ACHIEVING TOGETHER

FOUR STONES GATEWAY TRUST

SUSPENSION AND PERMANENT EXCLUSIONS POLICY

DATE POLICY WAS APPROVED	08.10.2026
DATE POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED	Autumn 2027
MEMBER OF STAFF WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR REVIEW	EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER

Key Definitions

All policies incorporate the following schools or organisations within Four Stones Gateway Trust ('the Trust'):

- Clee Hill Community Academy
- Cleobury Mortimer Primary School
- Haybridge High School and Sixth Form
- Haybridge Teaching School Hub
- Haybridge SCITT
- King Charles I School
- Lacon Childe School
- SHaW (Shropshire, Herefordshire, and Wolverhampton) Maths Hub
- Stottesdon CofE Primary School
- TDMS (The De Montfort School)
- Any other schools or organisations that may join the Trust from time to time and not listed above.

The terms Academy, School, Organisation and Trust are considered interchangeable in the context of all Trust policies.

Where appropriate, in this Policy the term:

"CEO" includes the Chief Executive Officer

"CFOO" includes the Chief Financial Officer

"Trust Senior Leadership Team" includes Executive Headteachers, Headteachers, strategic operational leads and Teaching School/SCITT Directors.

"Headteacher" includes the appropriate School Headteacher.

"Trustees or Trust Board" are appointed Trustees who oversee the business of Four Stones Gateway Trust, agreeing the overarching strategic direction and ensuring robust governance.

"Local Academy Boards (LAB)" are appointed Governors at a local level. LAB Governors act as advocates for their school's Safeguarding, SEND, Standards and Stakeholder engagement.

"Chair" responsible for leading the board and ensuring its effectiveness.

"Stakeholders" are any individuals or companies who are invested in the welfare and success of the Trust and/or School and its students, including staff members, students, parents, community members, LAB or Trust members, trade unions, local business leaders etc.

Key Definitions specific to this Policy

"Internal suspension" - the temporary removal of a student from normal lessons whilst remaining within the school (an internal provision).

"Suspension" - the temporary removal of a student from the school for behaviour management purposes. A student may be suspended for one or more fixed periods, up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year. A suspension does not have to be for a continuous period.

"Exclusion" - the permanent removal of a student from the school and taken off the school roll. This can also be referred to as a **"permanent exclusion."**

"Parent/carer" - any person who has parental responsibility and any person who cares for the student.

1. Statement of Intent

The Four Stones Gateway Trust (the Trust) adopts a whole-school approach to behaviour. Suspensions and exclusions are used only within a wider framework of behaviour support, pastoral intervention, safeguarding and inclusion.

This Policy deals with the policy and practice which informs the use of exclusion by the schools in the Trust. It is underpinned by the shared commitment of all members of the school community to achieve two important aims:

1. To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the Trust's community, and to maintain an appropriate educational environment in which all students can learn and succeed.
2. To reduce the need to use exclusion as a sanction.

Amongst other sanctions, the Trust recognises that suspension and exclusion of students may be necessary where there has been a serious breach, or consistent breaches, of the Trust Behaviour Policy and where allowing the student to remain in school would be damaging to the education or welfare of themselves or others.

In all cases, suspending or excluding students should only be used as a means of last resort.

The Trust has created this Policy to clearly define the legal responsibilities of the Headteacher, the Local Academy Board (LAB) and the LA when responding to student suspensions and exclusions, to ensure that they are dealt with both fairly and lawfully, and in line with DfE statutory guidance. This Policy also aims to secure a student's right to an education despite having been suspended or excluded by ensuring that proper arrangements are in place.

2. Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This Policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002, as amended by the Education Act 2011.
- Education and Inspections Act 2006. (Part 7, chapter 2 sets out parental responsibility for excluded pupils.)
- The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended by The Education (Provision of Full-Time education for excluded pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014.
- Equality Act 2010
- The School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) (Amendment and Transitional Provision) Regulations 2023
- The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)

This Policy also has due regard to statutory and non-statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2026) School Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions (Statutory Guidance)
- DfE (2024) 'Behaviour in Schools'
- DfE (2015) 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and behaviour in schools'
- DfE School exclusions: guide for parents
- Section 51a of the Education Act 2002, as amended by the Education Act 2011
- The School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012

In addition, the policy is based on:
- Part 7, chapter 2 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, which sets out parental responsibility for excluded pupils
- Section 579 of the Education Act 1996, which defines 'school day'
- The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended by The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 and as modified and amended by The Education (Educational Provision for Improving Behaviour) (Application to Academies and Pupil Referral Units and Minor Amendments) Regulations 2026.
- The Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- The Inspection information for state-funded schools, which defines 'off-rolling'

This Policy operates in conjunction with the following Trust and school policies:
- Behaviour Policy
- Behaviour for Learning protocols
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Equality Policy
- IT Acceptable Use
- Mobile Devices and Wearable Technology Policy
- Student Code of Conduct
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

This Policy complies with our Funding Agreement and Articles of Association.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Headteacher:

Decides whether to suspend or permanently exclude.

Only the Headteacher, or acting Headteacher, can suspend or permanently exclude a student from the school on disciplinary grounds. The decision can be made in respect of behaviour inside or outside of school. Permanent exclusion will only be used as a last resort.

Any decision of the Headteacher, regarding suspension or permanent exclusion, will always be made in line with the principles of administrative law i.e. that is it lawful (with respect to the legislation relating directly to suspension and permanent exclusions and a school's wider legal duties); reasonable, fair, and proportionate.

A decision to **suspend** a student will be taken only:
- In accordance with the Trust's behaviour policy
- To provide a clear signal of what is unacceptable behaviour
- To show a student that their current behaviour is putting them at risk of permanent exclusion

Where suspensions have become a regular occurrence, the headteacher will consider whether suspensions alone are an effective sanction and whether additional strategies need to be put in place to address behaviour issues.

A decision to **exclude** a student will be taken only:
- In response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the Behaviour Policy; and

- If allowing the student to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the student or of others for example staff or students of the school.

Section 4 of this document goes into more detail regarding 'Grounds for suspension or exclusion'.

Section 5 of this document goes into more detail regarding 'Factors considered'.

3.2 The Local Authority (LA):
For permanent exclusions, the LA will arrange suitable full-time education, for any student at compulsory school age, to begin no later than the sixth school day after the first day of the exclusion.

For students who are looked after (LAC) or who have social workers, the LA and the school will work together to arrange suitable full-time education to begin from the first day of the exclusion.

Reviewing and reassessing students' needs in consultation with their parents/carers where they have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) plan and are excluded permanently, with a view to identifying a new placement.

3.3 Student Disciplinary Panel:
The Trust delegates, to a properly constituted Student Disciplinary Panel, the functions of considering the Headteacher's decision about suspensions or permanent exclusions. Members of the Student Disciplinary Panel will receive appropriate training in exclusions legislation and statutory guidance prior to undertaking these responsibilities. Panel members are drawn from the Trust's Resolutions Team and may include trained Governors, Trustees and Affiliates (who are appointed to the Resolutions Team by the Trust Board) from across the Trust.

- Consider parents/carers' representations about an exclusion within 15 school days of receiving notice.

- Consider parents/carers' representations regarding a suspension within the statutory time (see section 9).

- Considering the suspension or exclusion before the date where it would result in a student missing a public examination or test (see section 9.3).

- Consider whether it would be right for a suspended student to be allowed onto the school premises to sit a public examination or test (see section 9.3).

- Adhere to its responsibilities to consider the reinstatement of students.

- Consider the interests and circumstances of the suspended or excluded student, including the circumstances in which they were suspended or excluded.

- Use the civil standard of proof (based on the 'balance of probabilities,' it is more than likely that the fact is true) when establishing the facts relating to a suspension or exclusion.

The Trust Board will provide the Secretary of State with information promptly about any suspensions or exclusions within the last 12 months.

4. Grounds for Suspension or Exclusion

Exclusion is an extreme sanction and will be avoided wherever possible. In most cases, students who display unacceptable behaviour will be dealt with in line with the Trust's Behaviour Policy and the school's Behaviour for Learning Protocols/school level behaviour policy) - without the need for exclusion. This approach helps students take responsibility for their actions while minimising disruption to their learning.

For details about internal suspension please refer to your school's '*Behaviour for Learning Protocols/school level behaviour policy*'.

A decision to exclude, whether internal, suspension or permanent, may be made in response to serious breaches of the Behaviour Policy and/or school rules. Examples of unacceptable behaviour that may lead to exclusion include:

- Unsafe behaviour or actions which put the student or others in danger.
- Verbal abuse to staff or visitors to site
- Verbal abuse to students
- Physical abuse to/attack on staff
- Physical abuse to/attack on students
- Indecent behaviour
- Damage to property
- Misuse of illegal drugs
- Misuse of other substances
- Theft
- Serious actual or threatened violence against another student or a member of staff.
- Sexual abuse or assault
- Possession of an illegal drug and drug paraphernalia
- Supplying an illegal drug
- Supplying contraband
- Carrying an offensive weapon
- Arson
- Persistent breaches of the Behaviour Policy
- Persistent disruptive behaviour
- Repeated refusal to follow instructions meaning the student is beyond the care and control of school staff.
- Any unacceptable behaviour for which school sanctions and other interventions have not been successful in modifying the student's behaviour.

This is not an exhaustive list and there may be other situations where the Headteacher makes the judgment that exclusion is an appropriate sanction.

5. Factors Considered when Suspending or Excluding a Student

When considering the suspension or exclusion, the Headteacher, will ensure the decision is lawful, proportionate, and fair, with respect to relevant legislation and the school's wider legal duties.

They will also take into account their duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years. No student will be discriminated against, and exclusions will not be more severe due to a student's protected characteristics or additional needs.

5.1 Exercise of Discretion

Before deciding whether to suspend or exclude the Headteacher will:

- Apply the civil standard of proof when responding to the facts relating to a suspension or exclusion, i.e. that 'on the balance of probabilities' it is more likely than not that the facts are true.

- Ensure appropriate investigations have been carried out.

- Allow the student to give their version of events. Students who need support to express their views will be allowed to have their views expressed through an advocate.

- Consider whether the student has special educational needs or a disability (SEND).

- Consider whether the student is especially vulnerable e.g. the student has a social worker or is a child looked after (CLA).

- Consider the gravity of the incident, or series of incidents, and whether it constitutes a serious breach of the Trust Behaviour Policy and/or school rules and expectations as laid out in the school's Behaviour for Learning Protocols/school level behaviour policy.

- Consider whether all alternative solutions have been explored, such as off-site direction or a managed move.

- Consider the effect that the student remaining in the school would have on the education and welfare of others.

- Consider in the case of a student found in possession of an offensive weapon, whether there is an intention to use it or not. It is the Trust's usual policy in this particularly serious matter to issue a permanent exclusion and possibly involve the Police.

5.2 Behaviour Outside School.

Students are expected to follow the Trust Behaviour Policy and School Behaviour for Learning Protocols/school level behaviour policy when taking part in school-related activities outside of school. This includes trips, travel to and from school, sports fixtures, and work experience placements.

Poor behaviour in these settings will be treated as if it happened in school. Serious breaches may result in suspension or permanent exclusion.

5.3 Drug Related Exclusions

Decisions about exclusions for drug-related incidents will be made by the Headteacher, based on the specific circumstances and available evidence.

6. Informing Relevant Parties

6.1 Informing Parents/Carers

Following the Headteacher's decision to suspend or exclude, they will inform the parents/carers, or the excluded student if they are 18 years or older, as soon as possible. This may be in person, by telephone or by letter, of the period of the suspension, or exclusion, and the reason(s) for it.

The parents/carers will also be provided with the following:

- The reason(s) for the suspension or exclusion

- The length of the suspension or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent.

- Information regarding their right to raise any representations about the suspension or exclusion to the Student Disciplinary Panel and, where the student is attending alongside parents/carers, how they may be involved in this.

- Their right to make a request to hold the meeting via remote access and how this request can be made.

- Their right to attend a meeting where there is a legal requirement for the Student Disciplinary Panel to consider the suspension or exclusion, and the fact that they can bring an accompanying individual.

- The arrangements that have been made for the student to continue their education prior to the organisation of any alternative provision, or the student's return to school.

- Relevant sources of free, impartial information.

- Where the student is of compulsory school age, the Headteacher will inform the parents/carers without delay and by the end of the afternoon session on the first day their child is suspended or permanently excluded that:
    - For the first 5 days of the suspension or exclusion (or until the start date of any alternative provision or the end of the suspension, where this is earlier), parents/carers are legally required to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours without justification.
    - Parents/carers may receive a penalty notice or be prosecuted if they fail to do so.

- Where the suspension is more than 5 consecutive school days the school must arrange suitable full-time education from day 6

- Where the student is excluded, the LA must arrange suitable full-time education from day 6.

- Where the suspension is more than 5 days or where excluded, the following information will be included if possible:
    - The start and end date for any alternative provision of full-time education.
    - The address at which the alternative provision will take place.
    - Any information necessary for the student to identify the person they should report to on the starting date.

- Where the Headteacher is unable to provide information on the alternative provision by the end of the afternoon session, they will provide the information at a later date without delay and no later than 48 hours before the alternative provision is due to begin. The Headteacher is able to give less than 48 hours of notice, with parental consent or where alternative provision is to be provided before the 6th day of suspension or exclusion.

- The LAB does not have to arrange such provision for students in their final year of compulsory education who do not have any further public exams to sit.

6.2 Informing the Local Academy Board

The Headteacher will notify the Chair of the LAB of:

- Any permanent exclusion, including when a suspension is followed by a decision to permanently exclude a student.

- Any suspension which would result in the student being suspended for a total of more than five school days in a term.

- Any suspension or permanent exclusion which would result in the student missing a National Curriculum test or public exam.

- Any suspension of 15 days or more, or permanent exclusion that has been cancelled, including the reason for the cancellation.

6.3 Informing the Local Authority (LA)

The Headteacher will notify the LA of all suspensions and permanent exclusions without delay, regardless of the length of a suspension.

The notification will include:

- The reason/s for the suspension or permanent exclusion

- The length of a suspension or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent

- They have decided to cancel a suspension of permanent exclusions, and why (where relevant)

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

6.4 Informing the Student's Social Worker and/or Virtual School Head (VSH)

If a:

- Student with a social worker is at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion, the Headteacher will inform the social worker as early as possible.

- Student who is a child looked-after (CLA) is at risk of suspension or exclusion, the Headteacher will inform the VSH as early as possible.

This is to work together to consider what factors may be affecting the student's behaviour, and what further support can be put in place to improve the behaviour.

If the Headteacher decides to suspend or permanently exclude a student with a social worker/a student who is looked after, they will inform the student's social worker/the VSH, as appropriate, without delay, that:

- They have decided to suspend or permanently exclude the student

- The reason(s) for the decision

- The length of the suspension or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent

- The suspension or permanent exclusion affects the student's ability to sit a National Curriculum test or public exam (where relevant)

- They have decided to cancel a suspension or permanent exclusion, and why (where relevant)

The social worker/VSH will be invited to any meeting of the Student Disciplinary Panel about the suspension or permanent exclusion. This is so they can provide advice on how the student's background and/or circumstances that may have influenced the circumstances of their suspension or permanent exclusion. The social worker should also help ensure safeguarding needs and risks and the student's welfare are considered.

7. Reintegration following Suspension or Off-Site Direction

7.1 Reintegration Strategy Meeting Purpose

Where a student is suspended or is directed to be educated off-site, upon return to the school both the student and parents/carers 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 how to 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.

7.2. Reintegration Measures

Our schools use 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;
- ensuring the student receives academic support upon return to catch up on any lost progress;
- planned pastoral interventions;
- Family Help support, as appropriate;
- mentoring by a trusted adult;
- regular reviews with the student and parents/carers to discuss progress being made and raise and address any concerns at an early stage;
- informing the student, parents/carers, and staff of potential external support; and
- where appropriate, involvement of Shropshire Education Access Service / Worcestershire Exclusions Officer (Pupil Planning Meeting Application for access).

8. Cancelling a Suspension or Exclusion

The Headteacher may cancel any suspension or exclusion only if it has not been reviewed by the Student Disciplinary Panel.

Where a suspension or exclusion is cancelled, the Headteacher will notify the student's parents/carers, the chair of the LAB, the LA, and, where relevant, the virtual school head (VSH) and the student's social worker. The notification will also provide the reason for the cancellation.

The Headteacher will offer the student's parents/carers the opportunity to meet to discuss the circumstances that led to the cancellation of the suspension or exclusion, and the student will be allowed back into school without delay.

When a suspension or exclusion is cancelled, the Student Disciplinary Panel's duty to consider reinstatement ceases, and there is no requirement to hold a meeting to consider reinstatement. Any days spent out of school because of a suspension prior to it being cancelled will count towards the 45-school day maximum for suspensions in any academic year. There is no 45-day 'cap' on permanent exclusion.

All suspensions and exclusions will be formally recorded on the school's information management system.

9. Considering the Reinstatement of a Student

The Student Disciplinary Panel will consider and decide on the reinstatement of a suspended or permanently excluded student within 15 school days of receiving the notice of the suspension or exclusion if:

- The exclusion is permanent.
- It is a suspension which would bring the student's total number of days out of school to more than 15 in a term; or
- It would result in a student missing a public exam or National Curriculum test.

9.1 Suspension of 5 days or fewer in a term

Where the student has been suspended, and the suspension does not bring the student's total number of days of suspension to more than 5 in a term, the Student Disciplinary Panel must consider any representations made by parents/carers. However, it is not required to arrange a meeting with parents/carers, and it cannot direct the Headteacher to reinstate the student.

9.2 Suspension of between 6 - 15 days in a term

Where the student has been suspended for more than 5, but not more than 15 school days, in a single term, and the parents/carers make representations, the Student Disciplinary Panel will consider and decide on the reinstatement of a suspended student within 50 school days of receiving notice of the suspension. If the parents/carers do not make representations, the Panel is not required to meet, and it cannot direct the Headteacher to reinstate the student.

9.3 Public Examinations

Where a suspension or exclusion would result in a student missing a public exam or National Curriculum test, the Student Disciplinary Panel will, as far as reasonably practicable, consider and decide on the reinstatement of the student before the date of the exam or test. If this is not practicable, the Student Disciplinary Panel may consider the suspension or exclusion and decide whether to reinstate the student.

The following parties will be invited to a meeting of the Student Disciplinary Panel and allowed to make representations or share information:

- Parents/carers, or the student if they are 18 or older (and, where requested, a representative or friend)
- The student, if they are aged 17 or younger and it would be appropriate to their age and understanding (and, where requested, a representative or friend)
- The Headteacher.
- The student's social worker (if they have one).
- The Virtual School Headteacher (VSH) (if the student is looked after).

Student Disciplinary Panel meetings can be held remotely or hybrid on the agreement of all parties.

See section 14 for more details on remote access to meetings.

The Student Disciplinary Panel will try to arrange the meeting within the statutory time limits set out above and must try to have it at a time that suits all relevant parties. However, its decision will not be invalid simply on the grounds that it was not made within these time limits.

10. Reaching a Decision

The Student Disciplinary Panel can either:

- Decline to reinstate the student; or
- Direct the reinstatement of the student immediately, or on a particular date. (except in cases where the Panel cannot do this - see section 9.1 and section 9.2)

In reaching a decision, the Student Disciplinary Panel will apply the civil standard of proof when responding to the acts relating to a suspension or exclusion, i.e. that on the 'balance of probabilities' it is more likely than not that the facts are true.

To reach a decision, the Panel will:

- Consider whether the decision to suspend or permanently exclude was lawful, reasonable, and procedurally fair

- Whether the Headteacher followed their legal duties
- Consider the welfare and safeguarding of the student and their peers
- Consider any evidence that was presented to the Student Disciplinary Panel in relation to the decision
- Ensure that minutes are taken of the meeting, and a record kept of the evidence that was considered
- Ensure the outcome will also be recorded on the student's educational record, and copies of relevant papers will be kept with this record

11. Notification of Considered Suspensions or Exclusions

The clerk to the Student Disciplinary Panel will notify the parents/carers of the suspended or excluded student, the Headteacher, and the LA of their decision following the consideration of a suspension or exclusion, in writing and without delay.

Where an exclusion is permanent and the Student Disciplinary Panel has decided not to reinstate the student, the notification of decision will also include the following:

- That the exclusion is permanent
- Of their right for it to be reviewed by an Independent Review Panel (IRP)
- Of the date by which an application for review must be made
- Of the name and address of whom the review application should be submitted to
- That a request to hold the meeting via remote access can be made and how to do this
- That any application should set out the grounds on which it is being made and that, where appropriate, this should include reference to how a student's SEND is considered relevant to the exclusion
- That, regardless of whether a student has been identified as having SEND, the parents/carers have a right to request that a SEND expert attends the review
- Of the role of the SEND expert that will attend the review
- That they are required to make it clear if they wish for a SEND expert to attend the review
- That they may appoint someone at their own expense to make representations to the panel

The Student Disciplinary Panel will also notify parents/carers that, if they believe a suspension or exclusion has been issued as a result of discrimination, then they are required to make a claim under the Equality Act 2010 to the First-tier Tribunal (SEND), and that this should be within 6 months of when the discrimination allegedly took place.

After any conclusion, the Student Disciplinary Panel will notify the parents/carers, and all other parties involved, of the decision that was made and the reasoning for this, in sufficient detail.

12. Preventative Measures to Exclusion

The threat of a permanent exclusion will never be used as the means to coerce parents/carers to move their child to another school. As described earlier in this document, alternative strategies to repeated suspensions or a permanent exclusion are always used if possible. Examples include:

- **Internal Suspension (also sometimes referred to as internal exclusion)**

An internal suspension will be implemented for a misdemeanor of sufficient seriousness as to warrant a student being removed from lessons, but not so serious as to warrant removal from school. All efforts will be made to keep the student in school.

- **Pastoral Support**

Pastoral support may be necessary if a student's behaviour at school means that they are at risk of permanent exclusion; have had a number of suspensions but behaviour is not improving; or are behaving in ways that hinder progress and achievement in school and/or safety and wellbeing of themselves or others.

Students placed in the internal provision room will be set work. They are not allowed to take their break or lunchtime with other students but will be given a separate and comparable break and lunchtime.

There is no limit on how many times a student may be placed in the internal provision room in an academic year. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, students will only be placed in the internal provision for a maximum of five consecutive days.

- **Off-Site Direction**

Off-site direction is when a student is required to attend another education setting to improve their behaviour. Headteachers in the Trust have the authority from Trustees to direct a student to an off-site provider (e.g. the ContinU Plus Academy, Aspire Academy or TMBSS) to modify and improve their behaviour (please refer to the 'Off-site/Alternative Provision Principles').

Parents/carers will normally receive written notice at least two school days before the placement commences. Notification will include the rationale for the placement, intended objectives, venue address, named contact, attendance arrangements and daily session times. It should be noted that parental consent is not needed.

During the period of an off-site direction:

- The student might be in alternative provision (AP) on a part-time schedule with continued mainstream schooling, or full-time for a limited period.
- The student will be dual-registered.
- A proposed maximum period will be discussed and agreed upon as part of the planning phase. As part of planning, alternative options will be considered once the time limit has been reached, including a managed move on a permanent basis (if a student is placed in a mainstream school).
- Every off-site direction placement will be reviewed at least every 20 school days and sooner where concerns arise to ensure the placement is achieving its objectives, and the student is benefitting from it.
- The student will be re-integrated back into the relevant school once they have modified and improved their behaviour.

Schools in the Trust will have regard to all of the statutory guidance set out in the 'Alternative Provision Statutory guidance for local authorities (January 2013, Updated February 2025)' document.

- **Managed Move**

A managed move is used to initiate a process leading to a permanent transfer of a student to another mainstream school, as part of a behaviour management process.

Managed moves are:

- Done strictly in the student's best interest.
- Voluntary and agreed by all parties – both schools, the relevant admission authority, and the parents/carers
- Offered as part of a planned intervention.

- Preceded by information-sharing between the current school, receiving school and supported by an effective integration strategy.

- **Safeguarding Separation**

In exceptional circumstances, the headteacher may decide to temporarily prevent a student from attending the school site for safeguarding reasons. Such arrangements are not disciplinary suspensions or exclusions and will be recorded separately. Appropriate safeguarding records will be maintained and regularly reviewed to ensure the arrangement remains necessary and proportionate.

This measure will only be used when:
- It is necessary to separate students to ensure safety, and
- There is no reasonable alternative that would allow all students to remain on site

Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis, led by the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and informed by multi-agency working where appropriate (e.g children's social care or the police).
Where this measure is used, the school will:
- Inform parents/carers without delay, including the reasons for the decision
- Notify the governing board without delay
- Provide work for the student to complete at home, or work with the LA to ensure suitable education is arranged
- Support the student's reintegration, as soon as it is safe to do so

13. Independent Review Panel (IRP)

If parents/carers apply for an independent review within the legal timeframe, the Trust will arrange for an IRP to review the decision of the Student Disciplinary Panel not to reinstate a permanently excluded student.

13.1. Membership of the Independent Review Panel (IRP)

An IRP will be formed of 3 or 5 members that represent the following categories:

- A lay member to chair the panel. This individual will not have worked in any school in a paid capacity

- A current or former school governor / trustee who has served for at least 12 consecutive months in the last 5 years

- A Headteacher or individual who has been a Headteacher within the last 5 years

Parents/carers are required to submit their applications within:

- 15 school days of the Student Disciplinary Panel's notification of their decision

- 15 school days of the final determination of a discriminatory claim made under the Equality Act 2010

Any application made outside of the above timeframe will not be reviewed. Parents/carers are able to request an independent panel review even if they did not make a case to, or attend, the Student Disciplinary Panel's initial consideration of the exclusion.

Parents/carers can request that the IRP take place via remote access.

The Trust will adhere to all statutory guidelines when conducting an Independent Panel Review, as outlined in the DfE's statutory guidance.

13.2 The Duties of the Independent Review Panel

The role of the IRP is to review the Student Disciplinary Panel's decision not to reinstate an excluded student. In reviewing the decision, the panel will consider the interests and circumstances of the excluded student, including the circumstances in which the student was excluded, and have regard to the interests of

other students and people working at the school. The panel will apply the civil standard of proof, rather than the criminal standard of 'beyond reasonable doubt'.

Following the review, the panel will do one of the following:

- Uphold the decision
- Recommend that the Student Disciplinary Panel reconsiders reinstatement
- Quash the decision and direct that the Student Disciplinary Panel reconsiders reinstatement

The panel's decision does not have to be unanimous and can be decided by a majority vote. It is binding on the student, parents/carers, LAB, or Headteacher and Trust.

14. Conducting Meetings via Remote Access

Parents/carers, or excluded students if they are 18 or older, will be able to request Student Disciplinary Panel meetings or Independent Review Panel (IRP) are held via remote access. Remote meetings and panels will be held following timelines as in-person meetings.

If no preference is stated by the parent/carer, the Trust may request that a remote meeting is held, with the agreement of all parties, where holding a face-to-face meeting is not practical due to the availability of panel members. This request will be made only where absolutely necessary.

Remote meetings will only proceed if the Panel or IRP is satisfied that the process will remain fair and transparent. If this is not possible, the Panel or IRP will work with the parent/carer to arrange a suitable in-person meeting

If technical issues during a remote meeting prevent participants from being seen, heard, or fully involved—and cannot be resolved—an in-person meeting will be arranged without delay.

When holding meetings remotely, the Panel or IRP will:

- Comply with relevant equalities legislation.
- Ensure parents/carers can access any support they are entitled to, including a friend or representative.
- Confirm all participants have the necessary technology to take part.
- Ensure everyone can express their views and fulfil their role.
- Guarantee the meeting is fair and transparent.

15. Criminal Investigations

The Headteacher will not postpone taking a decision to suspend or exclude a student due to a police investigation being underway, or any criminal proceedings that are in place.

Particular consideration will be given when deciding to suspend or exclude a student where evidence is limited by a police investigation, to ensure that any decision made is fair and reasonable.

If the Student Disciplinary Panel is required to consider the Headteacher's decision in these circumstances, they will not postpone the meeting and will make a decision based on the evidence available.

16. Removing Excluded students from the School Register

The school will remove students from the school register if:

- 15 school days have passed since the parents/carers were notified of the Student Disciplinary Panel's decision not to reinstate the student and no application for an independent panel review has been received.

- The parents/carers have stated in writing that they will not be applying for an independent panel review following an exclusion.

If an application for an IRP has been made within 15 school days, the Headteacher will wait until the review has been decided, or abandoned, and until the Student Disciplinary Panel has completed any reconsideration that the IRP recommended or directed it to carry out, before removing the student from the school register.

If a student's name is to be removed from the register, the Headteacher will make a return to the LA, which will include:

- All the particulars which were entered in the register.
- The address of any parent with whom the student normally resides.
- The grounds upon which the student's name is to be removed from the register.
- Any return to the LA will be made as soon as the grounds for removal are met and no later than the date in which the student's name was removed.

If a student's name has been removed from the register and a discrimination claim is made, the student may be reinstated following a decision made by the First-tier Tribunal (SEND) or County Court.

Whilst a student's name stays on the admissions register, the appropriate code will be used to mark the student's attendance:

- Code B: Off-site education activity.
- Code D: Dual registered (at an off-site setting / alternative provision)
- Code E: Excluded but not attending alternative provision.

17. Using Data

Headteachers will ensure that all data about suspensions and exclusions is collected and provided to the Local Academy Board and summarised for the Trust Board regularly. Termly reports to trustees will include analysis of disproportionality across protected characteristics, SEND status, disadvantage, attendance, looked after status and repeat suspensions. Trust Board reports will also include information relating to safeguarding separations and, where appropriate, the effectiveness and cost of off-site placements.

The data will be reviewed to:

- Consider the level of student moves and the characteristics of students who are moving on any permanent exclusions to ensure that this is only being used as a last resort.
- Gather information on students who are taken off roll and those who are on roll but attending education off-site.
- Determine whether there are any patterns of suspensions and exclusions across the Trust.
- Consider the effectiveness and consistency in implementing the Trust Behaviour Policy.
- Understand any variations in the rolling average of permanent exclusions to ensure they are only used when necessary.
- Understand the characteristics of suspended and excluded students and evaluate equality considerations.

- Gather information on where students are receiving repeat suspensions.

- Evaluate interventions in place to support students at risk of suspension and exclusion, including where there are patterns which may indicate that certain policies and support measures are or are not working.

- Analyse whether the placements of students directed off-site into alternative provision are reviewed at sufficient intervals to assure that the education is achieving its objectives.

18. Advice for Parents/Carers

Current Statutory Exclusions Guidance. "A guide for parents on school behaviour and exclusion'
Please contact the Headteacher's PA if you wish for a paper copy of this guide.

There are a number of national organisations that provide free information, support, and advice to parents/carers on exclusion matters:

- Coram Children's Legal Centre. They can be contacted on 0300 330 5485 or through https://childlawadvice.org.uk/information-pages/school-exclusion/. The advice line is open on Mondays to Fridays from 8.00am to 6.00pm.

- ACE education. They can be contacted on 03000 115 142 or at enquiries@ace-ed.org.uk. Please check their website at http://www.ace-ed.org.uk for the opening times of the advice line.

- The National Autistic Society School Exclusion Service (England) can be contacted on 0808 800 4002 or at schoolexclusions@nas.org.uk. Information can also be found on their website at https://www.autism.org.uk/

- Independent Parental Special Education Advice http://www.ipsea.org.uk/

There are also some local services who can provide advice and guidance:

- Gethin Howells (Children Missing Education Officer Exclusions and Hard to Place). He can be contacted on 01905 843931 or at exclusions@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk

- Jo Kelly (Head of Virtual School and Access to Education Shropshire) can be contacted at: Supporting attendance, engagement and inclusion | Shropshire Council

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service-SENDIASS (formerly the parent partnership service). They have a website at

    - www.SENDworcestershire.co.uk and can be contacted on 01905 768153 or at sendiass@worcestershire.gov.uk.
    - Shropshire SENDIASS | SEND help shropshire | Shropshire, UK and can be contacted on 01743280019 or at iass@cabshropshire.org.uk
    - They have a national website at https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/information-advice-and-support-services-network/about

- Worcestershire Gypsy Roma Traveller Education Team. They can be contacted on 01905 846045 or at GRT@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk