Suspension and exclusion policy

Reviewer:	Adrian Colman
Approval:	Trust Board
Date approved:	23/09/2026
Review date:	22/09/2027
Review timescale:	Annual
Keywords:	

Contents

1 Introduction 3

2 Application of policy 3

Off Rolling 3

3 Types of exclusion 4

3.1 Suspensions 4

3.2 Permanent exclusions 4

4 Roles and responsibilities 4

4.1 The principal 4

4.2 The trustees 4

4.3 Parents 4

4.4 Students 5

5 CCTV, witness evidence and student views 5

6 Reintegration strategy meetings following suspension or off-site direction 5

7 Cancelling a suspension or exclusion 6

8 Suspensions before a permanent exclusion 6

9 Alternatives to Permanent Exclusion 7

9.1 Off-site Direction 7

9.2 Alternative Provision Review Arrangements 7

9.3 Managed Moves 7

10 Independent review panels (IRPs) 7

11 Reconsideration by the trustee board 7

12 Remote meetings 8

13 Equality impact 9

14 Complaints 9

15 Monitoring arrangements 10

1 Introduction

Caroline Chisholm school's suspension and exclusion policy aims to set out the process that will be followed and the additional considerations around suspensions and exclusions that the school will apply. Good behaviour and self-discipline lead to effective learning and help prepare children and young people for life beyond the school gate.

Where the school's approaches towards behaviour management have been exhausted, then suspensions and permanent exclusions will sometimes be necessary as a last resort. This is to ensure that other students and teaching staff are protected from disruption and can learn in a safe, calm, and supportive environment.

The school will have regard to the Department for Education statutory guidance *Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from Maintained Schools, Academies and Pupil Referral Units in England, including Pupil Movement* (effective from 26 July 2026), and any subsequent revisions.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Positive Behaviour policy and the SEND policy for the school.

2 Application of policy

This policy applies to all members of the school community. We will apply suspensions and exclusions in accordance with this policy and ensure that its contents are relayed to all staff, parents, and students.

Off Rolling

The school will not engage in off-rolling. A pupil will not be removed from the school roll, encouraged to leave the school, or prevented from attending school as an alternative to following the formal suspension or permanent exclusion process.

Factors considered before suspension or exclusion:

Before making a decision to suspend or permanently exclude, the principal will consider whether a pupil has SEND, an Education Health and Care Plan, a social worker, mental health needs, or other vulnerabilities that may have contributed to the behaviour. The school will consider whether reasonable adjustments and further support could appropriately address the behaviour before exclusion is considered.

3 Types of exclusion

Suspensions and permanent exclusions are different:

3.1 Suspensions

Suspensions (previously called fixed-term exclusions) are where a student is prevented from attending the school for a fixed period. At the end of the period, they are expected to return to school following a reintegration meeting. A student may receive a maximum 45 days of suspension in an academic year before being permanently excluded.

3.2 Permanent exclusions

Permanent exclusions are where, subject to a decision of the trustee board to reinstate the student to the school, the student is prevented from attending the school again. A decision to permanently exclude will only be taken in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy; and where allowing the student to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the student or others such as staff or students in the school.

4 Roles and responsibilities

All members of the school community are expected to follow this policy. Roles, responsibilities, and expectations of each section of the school community are set out in detail below.

4.1 The principal

All decisions to suspend or permanently exclude a student will be taken by the principal after considering all the circumstances. Every decision made will be proportionate to the seriousness of the behaviour with reference to the school's behaviour policy.

4.2 The trustees

The trustee board is responsible for forming committees to review exclusions and suspensions when it is required to do so, it is requested by parents, or it is, in its view, prudent to review an individual decision. In each case, the decision of the relevant committee formed by the trustee board will be to decide whether to uphold the exclusion or suspension, or instead to reinstate the student to the school. The trust follows statutory guidance when reviewing suspensions and exclusions.

4.3 Parents

Parents will be informed without delay of any suspension or exclusion and there is an ability to make representations in regard to any suspension or exclusion decision. Details will be provided on the rights parents have with every letter that is sent from the principal.

4.4 Students

All students at the school are expected to follow the expectations regarding their behaviour to ensure that all students can learn and participate in school life effectively. Where those expectations are breached, the Positive Behaviour policy will apply.

5 CCTV, witness evidence and student views

The school uses Close Circuit Television (CCTV) within its premises. This is to provide a safe and secure environment for students, staff and visitors. If behavioural incidents are recorded on CCTV, the footage may be viewed as part of the investigation and the content considered before imposing a sanction. If CCTV is relied upon for a decision on a suspension or exclusion, then it will be shown in some format (redacted as necessary) at any trustee review meeting. Please see the School's CCTV policy and privacy notices for more information.

Where witness evidence is relied upon, whether that be from a student or a staff member, the statement(s) will be provided at any trustee review meeting. All statements will be signed and dated unless the principal has good reason to protect the anonymity of the relevant witness. Reasons may include threats of reprisals.

Before taking a decision to suspend or exclude and where appropriate, the principal will take the student's views into account, considering these in light of their age and understanding, and inform the student about how their views have been factored into any decision made. Where relevant, the student will be given support to express their view, including through advocates such as parents or, if the student has one, a social worker. The principal will also take account of any contributing factors identified after an incident of misbehaviour has occurred.

6 Reintegration strategy meetings following suspension or off-site direction

Where a student is suspended or is directed to be educated off-site, upon return to the school both the student and parents will be invited to a reintegration strategy meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to:

- Offer the student a fresh start,
- Help them understand the impact of their behaviour on themselves and others,
- Teach them to how meet the high expectations of behaviour in line with the school culture,
- Foster a renewed sense of belonging within the school community; and
  Build engagement with learning so that further suspensions are not needed. School staff will work with the student to understand what led to the behaviour and to establish if any changes can be made or further support implemented from

a pastoral or practical perspective that might reduce the chance of repeat behaviours. Previous behaviour is not seen as an obstacle to future success.

The school uses various measures to support a student's successful reintegration including:

- Daily contact with a designated pastoral professional in-school.
- Use of a report card with personalised targets leading to personalised rewards.
- Ensuring the student receives academic support upon return to catch up on any lost progress.
- Planned pastoral interventions.
- Mentoring by a trusted adult or a local mentoring charity.
- Regular reviews with the student and parents to praise progress being made and raise and address any concerns at an early stage; and
- Informing the student, parents, and staff of potential external support.

Whilst reintegration meetings are highly encouraged by the school, students will not be prevented from being admitted to the school or being put in mainstream classes because a meeting has not taken place.

7 Cancelling a suspension or exclusion

A suspension or exclusion can be cancelled by the principal as long as the trustees have not yet met to consider whether the student should be reinstated. In relation to an exclusion, it cannot be cancelled if the total time the student was suspended that academic year would be over 45 days at the point of the decision to cancel the exclusion.

Where a suspension or exclusion is cancelled, the relevant parties will be informed by the principal in accordance with the Statutory Guidance on Suspensions and Exclusions.

8 Suspensions before a permanent exclusion

In exceptional circumstances, students may receive a suspension prior to a permanent exclusion. For each decision, the principal will send the relevant letter setting out the rights of parents. A suspension cannot be converted into a permanent exclusion and so any subsequent permanent exclusion would be a fresh decision due to commence immediately after the suspension had ended. Exceptional circumstances may include where further evidence has come to light or where the incident was serious, and time is required to fully investigate the circumstances and consider alternatives.

9 Alternatives to Permanent Exclusion

9.1 Off-site Direction

Before taking any decision to permanently exclude a student, the principal will consider whether a direction to attend alternative provision and/or a managed move as part of a planned intervention would be a reasonable alternative that should be considered.

9.2 Alternative Provision Review Arrangements

In the case of directing a student off-site to alternative provision, the aim of any direction is for it to be used as a short-term measure as part of the school's behaviour management strategy to improve a student's behaviour where in-school interventions and/or outreach have been unsuccessful or are deemed inappropriate. While parental consent is not needed, discussions would take place with parents to feed in their views about the options. The requirements in relation to any off-site direction will be followed.

Alternative provision placements will be subject to regular review to evaluate attendance, behavioural improvement, safeguarding arrangements and educational outcomes.

9.3 Managed Moves

For a managed move to take place there needs to be agreement between the school, the parents, and the new school that a managed move should occur. Before a managed move is agreed to, the student should attend the new school to ensure that the new school would be suitable for them. We will share relevant information with the new school and check that they have an integration strategy. At the end of this period, the relevant parties (including the parents) will review the placement before a decision is taken about whether the move becomes permanent.

10 Independent review panels (IRPs)

The school arranges its own IRPs, and requests for an IRP where a permanent exclusion has been upheld should be made to the trust governance professional within 15 school days.

Further details on the role and powers of IRPs can be found in Part Ten of the Statutory Guidance on Exclusions.

11 Reconsideration by the trustee board

Where an IRP either recommends reconsideration or quashes the initial decision of the trustee board, the decision will be reconsidered within 10 school days. This may involve a rehearing with oral evidence given by the school and parents or may be a

reconsideration with only the trustee board members and the governance professional present.

12 Remote meetings

Any trustee meeting and/or an IRP meeting may be conducted remotely where the parents request for it to be conducted remotely provided the meeting can be held fairly and transparently remotely, with all participants having access and able to make representations.

If trustees meet to consider and decide on reinstatement of a suspended or permanently excluded student via the use of remote access, this must happen within 15 school days of receiving notice of a suspension or permanent exclusion from the headteacher.

If an IRP meeting is to be held face to face or via the use of remote access, the local authority/academy trust must take reasonable steps to identify a date for the review that all parties, and any SEN expert appointed to give advice, are able to attend or join. The review must begin within 15 school days of the day on which the parent's application for a review was made (panels have the power to adjourn a hearing if required).

Where a parent does not request a remote meeting or does not state a wish either way, trustees and arranging authorities must hold the meeting in person, unless it is not reasonably practicable to do so in person for a reason related to extraordinary events or unforeseen circumstances such as an unforeseen school closure due to floods, fire or outbreak of infectious illness/disease.

If there are technological or internet network issues, during a meeting held via the use of remote access which compromises the ability for participants to be seen or heard or prevents the meeting from being held fairly and transparently and it is not reasonably practicable to resolve, a face-to-face meeting must be arranged by the trustees or arranging authority, despite the parent's request. This should be done without delay.

In addition, where a child's social worker or the virtual school head are due to attend a meeting, they may join an in-person meeting remotely if it can be fairly accessed, the technology is available, and everyone would be able to make representations.

Trustees, arranging authorities and panel members must:

- Comply with relevant equalities legislation
- Enable access to support which the parent is entitled to, including the presence of a friend

Trustees, arranging authorities and panel members should ensure the following conditions are met for a meeting via remote access:

- Confirm with all the participants that they have access to the technology which will allow them to hear and speak throughout the meeting, and to see and be seen, such as via a live video link
- Ensure all the participants will be able to put across their point of view or fulfil their function
- Ensure the remote meeting can be held fairly and transparently

If a trustee or arranging authority is not satisfied that a meeting can be held fairly and transparently via remote access, they should consult with the parent to discuss how a face-to-face meeting can be arranged that will be convenient for them.

13 Equality impact

The school does all it can to ensure that its policies do not discriminate against students or others, either directly or indirectly, in line with any Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics. This includes race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, and sex. In considering suspensions and exclusions, the school will comply with the Equality Act 2010 and make reasonable adjustments where required for disabled pupils.

14 Complaints

If parents have any concerns or complaints over the application or implementation of this policy or feel that they are being pressured into a managed move, they should raise their concerns with a staff member or the principal in accordance with the school's complaints policy. If the concern relates to a suspension or exclusion, the statutory procedure set out in the suspensions and exclusions statutory guidance will be followed.

15 Monitoring arrangements

The trustees review data on suspensions and exclusions to ensure that the use of suspensions and exclusions is appropriate. The following are monitored by the trustees to ensure the processes and support for students are appropriate:

- The interventions put in place for students at risk of suspension and permanent exclusion
- The processes in place for determining and reviewing directions to alternative provision and that such placements are reviewed at sufficient intervals to assure that the education is achieving its objectives and that students are benefiting from it
- The full-time educational provision for students of compulsory school age from the sixth consecutive school day of a suspension, in particular checking the provision is suitable and quality-assured to ensure that:
    - Any previous placements have been evaluated, including support for any applicable SEND.
    - There is a process in place to monitor the student's attendance and behaviour at the provision
    - The correct attendance code is being used
    - The student's child protection file and any other information relevant to the student's safeguarding and welfare has been securely transferred to their new setting as early as possible
- Whether there is any variation within the year on suspensions and permanent exclusions and the characteristics of students
- The cost implications of directing children to be educated off-site in alternative provision and whether there are any patterns to the reasons or timing of moves
- Whether the school register and absence codes have been recorded correctly
- How the behaviour policy is applied and specifically its consistency
- The circumstances in which students receive repeat suspensions
- Whether Personal Education Plans for looked after children have been reviewed on a termly basis.