

School Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion Policy

Approved date:	September 2026	Review date:	September 2027
Approval Level:	Headteacher	Owner:	M Dean

1. Purpose and principles

Poynton High School is committed to maintaining a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment in which every pupil can learn, thrive and achieve. Suspension and permanent exclusion are lawful behaviour management tools, but they will be used fairly, consistently and only where justified by the individual circumstances of the case.

The aims of this policy are to ensure that:

- decisions to suspend or permanently exclude are lawful, reasonable, fair and proportionate;
- only the Headteacher, or a person formally acting as Headteacher, makes a decision to suspend or permanently exclude;
- permanent exclusion is used only as a last resort;
- pupils are able and encouraged to express their views and understand how those views have been considered;
- duties relating to safeguarding, equality, SEND, children with a social worker and looked-after children are met;
- pupils continue to receive appropriate education during suspension or permanent exclusion;
- parents and relevant agencies receive clear and timely information;
- off-rolling and informal or unlawful exclusion do not occur; and
- suspension, permanent exclusion and pupil movement data are reviewed to identify patterns, repeat suspensions and possible disproportionality.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all pupils registered at Poynton High School, including pupils above compulsory school age, unless a statutory provision expressly states otherwise. It applies to behaviour:

- on the school site;
- while taking part in a school-organised or school-related activity;
- while travelling to or from school;
- while wearing school uniform or otherwise identifiable as a pupil of the school; and
- outside school where the behaviour could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school, poses a threat to another pupil, member of staff or member of the public, or could adversely affect the reputation of the school.

Behaviour outside school may be grounds for suspension or permanent exclusion where this is consistent with the school Behaviour Policy and the decision is lawful, reasonable, fair and proportionate. Where behaviour may constitute a criminal offence or raises a safeguarding concern, the school will follow its safeguarding procedures and consider liaison with the police or other agencies as appropriate.

3. Legal and statutory framework

This policy has been prepared with 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, July 2026, effective from 26 July 2026.

It also reflects, where applicable:

- Education Act 2002, as amended;
- School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012, as amended;
- Education and Inspections Act 2006;
- Education Act 1996;
- Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended;
- Education (Educational Provision for Improving Behaviour) Regulations 2010, as amended and applied to academies and pupil referral units by the 2026 Regulations;
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024;
- Equality Act 2010;
- Children and Families Act 2014;
- Human Rights Act 1998; and
- Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years.

4. Definitions

Term	Meaning
Exclusion	A disciplinary exclusion. In law, the two forms are suspension and permanent exclusion.
Suspension	A temporary exclusion for one or more fixed periods. A suspension may include part of a school day and must have a defined end date.
Permanent exclusion	A disciplinary decision that the pupil is no longer allowed to attend the school, unless reinstated.
School day	Any day on which there is a school session. An INSET or staff training day does not count as a school day.
Parent	A birth parent, a person with parental responsibility, or a person who has care of the pupil. Where practicable, all those with parental responsibility should be involved.
Relevant person	The parent where the pupil is under 18, or the excluded pupil where they are aged 18 or over.
Cancelled exclusion	An exclusion cancelled by the Headteacher before the governing board has met to consider reinstatement.
Off-site direction	A temporary requirement for a pupil to attend another education setting to improve future behaviour. It is not an exclusion and must not be used as punishment for past misconduct.
Managed move	A voluntary, planned and permanent transfer to another mainstream school, agreed by all relevant parties and used only where it is in the pupil's best interests.
Internal removal	A requirement for a pupil to work away from peers on the school site. It is not a suspension or permanent exclusion.
Safeguarding separation	A temporary decision to forbid a pupil from attending the school premises for safeguarding reasons. It is not a disciplinary exclusion.

5. The Headteacher's power and decision-making

5.1 Authority

Only the Headteacher, or a person formally appointed to carry out the functions of the Headteacher in the Headteacher's absence, may suspend or permanently exclude a pupil on disciplinary grounds. The decision will be made in line with administrative law and will be lawful, reasonable, fair and proportionate.

5.2 Establishing the facts

The Headteacher will apply the civil standard of proof, namely the balance of probabilities. A fact will be treated as established where it is more likely than not to have occurred. Before deciding whether to suspend or permanently exclude, the Headteacher will, where relevant:

- consider all available evidence and relevant facts, including any contributing or mitigating factors;
- consider whether the incident was provoked and whether there are safeguarding considerations;
- allow and encourage the pupil to give their account, taking account of age and understanding;
- provide support for the pupil to express their views where required, including through a parent, advocate or social worker;
- explain, as appropriate, how the pupil's views have been taken into account;
- consider the pupil's SEND, disability, health needs, communication needs and wider vulnerabilities;
- consider whether relevant reasonable adjustments and appropriate special educational provision have been made;
- consider the school's duty of care when arranging for the pupil to leave the site; and
- consult the Designated Safeguarding Lead, SENCO, Designated Teacher, social worker, Virtual School Head or local authority where appropriate, without fettering the Headteacher's decision.

5.3 Suspension

A pupil may be suspended for one or more fixed periods, up to a cumulative maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year. A suspension does not have to be continuous. Any days spent out of school before an exclusion is cancelled continue to count towards this maximum.

A suspension may be for part of the school day. The full statutory process, including written notification, applies. A lunchtime suspension counts as half a school day when determining whether governing board consideration is triggered.

A suspension cannot be extended or converted into a permanent exclusion. Where exceptional further evidence comes to light, the Headteacher may issue a further suspension or permanent exclusion to begin immediately after the first suspension ends. A new decision and a new written notice will be issued.

5.4 Permanent exclusion

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 pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others, including staff or pupils.

Permanent exclusion is a last resort. Previous suspensions are not a legal precondition. The Headteacher will make the decision on the individual facts, evidence and circumstances of the case.

5.5 Police investigations and criminal proceedings

The Headteacher does not have to postpone an exclusion decision solely because a police investigation or criminal proceedings are under way. The decision will be made fairly on the evidence available at the time. Safeguarding procedures will continue to apply.

6. Equality, SEND and vulnerable pupils

The school will comply with the Equality Act 2010, including the duty not to discriminate, harass or victimise and the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. The school will also use its best endeavours to secure appropriate special educational provision for pupils with SEN and will have regard to the SEND Code of Practice.

- Where a pupil has an EHC plan and there are emerging behavioural concerns or a risk of exclusion, the school will contact the local authority at an early stage and consider whether an early annual review should be requested.
- Where a pupil has SEN without an EHC plan, the school will review the suitability of current provision and support, involving external specialists where appropriate.
- Where a pupil has a social worker and is at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion, the school will involve the social worker, DSL and parents as early as possible.
- Where a looked-after child is at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion, the Designated Teacher will contact the Virtual School Head as soon as possible and consider whether the Personal Education Plan requires review.
- For a previously looked-after child at risk of exclusion, the school will engage with the parents and Designated Teacher and may seek advice from the Virtual School Head.

7. Arrangements that are not disciplinary exclusions

7.1 Internal rest

Internal rest may be used in line with the Behaviour Policy where it is necessary and proportionate. The pupil will remain on the school site, receive appropriate work and supervision, and continue to have access to safeguarding and SEND support. Reasonable adjustments will be made where required. Internal reset will be recorded and reviewed, but it will not be described or recorded as a suspension or permanent exclusion.

7.2 Safeguarding separation

In rare circumstances, the school may temporarily forbid a pupil from attending the premises where physical separation is essential to safeguard one or more pupils and cannot practicably be achieved while allowing the pupil to remain on site. This is not a disciplinary exclusion.

- The decision will be made case by case, with the DSL or deputy taking a lead role and with support from other agencies where required.
- Parents will be informed of the reason without delay and the governing board will be notified without delay.
- The school will consider the Equality Act 2010, Human Rights Act 1998, Keeping Children Safe in Education and public-law principles.
- The school, parent or local authority will arrange education. Where neither the school nor parent arranges education, the local authority has responsibility under section 19 of the Education Act 1996.
- The arrangement will be kept under review and used only while essential. A reintegration strategy will be agreed before or at the beginning of the pupil's return.

7.3 Off-site direction

Off-site direction is a temporary placement at another mainstream school or alternative provision to improve future behaviour. It will not be used as a punishment for past misconduct. The governing board or academy trust is responsible for the direction in accordance with the applicable legislation and trust scheme of delegation. For such a placement our partner schools, include, Wilmslow High School, Glossopdale School and Bramhall High School.

Before a direction is made, the school will:

- evidence the initial intervention and targeted support already provided, or why such support is inappropriate;
- assess the pupil's behaviour, SEND, disability, health, safeguarding and educational needs;
- enable the pupil to express their views and explain how those views have been considered;
- agree the placement objectives, proposed maximum period, curriculum, support and reintegration plan with the provider; and
- share relevant information securely in advance, including attainment information, a current risk assessment and effective support and risk-management strategies.

The governing board or academy trust will notify the parent, the pupil if aged 18 or over, and the local authority where the pupil has an EHC plan, in writing as soon as practicable and no later than two school days before the placement begins. The notice will state:

- where the education will be provided;
- who the pupil must report to on first attending;
- the number of days for which the direction is imposed;
- the reasons and objectives; and
- the start and finish times and, where two sessions are provided, the timing of the break.

The placement will be kept under review for as long as it remains in effect. Parents, a pupil aged 18 or over, and the local authority where the pupil has an EHC plan may request a review in writing. A request will be met as soon as reasonably practicable unless a review has taken place within the previous 10 weeks. Invitations to a review, and an invitation to submit written views, will be sent at least six days before the meeting. The decision following each review, including whether the direction continues, its duration and the reasons, will be notified in writing no later than six days after the meeting.

Where the pupil attends another school under an off-site direction and is dual registered, attendance Code D will be used. The school will ensure that the pupil continues to receive a broad and balanced education and that SEND and equality duties continue to be met.

7.4 Managed moves

A managed move is a voluntary, planned and permanent transfer to another mainstream school. It must be agreed by all relevant parties, including the parent and the admission authority of the new school, and used only where it is in the pupil's best interests. There is no lawful category of "trial managed move" or "trial admission". A temporary placement to improve behaviour will be treated as an off-site direction and reviewed accordingly.

A pupil will not be permanently excluded because a parent or pupil refuses a managed move. Where a pupil has an EHC plan, the local authority will be involved before any move and the statutory process for amending the plan will be followed.

8. Cancelling an exclusion

The Headteacher may cancel a suspension or permanent exclusion that has begun, or has not yet begun, only before the governing board has met to consider reinstatement. A permanent exclusion cannot be cancelled if the pupil has already been excluded for more than 45 school days in the academic year, or will have been by the time the cancellation takes effect.

- The Headteacher will notify the parent or pupil aged 18 or over, the governing board, the local authority and, where applicable, the social worker and Virtual School Head, in writing and without delay, giving the reason for cancellation.
- The governing board's duty to consider reinstatement will cease.

- The parent or pupil aged 18 or over will be offered an opportunity to meet the Headteacher to discuss the circumstances, without delay.
- The pupil will be allowed to return to school without delay.
- Any days already spent out of school will count towards the maximum of 45 school days in the academic year.
- A reintegration strategy will be put in place.

9. Notification following an exclusion decision

9.1 Parents and pupils aged 18 or over

The Headteacher will notify the parent, or the excluded pupil if aged 18 or over, without delay of the period of suspension or the fact of permanent exclusion and the reason or reasons. Written notification will be provided without delay and will include:

- the reason or reasons for the suspension or permanent exclusion;
- for a suspension, the period and the start and end dates; or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent;
- parents' right to make representations to the governing board and how the pupil may be involved;
- how and to whom representations should be made;
- where a governing board meeting is legally required, the right to attend, to be represented at personal expense and to bring a friend;
- parents' or an adult pupil's right to request that the governing board meeting is held by remote access, and how and to whom the request should be made;
- arrangements for the pupil's education before alternative provision starts or the pupil returns;
- relevant sources of free and impartial advice, including the Department for Education parent guidance, the local SEND Information, Advice and Support Service, Coram Child Law Advice and IPSEA; and
- where relevant, information about any public examination or national curriculum test that falls during the exclusion.

Electronic service of the formal notice will be used only where the parent has agreed in writing that notices of this kind may be sent electronically.

9.2 Public-place duty

For a pupil of compulsory school age, the Headteacher will notify the parent, without delay and no later than the end of the afternoon session on the first day, of the days on which the parent must ensure that the pupil is not present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification. This duty applies to the first five school days of a suspension or permanent exclusion, or

until full-time alternative provision begins, or the suspension ends, if earlier. The notice will explain the possible fixed penalty or prosecution for non-compliance.

9.3 Alternative provision information

Where alternative provision is being arranged, the notice will include, where ascertainable, the start date, start and finish times, address and reporting arrangements. If this information cannot reasonably be provided by the end of the afternoon session on the first day, it will be provided without delay and no later than 48 hours before the provision begins. Provision before the sixth day may begin with less than 48 hours' notice where the parent consents.

9.4 Social worker, Virtual School Head, governing board and local authority

- The local authority will be notified without delay of every suspension and permanent exclusion, regardless of length, including the reason and duration or the fact that it is permanent.
- Where the pupil has a social worker, that social worker will be notified without delay of the period and reasons.
- Where the pupil is looked after, the Virtual School Head will be notified without delay of the period and reasons.
- For a permanent exclusion where the pupil lives in another local authority, the home authority will also be notified without delay.
- The governing board will be notified without delay of any permanent exclusion; any exclusion taking the term total above five school days or ten lunchtimes; and any exclusion causing the pupil to miss a public examination or national curriculum test.
- Other suspensions not previously reported will be reported to the governing board once per term.

10. Education during suspension or permanent exclusion

During the first five school days, the school will take reasonable steps to set and mark work that is accessible and achievable outside school. Online platforms may be used, but appropriate alternatives and reasonable adjustments will be made where required.

For a suspension of more than five school days, the governing board or academy trust will arrange suitable full-time education for a pupil of compulsory school age to begin no later than the sixth school day. Consecutive suspensions are cumulative for this purpose. For a permanent exclusion, the local authority, or home authority where applicable, will arrange suitable full-time education to begin no later than the sixth school day after the first day of permanent exclusion.

For a looked-after child or a child with a social worker, the school and local authority should work together to seek alternative provision from the first day following suspension or permanent exclusion. Suitable provision for a looked-after child will be recorded in the Personal Education Plan. Where a pupil has an EHC plan, the local authority may need to review or reassess the plan.

Provision is not required for a pupil in the final year of compulsory education who has no further public examinations to sit.

11. Reintegration

The school will support the pupil to reintegrate successfully following a suspension, cancelled exclusion, off-site direction or safeguarding separation. A reintegration strategy will offer a fresh start, rebuild belonging and engagement with learning, and address behaviour, educational, pastoral, SEND, health and safeguarding needs. This may also be appropriate following an internal rest too.

The strategy will be communicated at a meeting before or at the beginning of the pupil's return. The parent will attend. A pupil will not be prevented from returning to school or to the mainstream classroom because a parent is unable or unwilling to attend a reintegration meeting.

- regular contact and a planned welcome back;
- a restorative conversation where appropriate and safe;
- curriculum or catch-up support;
- mentoring, pastoral or multi-agency support;
- a pupil profile and reasonable adjustments where appropriate;
- a risk assessment or safety plan where required; and
- review with the pupil and parent.

A part-time timetable will not be used to manage behaviour. Any part-time timetable used for another lawful purpose will be time limited, regularly reviewed with the pupil and parent, and supported by the appropriate attendance arrangements.

12. Governing board consideration of reinstatement

12.1 When the governing board must meet

Circumstance	Duty	Timescale
Permanent exclusion; term total above 15 school days; or exclusion causing a missed public examination or national curriculum test	Convene a meeting and decide whether to reinstate	Within 15 school days of receiving notice. For an examination or test, meet before it where reasonably practicable.
Term total above 5 but not above 15 school days, and the parent makes representations	Convene a meeting and decide whether to reinstate	Within 50 school days of receiving notice.
Term total of 5 school days or fewer	Consider any written representations. The governing board cannot direct	No statutory meeting required.

	reinstatement and need not meet the parent.	
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12.2 Arrangements for the meeting

Where the governing board is legally required to consider reinstatement, it will:

- make reasonable endeavours to arrange the meeting within the statutory timescale and at a time suitable for relevant parties;
- invite the parent, Headteacher, the pupil aged 18 or over, the social worker where the pupil has one, and the Virtual School Head where the pupil is looked after;
- allow the parent and pupil to be accompanied by a friend or representative, subject to a reasonable limit on numbers;
- enable and encourage the pupil to participate, taking account of age, understanding, communication needs and reasonable adjustments;
- ask for written evidence in advance and, where possible, circulate relevant papers and the list of attendees at least five school days before the meeting;
- consider any representations and all relevant evidence; and
- keep minutes and a record of the evidence considered.

12.3 Decision

The governing board will consider whether the Headteacher's decision was lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair. It will apply the balance of probabilities and consider the interests and circumstances of the pupil alongside those of other pupils, staff and the wider school community. It may decline to reinstate or direct reinstatement immediately or on a specified date.

The governing board will notify the parent or adult pupil, Headteacher and local authority, and where relevant the home authority, social worker and Virtual School Head, of its decision and reasons in writing and without delay. The outcome will be recorded on the pupil's educational record.

13. Remote-access meetings

A parent or excluded pupil aged 18 or over may request that a governing board meeting or independent review panel is held by remote access. Remote access is not the default. Where no remote request is made, the meeting will be held in person unless extraordinary events or unforeseen circumstances make this not reasonably practicable.

- A correctly made request will be granted only where the governing board or arranging authority is satisfied that the meeting can be conducted fairly and transparently and all participants can participate effectively.
- If technology fails and fairness or effective participation cannot be restored, a face-to-face meeting will be arranged without delay.

- A remote meeting may be refused where a safeguarding concern means full participation, fairness or transparency cannot be secured.
- Social workers and Virtual School Heads must be allowed to join remotely, including where the main meeting is in person, where the conditions for effective, fair and transparent participation are met.
- Remote access does not alter any other procedural right or statutory timescale.

14. Independent review of a permanent exclusion

Where the governing board decides not to reinstate a permanently excluded pupil, its written decision will state that the exclusion remains permanent and will provide:

- notice of the right to apply for an independent review panel and the application deadline;
- where and to whom the application and evidence must be sent;
- the right to request a remote-access review and how to request it;
- the need to set out the grounds for review and, where appropriate, the relevance of SEN;
- the right to require the academy trust to appoint a SEN expert, whether or not the pupil has identified SEN, at no cost to the parent;
- information about the SEN expert's role;
- the right to appoint a representative at the parent's own expense and to bring a friend;
- information about Equality Act discrimination claims and the relevant tribunal or court; and
- relevant free and impartial advice.

An application must be made within 15 school days of written notice of the governing board's decision. If no application was made within that period, an application may instead be made within 15 school days of the final determination of an Equality Act discrimination claim relating to the permanent exclusion. An application outside the legal timeframe must be rejected.

The academy trust will arrange the review at its own expense. The review must begin within 15 school days of the application. The panel will comprise three or five eligible and trained members and may:

- uphold the governing board's decision;
- recommend that the governing board reconsiders reinstatement; or
- quash the decision and direct reconsideration where the governing board's decision was flawed when considered in light of the principles of judicial review.

Where reconsideration is recommended or directed, the governing board will reconvene within 10 school days of receiving notice of the panel's decision, consider reinstatement afresh, record its reasons and notify the relevant parties in writing without delay.

15. Admission and attendance registers and information transfer

A permanently excluded pupil's name will remain on the admission register until:

- 15 school days have passed since the parent was notified of the governing board's decision not to reinstate and no application has been made for an independent review; or
- the parent has stated in writing that no application will be made.

Where a timely review application is made, the school will wait until the review is determined or abandoned and any recommended or directed reconsideration has been completed. Removal will not be backdated. A return will be made to the local authority when the pupil's name is deleted because of permanent exclusion.

While the pupil remains registered, the appropriate attendance code will be used. Code D may be used where the pupil is dual registered at another educational establishment; Code B may be used for approved off-site educational activity where the pupil is not registered at another school; and Code E will be used where the pupil is suspended or permanently excluded and is not attending alternative provision.

Once the pupil has been removed from the admission register and registered at a new school, the Common Transfer File will be transferred within 15 school days unless the governing body and local authority have agreed otherwise. The DSL will transfer the child protection file securely, separately from the main pupil file, as soon as possible and within five days for an in-year transfer, obtaining confirmation of receipt.

16. Recording, monitoring and governance oversight

Every suspension and permanent exclusion, including a part-day or lunchtime suspension and any cancelled exclusion, will be formally recorded. The school will maintain a reliable cumulative record of school days lost to suspension across the academic year, including known suspensions imposed by previous schools.

The Deputy Headteacher will report regularly to the Headteacher and governing board. Monitoring will include:

- numbers, duration and reasons for suspensions and permanent exclusions;
- repeat suspensions and cumulative days;
- patterns by year group and pupil characteristics, including SEND, disability, disadvantage, ethnicity, sex, looked-after status and social-worker involvement, using data lawfully and proportionately;
- off-site direction, managed moves, safeguarding separations, removals from roll and other pupil movement;
- quality, attendance and outcomes of alternative provision;
- interventions for pupils at risk of exclusion;
- correct use of attendance codes;

- compliance with notification and review timescales; and
- any evidence of disproportionality, policy inconsistency, unlawful exclusion or off-rolling.

The governing board will provide challenge and assurance, including whether placements and safeguarding separations are reviewed sufficiently, whether SEND support is appropriate, and whether permanent exclusion is used only where necessary as a last resort.

17. Complaints and records

Statutory representations, governing board consideration and independent review rights are separate from the school complaints procedure. Concerns that do not fall within the statutory review process may be raised through the school complaints procedure. Records will be retained and shared in accordance with data protection, safeguarding and educational-record requirements.

18. Related policies and guidance

- Poynton High School Behaviour Policy;
- SEND Policy and Information Report;
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Attendance Policy;
- Equality information and objectives;
- Complaints Policy;
- Department for Education: Suspension and permanent exclusion statutory guidance, July 2026;
- Department for Education: Behaviour in Schools;
- Department for Education: Keeping Children Safe in Education;
- Department for Education: Working together to improve school attendance; and
- Department for Education: Arranging Alternative Provision.