; and
- whether alternatives to exclusion would be appropriate.

The existence of a contributing factor does not automatically prevent suspension or permanent exclusion.

There will be circumstances where suspension remains appropriate despite a child's additional needs or vulnerabilities.

9. SEND, disability and equality

Thringstone Primary School is committed to high expectations and inclusion.

Children with SEND or disabilities are not exempt from the school's expectations of **Ready, Respectful and Safe**. However, equality does not always mean treating every child in exactly the same way.

The school will comply with its duties under:

- the Equality Act 2010;
- the Children and Families Act 2014; and
- the SEND Code of Practice.

Before deciding whether suspension or permanent exclusion is appropriate, the Headteacher will consider, where relevant:

- whether the behaviour may be related to an identified or emerging need;
- whether appropriate SEND provision has been put in place;
- whether reasonable adjustments have been made;
- whether further reasonable adjustments could reduce the likelihood of recurrence;
- whether advice from the SENCO or other professionals is required;
- whether the child's support plan, SEND Support Plan or EHC plan remains appropriate; and
- whether additional assessment or intervention is necessary.

The Equality Act requires reasonable adjustments for disabled children, including in relation to disciplinary processes. A failure to make reasonable adjustments where disability manifests itself through breaches of school rules may make an exclusion discriminatory.

This does **not** mean that a child with SEND or a disability can never be suspended or permanently excluded.

Where a serious incident has occurred, suspension or permanent exclusion may still be appropriate after the child's needs and the school's legal duties have been properly considered.

10. Children who are vulnerable or known to services

Particular care will be taken where a child:

- has a social worker;
- is looked after;
- was previously looked after;
- is receiving Early Help or Family Help;
- has an EHC plan;
- is known to safeguarding services;
- is experiencing significant family difficulty; or
- is otherwise considered vulnerable.

Where a child has a social worker and is at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion, the school will seek to involve the social worker as early as possible.

Where a looked-after child is at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion, the school will involve the relevant Virtual School Head as early as possible.

Where a decision to suspend or permanently exclude is made, the child's social worker and/or Virtual School Head must be notified without delay where applicable.

The involvement of these professionals is intended to ensure that the child's circumstances, welfare and safeguarding needs are properly considered.

11. Safeguarding and separation between children

There may be circumstances where children need to be kept apart because of a safeguarding concern.

This is distinct from disciplinary suspension.

For example, following an allegation of serious child-on-child harm, the school may need to make temporary arrangements while:

- safeguarding information is considered;
- an immediate risk and needs assessment is completed;
- advice is obtained from children's social care or police;
- safety plans are established; or
- further information is gathered.

The school will follow **Keeping Children Safe in Education** and its Child Protection Policy.

Where a child is kept away from school for disciplinary reasons, this must be formally recorded as a suspension. The school will not use safeguarding arrangements as a way of avoiding statutory suspension procedures.

Equally, the school will not automatically suspend a child simply because an allegation has been made.

The safety and welfare of all children will be considered.

12. Informal and unlawful exclusions

Thringstone Primary School will not use informal or unlawful exclusions.

The school will not:

- ask a parent to take a child home to 'cool off' for disciplinary reasons without recording a suspension;
- tell a parent that their child cannot attend school without formally suspending them;
- extend a suspension informally;

- make a child's return conditional upon a parent attending a meeting;
- pressure a parent to remove their child from the school roll;
- use a reduced timetable as a behaviour sanction; or
- encourage elective home education as an alternative to suspension or permanent exclusion.

Any time a child is sent home for disciplinary reasons, this will be treated and recorded as a suspension.

National guidance specifically states that sending a child home for disciplinary reasons while expecting them to complete online work must still be recorded as a suspension.

13. Length and recording of suspensions

Each suspension will be for the shortest period considered appropriate in the circumstances.

A child may be suspended for one or more fixed periods, but no child may receive more than **45 school days of suspension during one academic year**.

The school will maintain accurate records so that cumulative days are monitored.

The Headteacher will not simply extend an existing suspension.

Where significant new evidence comes to light following a suspension, the Headteacher may make a further separate decision in accordance with statutory guidance.

14. Informing parents

Whenever the Headteacher suspends or permanently excludes a child, parents will be informed **without delay** of:

- the decision;
- the reason or reasons;
- the length of the suspension or the fact that the exclusion is permanent; and
- the arrangements for the child's education.

Parents will also receive written notification without delay. The statutory guidance expressly requires notification of the period and reasons and written information following the decision.

Written notification will include, as applicable:

- the reasons for the suspension or permanent exclusion;
- the length of the suspension;
- the parent's right to make representations to the Trust Board;
- how representations can be made;

- the circumstances in which the Trust Board must consider reinstatement;
- the parent's right to attend a relevant meeting;
- the right to be represented or accompanied;
- information about requesting a remote meeting where applicable;
- arrangements for education;
- the parent's responsibilities during the first five school days; and
- sources of independent advice.

Where possible, the school will speak with parents personally or by telephone before sending formal written notification.

15. Parents' responsibility during the first five days

Where a child of compulsory school age is suspended or permanently excluded, parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that the child is not present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five school days, or until alternative provision begins if this is earlier.

The school will notify parents of the days to which this duty applies.

Failure to comply without reasonable justification may result in a fixed penalty notice or prosecution.

16. Informing the local authority

The Headteacher will notify the local authority **without delay** of every suspension and permanent exclusion, regardless of its length.

This requirement applies to all suspensions.

The notification will include:

- the reason or reasons;
- the length of a suspension; or
- confirmation that a permanent exclusion has been made.

Where a permanently excluded child lives in a different local authority area, the child's home authority will also be informed.

17. Informing the Trust Board

The Headteacher will notify the Trust Board in accordance with statutory requirements.

The Trust Board must be informed without delay of exclusions which require statutory consideration, including:

- every permanent exclusion;
- suspensions which result in the relevant statutory threshold being met; and

- a suspension or permanent exclusion which causes a child to miss a National Curriculum test.

The Headteacher will also provide suspension and exclusion information to trustees as part of the school's wider monitoring arrangements.

18. Education during suspension

Suspension does not remove a child's entitlement to education.

For the **first five school days**, the school will take reasonable steps to ensure that appropriate work is:

- provided;
- accessible;
- achievable;
- appropriate to the child's learning needs; and
- marked or reviewed.

Reasonable adjustments will be made for children with SEND or disabilities.

Where a suspension lasts for more than five school days, suitable full-time education must be arranged from **no later than the sixth school day**.

For a suspended child, this responsibility rests with the Trust Board.

For a permanently excluded child, it rests with the child's local authority.

Where a child is looked after or has a social worker, the school will work with the local authority with the aim of arranging appropriate provision from the **first day following exclusion**, where possible.

19. Cancelling a suspension or permanent exclusion

The Headteacher may cancel a suspension or permanent exclusion, including one which has already begun, provided that the Trust Board has not yet met to consider whether the child should be reinstated.

Where an exclusion is cancelled:

- parents will be informed without delay;
- the Trust Board will be informed without delay;
- the local authority will be informed without delay;
- the social worker and/or Virtual School Head will be informed where relevant;
- the reason for cancellation will be provided;
- parents will be offered an opportunity to meet with the Headteacher;
- the child will be allowed to return to school without delay; and
- the Trust Board's duty to consider reinstatement will cease.

Days already spent out of school continue to count towards the child's maximum of 45 suspension days.

A permanent exclusion cannot be cancelled where doing so would result in the child exceeding the statutory 45-day limit.

20. Reintegration following suspension

Following a suspension, or where an exclusion has been cancelled, the school will support the child to make a successful return.

Reintegration should provide a **fresh start** while maintaining clear expectations.

A reintegration strategy will normally be discussed before, or at the beginning of, the child's return.

This may include:

- allowing the child to reflect on what happened;
- helping the child understand the impact of their behaviour;
- reinforcing **Ready, Respectful and Safe**;
- identifying triggers or underlying needs;
- agreeing strategies to prevent recurrence;
- considering further SEND or wellbeing support;
- identifying reasonable adjustments;
- repairing relationships where appropriate;
- establishing a key adult;
- increased communication with parents;
- short-term monitoring;
- a behaviour support plan; or
- involvement from external professionals.

Where possible, parents will be invited to take part in the reintegration meeting.

However, **a child's return to school will never be made conditional upon a parent attending a reintegration meeting.**

The statutory guidance states that reintegration should foster a renewed sense of belonging and that a child must not be prevented from returning because their parent is unable or unwilling to attend.

The effectiveness of the reintegration strategy will be reviewed and adapted where necessary.

21. Off-site direction

Off-site direction is different from suspension.

It is a temporary placement at another mainstream school or alternative provision intended to **improve future behaviour**.

It will not be used as a punishment for past misconduct.

Where possible, in-school interventions and targeted support will be considered first.

The 2026 statutory framework explicitly applies off-site direction requirements to academies.

Any off-site direction will:

- have clear reasons and objectives;
- be time limited;
- be based upon the child's individual circumstances;
- consider SEND, disability and health needs;
- maintain access to a broad and balanced education;
- identify arrangements for reintegration;
- include appropriate information sharing;
- include risk information where relevant; and
- be reviewed regularly.

The child's views should be sought and considered.

Parents will be notified in writing as soon as practicable and ordinarily no later than **two school days before the placement begins**, with the information required by regulations.

The Trust Board will keep the placement and reintegration arrangements under review.

Parents, and the local authority where the child has an EHC plan, may request a review meeting in accordance with the statutory regulations.

Where an off-site direction is used, the child remains on the school's roll unless and until a lawful permanent transfer takes place.

22. Managed moves

A managed move is a **permanent transfer** from Thringstone Primary School to another mainstream school.

Managed moves will:

- be voluntary;
- form part of a planned intervention;
- have the agreement of parents;

- have the agreement of the receiving school's admission authority; and
- only be pursued where the move is considered to be in the child's best interests.

Children and parents will not be pressured into agreeing to a managed move.

There is no lawful concept of a **trial managed move**.

Where a temporary placement is required to improve behaviour, the statutory off-site direction process should be used instead.

Once a managed move becomes permanent, the child will be removed from Thringstone's admission register and admitted to the new school's register in accordance with statutory requirements.

Where the child has an EHC plan, the local authority must be involved and the statutory process for amending the EHC plan followed.

23. Reduced or part-time timetables

A part-time timetable will **not be used as a behaviour management sanction** or as an alternative to suspension.

There may be exceptional circumstances where a temporary reduced timetable is agreed because it is in the child's best interests and is necessary to meet identified needs.

In such circumstances it will:

- have a clearly identified purpose;
- be agreed with parents;
- be time limited;
- include a plan for returning to full-time education;
- be regularly reviewed; and
- comply with attendance guidance.

The statutory exclusion guidance specifically states that a part-time timetable should not be used to manage behaviour and should only remain in place for the shortest necessary period.

24. Trust Board consideration of reinstatement

The Trust Board has statutory responsibilities to consider certain suspensions and all permanent exclusions.

The Trust Board must consider whether a child should be reinstated **within 15 school days** of receiving notice where:

- the child has been permanently excluded;

- suspensions would bring the child's total number of excluded school days to **more than 15 days in a term**; or
- the suspension or permanent exclusion would result in the child missing a public examination or National Curriculum test.

Where suspensions total **more than five but no more than 15 school days in a term**, and parents make representations, the Trust Board must consider those representations and decide whether the child should be reinstated within **50 school days** of receiving notice of the suspension.

If parents do not make representations in such cases, the Trust Board is not required to meet and cannot direct reinstatement.

For suspensions totalling five school days or fewer in a term, parents may make representations but the Trust Board cannot direct reinstatement where the suspension has already been served.

25. Conduct of the Trust Board meeting

Where the Trust Board is required to consider reinstatement, it will consider:

- the Headteacher's reasons for the decision;
- evidence supporting the decision;
- representations made by parents;
- the child's views;
- relevant behaviour records;
- relevant SEND information;
- whether reasonable adjustments were made;
- safeguarding considerations;
- the views of the child's social worker where applicable;
- the views of the Virtual School Head where applicable;
- relevant school policies;
- whether the decision was lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair; and
- whether reinstatement would be appropriate.

The Trust Board will apply the **balance of probabilities** when establishing facts.

Following consideration, it may:

- decline to reinstate the child; or
- direct reinstatement immediately or on a specified date.

Parents will be informed of the outcome and reasons in writing without delay.

26. Participation of children and parents

Children should be enabled and encouraged to participate in decisions affecting them in a manner appropriate to their age and understanding.

The Trust Board will take reasonable steps to enable the child to express their views.

Parents are entitled to make representations and, where a statutory meeting is held, may attend and be accompanied or represented in accordance with statutory guidance.

Reasonable adjustments will be made where necessary to enable parents or children with disabilities or communication needs to participate.

Where applicable, the child's social worker and Virtual School Head will be invited.

27. Remote meetings

A parent may request that an eligible Trust Board meeting or Independent Review Panel is held remotely.

Remote meetings are **not the default**.

Where no remote meeting is requested, the meeting should normally be held in person.

A request for remote access will be considered in accordance with statutory requirements, including whether:

- all participants can effectively participate;
- the meeting can be fair and transparent;
- appropriate technology is available;
- reasonable adjustments can be made; and
- there are any safeguarding concerns.

If technical difficulties prevent a fair and transparent remote meeting from taking place, an in-person meeting may need to be arranged.

The guidance states that, unless a parent requests remote access or exceptional circumstances apply, meetings should take place in person.

Social workers and Virtual School Heads may be allowed to participate remotely where the statutory conditions are met.

28. Independent Review Panel following permanent exclusion

Where the Trust Board decides not to reinstate a permanently excluded child, parents have the right to request an **Independent Review Panel (IRP)**.

Parents must normally submit the request within **15 school days** of being notified in writing of the Trust Board's decision.

Parents may request the appointment of a **SEN expert**, regardless of whether the child has formally identified SEND.

The Trust will provide parents with information about:

- how to request an Independent Review Panel;
- the deadline;
- where the application must be submitted;
- the role of the SEN expert;
- the right to request a remote hearing where applicable; and
- sources of independent advice.

The Independent Review Panel may:

- uphold the Trust Board's decision;
- recommend that the Trust Board reconsiders its decision; or
- quash the decision and direct the Trust Board to reconsider.

An Independent Review Panel does not itself reinstate a child.

Where reconsideration is required, the Trust Board will follow the statutory procedure.

29. Removing a permanently excluded child from the admission register

A permanently excluded child's name will not be removed from the school admission register simply because the Headteacher has made the decision to permanently exclude.

The child's name will only be removed when the statutory process permits this.

This includes where:

- 15 school days have passed since parents were notified of the Trust Board's decision not to reinstate and no application for an Independent Review Panel has been made; or
- parents confirm in writing that they will not apply for a review;

subject to the other statutory provisions governing Independent Review Panels and reconsideration.

The removal cannot be backdated to the date of the permanent exclusion.

30. Off-rolling

Thringstone Primary School will not engage in off-rolling.

Off-rolling includes practices designed to remove a child from the school's roll primarily in the interests of the school rather than the child, without following the appropriate statutory process.

The school will not:

- pressure parents into elective home education;
- pressure parents into a managed move;
- encourage parents to withdraw a child to avoid permanent exclusion;
- keep a child on roll while preventing normal attendance without a lawful basis;
- use repeated informal exclusions;
- use a part-time timetable to avoid formal suspension; or
- manipulate admission or attendance arrangements for performance or accountability reasons.

Where permanent exclusion is considered necessary, the statutory permanent exclusion procedure will be followed.

31. Monitoring suspensions and permanent exclusions

The Headteacher will monitor suspension and permanent exclusion data regularly.

This will include consideration of:

- number of suspensions;
- number of children suspended;
- repeat suspensions;
- number of days lost;
- reasons for suspension;
- permanent exclusions;
- use of off-site direction;
- managed moves;
- patterns over time;
- effectiveness of reintegration;
- support provided before and after exclusion; and
- whether school systems and interventions are having the intended impact.

Data will also be considered by groups where appropriate, including:

- SEND;
- disability;
- disadvantaged children;
- children with a social worker;
- looked-after and previously looked-after children;

- sex;
- ethnicity; and
- other relevant characteristics.

The purpose of this analysis is not to establish quotas or prevent appropriate use of suspension. It is to identify whether particular groups are disproportionately affected, understand why, and ensure that school practice remains fair, effective and lawful.

The Trust Board will provide appropriate challenge and oversight.

32. Records

The school will keep accurate records of:

- suspensions;
- permanent exclusions;
- reasons;
- dates and duration;
- evidence considered;
- statutory notifications;
- parent communication;
- educational arrangements;
- reintegration arrangements;
- Trust Board consideration;
- off-site directions; and
- managed moves.

Relevant information will be recorded through the school's established information and safeguarding systems.

Exclusion records and evidence will be retained in accordance with statutory guidance, data protection requirements and the school's retention schedule.

33. Complaints and discrimination

The statutory suspension and permanent exclusion procedures contain specific routes for parents to make representations, request reviews and challenge decisions.

Complaints about disability discrimination in relation to suspensions or permanent exclusions may be made to the **First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability)**.

Other discrimination claims may fall within the jurisdiction of the county court.

Parents will be signposted to appropriate independent advice within statutory notification letters.

The school's general complaints procedure cannot overturn a statutory suspension or permanent exclusion decision where the legislation provides a separate statutory route.

34. Staff responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to contribute to a culture in which suspension and permanent exclusion are less likely to become necessary.

Staff will:

- consistently apply the Behaviour Policy;
- explicitly teach expected behaviour;
- use the language of **Ready, Respectful and Safe**;
- maintain high expectations;
- identify emerging patterns early;
- record significant incidents accurately;
- communicate concerns to senior leaders;
- consider underlying needs appropriately;
- implement agreed reasonable adjustments;
- work with families;
- support reintegration following suspension; and
- ensure that previous behaviour does not become a barrier to a child's future success.

The Behaviour Policy establishes a graduated response while allowing immediate senior leader intervention where serious behaviour occurs.

35. Role of the Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- making all suspension and permanent exclusion decisions;
- ensuring decisions meet statutory requirements;
- ensuring evidence has been appropriately considered;
- ensuring SEND and equality duties have been considered;
- ensuring statutory notifications are completed;
- ensuring appropriate educational provision is arranged;
- monitoring cumulative suspension days;
- supporting reintegration;
- reporting patterns and trends to trustees; and
- ensuring this policy is implemented consistently.

36. Role of the Trust Board

The Trust Board is responsible for:

- fulfilling its statutory duties concerning suspensions and permanent exclusions;

- considering reinstatement when required;
- arranging appropriate panels or committees in accordance with the Trust's governance arrangements;
- ensuring suitable sixth-day provision for suspended children where required;
- overseeing off-site direction arrangements;
- arranging Independent Review Panels where required;
- monitoring patterns in suspension and permanent exclusion;
- challenging any apparent disproportionality;
- considering whether behaviour and inclusion systems are effective; and
- ensuring statutory guidance is followed.

37. Links with safeguarding

A behaviour incident may also be a safeguarding incident.

Where behaviour gives rise to a safeguarding concern, staff will follow the **Child Protection Policy** immediately.

Safeguarding action and disciplinary action are separate considerations and may take place alongside each other.

The existence of a police investigation or children's social care involvement does not automatically prevent the school from making a disciplinary decision, although the school will consider whether proceeding could prejudice an external investigation and will seek appropriate advice where required.

38. Links with other policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- **Behaviour Policy**
- **Child Protection Policy**
- **SEND Policy**
- **SEND Information Report**
- **Anti-Bullying Policy**
- **Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy**
- **Attendance Policy**
- **Equality Information and Objectives**
- **Supporting Children with Medical Conditions Policy**
- **Online Safety Policy**
- **Complaints Policy**
- **Staff Code of Conduct**

The school's Behaviour Policy specifically identifies this policy as the detailed procedure governing suspension and permanent exclusion.

39. Monitoring and review

The Headteacher will keep this policy under review and will recommend amendments where:

- statutory guidance changes;
- legislation changes;
- local authority procedures change;
- school practice identifies a need for clarification; or
- monitoring identifies an area requiring improvement.

The policy will be formally reviewed by trustees at least every **two years**, or earlier where required.

Appendix 1: Headteacher suspension decision checklist

Before making a suspension decision, the Headteacher should consider:

Incident

- ☐ What happened?
- ☐ What evidence is available?
- ☐ Has the child's account been obtained?
- ☐ Is the allegation established on the balance of probabilities?
- ☐ What impact did the behaviour have on others?

Context

- ☐ Is this a serious incident or part of a pattern?
- ☐ Are there relevant safeguarding factors?
- ☐ Are there known or emerging SEND needs?
- ☐ Are reasonable adjustments relevant?
- ☐ Does the child have a social worker?
- ☐ Is the child looked after or previously looked after?
- ☐ Are there relevant family or contextual circumstances?

Decision

- ☐ Is suspension necessary?
- ☐ Is the proposed length proportionate?
- ☐ Have alternatives been considered where appropriate?
- ☐ Would an alternative response adequately protect learning and safety?
- ☐ What additional support will be needed following the suspension?

Administration

- ☐ Parents notified without delay
- ☐ Written suspension letter issued
- ☐ Local authority notified
- ☐ Social worker notified where applicable
- ☐ Virtual School Head notified where applicable
- ☐ Trust Board notified where required
- ☐ Suspension recorded
- ☐ Cumulative suspension total checked
- ☐ Work arranged
- ☐ Sixth-day provision arranged where applicable
- ☐ Reintegration arrangements made

Appendix 2: Permanent exclusion decision checklist

A permanent exclusion should only proceed where the Headteacher is satisfied that:

- ☐ there has been a **serious breach or persistent breaches** of the Behaviour Policy;
and
- ☐ allowing the child to remain at the school would **seriously harm the education or welfare of the child or others.**

The Headteacher should also confirm:

- ☐ evidence has been assessed on the balance of probabilities
- ☐ the child's views have been considered
- ☐ relevant SEND and disability issues have been considered
- ☐ reasonable adjustments have been considered
- ☐ safeguarding information has been considered
- ☐ relevant vulnerabilities have been considered
- ☐ appropriate previous support has been considered
- ☐ alternatives have been considered where appropriate
- ☐ the decision is lawful, reasonable, fair and proportionate
- ☐ parents have been informed without delay
- ☐ the local authority has been informed without delay
- ☐ the social worker/VSH has been notified where relevant
- ☐ trustees have been notified
- ☐ education has been arranged for the first five days where appropriate
- ☐ all relevant evidence has been retained for trustee consideration