



# SEND CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy 2025-2026

**Approved by: The Governing Body**  
**Agreed: Autumn term 2025**  
**Review Autumn term 2026**  
**Annual**

### **Our Vision**

Everyone is offered a warm welcome here.

We serve the children, staff, parents and our community to the best of our ability, every day.

We have high expectations for our children.

We celebrate uniqueness by developing the whole person and helping every child to achieve their God given potential.

We love one another as we are loved by God.

### **1. Aims and Legal Compliance**

We are committed to following all statutory suspension and permanent exclusion procedures as mandated by the Department for Education (DfE) guidance (updated August 2024) to make sure that every child receives an education in a safe and caring environment.

Our school aims to:

- Ensure that the disciplinary process is applied lawfully, fairly, and consistently, adhering to the balance of probabilities standard of proof.
- Help governors, staff, parents/carers and pupils understand the disciplinary process.
- Make sure that pupils in school are safe and happy and that staff are protected.
- Prevent pupils from becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training).

### **2. Off-Rolling (Unlawful Exclusion)**

'Off-rolling' is strictly prohibited. Off-rolling is a form of unlawful exclusion and occurs where a school decides, in the interests of the school and not the pupil, to:

- Remove a pupil from the school admission register without a formal, permanent exclusion, or
- Encourage a parent/carer to remove their child from the school, or
- Retain a pupil on the school admission register but not allow them to attend the school.

It is unlawful to exclude a pupil for non-disciplinary reasons, such as low academic attainment, having an identified Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND), or the cost/difficulty of meeting a pupil's specific needs.

### 3. Nurture-Informed Approach and Non-Negotiable Boundaries

The school is committed to fostering a culture where all behaviour is understood within the context of a child's social and emotional development. Our disciplinary process is informed by the Six Principles of Nurture.

#### Nurture Principles in Policy Application

The Headteacher and staff will apply these principles when considering disciplinary action, particularly by seeking to understand the unmet need that underpinned the behaviour.

<b>Nurture Principle</b>	<b>Application in Policy Procedure</b>
1. Learning is understood developmentally.	The Headteacher will consider the pupil's social and emotional maturity alongside their chronological age when assessing the reasonableness and severity of the incident.
2. The school offers a safe base.	Staff must document attempts to de-escalate and re-establish a sense of safety and regulation for the pupil prior to any disciplinary escalation.
3. Nurture is important for the development of wellbeing.	Alternatives to Suspension will always prioritise pastoral support (e.g., mentoring, ELSA, Nurture Group provision) that targets the pupil's underlying social and emotional wellbeing deficits.
4. Language is a vital means of communication.	Following a serious incident, a Restorative Conversation with the pupil must be used to help them articulate the emotions and needs that drove the behaviour.
5. All behaviour is communication.	The Headteacher's investigation must explicitly seek to identify the function of the challenging behaviour (e.g., avoidance, attention-seeking, sensory need) as an unmet need.
6. Transitions are important in children's lives.	The re-integration process will be carefully managed to support the pupil's return to the classroom, ensuring the process is calm, predictable, and supportive.

#### Non-Negotiable Boundaries for Safety

The school has a non-negotiable duty to safeguard all pupils and staff, and to protect the right of every pupil to learn without disruption.

Suspension will be the expected and necessary outcome in all but the rarest and most exceptional circumstances for:

1. Serious Disruption of Learning: Sustained or severe behaviour that prevents the learning of other pupils in a classroom or public area from taking place.

2. **Physical Assault on Staff or Adults:** Any physical act, however minor the injury, directed against a member of staff, a volunteer, or any other adult on the school premises.

In such cases, the Headteacher will still apply Nurture Principles 5 and 1 during the investigation, but the decision to suspend will be made based on the severity of the action and the overriding need to uphold safety and order.

#### **4. Decision to Suspend or Permanently Exclude (Headteacher)**

##### Grounds for Action

The Headteacher may only suspend or permanently exclude a pupil for a disciplinary reason where:

1. The pupil has breached the school's behaviour policy; AND
2. The pupil's continued presence in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others at the school.

##### Investigation and Standard of Proof (Legal Requirement)

The Headteacher must:

- Establish, on the balance of probabilities (meaning it is more likely than not), that the pupil committed the alleged misconduct.
- Carry out a full and fair investigation before making a decision.

##### Consideration of Contributing Factors (Legal Requirement)

Before any decision to suspend or permanently exclude is made, the Headteacher must actively investigate and take into account all factors that may have contributed to the behaviour, including:

- **SEND/Disability:** Whether the behaviour is linked to an identified or undiagnosed Special Educational Need or Disability. If so, a review of provision and adjustments must be mandated.
- **Mental Health Issues:** Known or suspected trauma, anxiety, or other mental health conditions.
- **Trauma or Bereavement:** Any significant event (e.g., bereavement, family breakdown) that may have impacted the pupil's emotional state.
- **Evidence of Bullying or Harassment:** Whether the pupil was the victim of a previous incident that led to the subsequent misconduct.

##### Permanent Exclusion

A permanent exclusion will only be considered as a last resort in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the behaviour policy, where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously jeopardise the education or welfare of pupils or staff.

#### **5. Procedure for Suspension**

1. **Notification:** The Headteacher will immediately inform the parents/carers of the suspension decision, its reason, the duration (including the date of return), and their

rights of review.

2. **Written Confirmation:** Written notice must follow without delay, specifying the reason, the period, the parents' duty to ensure the pupil is not in a public place during school hours, and the provision for education (starting from the sixth school day of suspension).

#### Re-integration Meetings (Legal Requirement)

A suspension ends with the pupil's return to school.

1. The school will arrange a re-integration meeting with the parent/carer, pupil, and a key adult (aligned with Nurture Principle 6: Transitions).
2. The purpose is to review the incident, discuss the support plan, and re-establish expectations.
3. **Crucially:** The pupil must not be prevented from returning to school at the end of the suspension period, even if the parent/carer is unable or unwilling to attend the re-integration meeting.

### 6. Governing Board Review of Headteacher's Decision

The Governing Board has a duty to consider representations from parents/carers and review the Headteacher's decision in line with legal thresholds:

<b>Decision Type</b>	<b>Governing Body Duty to Review</b>
Permanent Exclusion	Mandatory review regardless of whether parents make representations.
Suspension (Total over 15 school days in one term)	Mandatory review regardless of whether parents make representations.
Suspension (Total over 5 but under 15 school days in one term)	Mandatory review if requested by parents/carers.
Suspension (Total of 5 school days or less in one term)	No requirement to review, but must consider parents' representations.

Review Hearings: Governing Board hearings and subsequent Independent Review Panel (IRP) hearings may be held remotely (virtually) if circumstances require it.

### 7. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Positive Behaviour policy
- SEND policy
- SEN information report