



Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy

Governor Committee Responsible:	N/A	Staff Lead	Hannah Williams
Status	Advisory	Review Cycle	Annually
Last Review	September 2026	Next Review Date	September 2027
Chair of Governors	Mike Adlam Chair@finlay.gloucs.sch.uk		

Finlay Community School – September 2026

Updated in line with DfE statutory guidance effective from 26 July 2026

1. Aims

We are committed to following all statutory exclusions procedures to ensure that every child receives an education in a safe, inclusive and supportive environment.

Our school aims to:

- Ensure that the exclusions process is applied fairly and consistently
- Help governors, staff, parents and pupils understand the exclusions process
- Ensure that pupils in school are safe and supported
- Prevent pupils from becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training)
- Ensure all suspensions and permanent exclusions are carried out lawfully
- Ensure that safeguarding and pupil welfare are central to all decisions

We will not use suspension or exclusion in a way that could place a pupil at increased risk of harm.

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on statutory guidance from the Department for Education:

Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement – statutory guidance effective from 26 July 2026.

It is based on the following legislation:

- Education Act 2002 (Section 51A)
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014 This policy is also written in line with:
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007
- Education (Educational Provision for Improving Behaviour) (Application to Academies and Pupil Referral Units and Minor Amendments) Regulations 2026

2A. Safeguarding and exclusion decisions

The school recognises that behaviour leading to suspension or permanent exclusion may be linked to unmet safeguarding needs.

Before making any decision to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil, the Co - headteacher will:

- Consider whether the behaviour is a result of:
 - Safeguarding concerns, including abuse, neglect or exploitation
 - Unmet social, emotional or mental health needs
 - Trauma or adverse childhood experiences
- Consult with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) where appropriate
- Review safeguarding records, including Child Protection or Child in Need plans
- Consider whether a safeguarding referral (including early help or statutory services) is required

Where a pupil is vulnerable, the school will ensure that exclusion is not used in a way that would place the pupil at greater risk of harm.

The school will work with relevant agencies, including children's social care, to ensure that appropriate support is in place before, during and after any suspension or permanent exclusion.

Separation for safeguarding purposes

There may be exceptional circumstances where it is necessary to separate pupils while safeguarding concerns are investigated or managed. Such separation is distinct from a disciplinary suspension or permanent exclusion and will not be used as an informal or unofficial exclusion.

Any arrangements will be based on an assessment of safeguarding risk and the individual circumstances of the pupil, with appropriate education and support maintained.

3. Definitions

Suspension – when a pupil is removed from the school for a fixed period

Permanent exclusion – when a pupil is removed permanently and taken off the school roll

Off-site direction – A temporary arrangement where the governing board requires a pupil to attend another education setting for the purpose of receiving educational provision intended to improve their behaviour. The pupil remains on Finlay Community School's roll and the placement must be kept under regular review.

Managed move – A permanent transfer of a pupil to another mainstream school, undertaken in the pupil's best interests and with the agreement of the pupil's parents, the pupil where appropriate, and

the schools involved. A managed move must be voluntary and must not be used as an alternative to following the statutory suspension or permanent exclusion process.

Parent – any person with parental responsibility

Exclusion – throughout this policy, where the term exclusion is used without qualification, it includes both suspension and permanent exclusion.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The Co-headteacher

Only the headteacher of a school can suspend or permanently exclude a pupil. At Finlay Community School, this responsibility is exercised in accordance with the school's Co-Headteacher leadership arrangements. In the absence of a Co-Headteacher, an acting headteacher may exercise this responsibility.

A decision will only be taken:

- In response to serious or persistent breaches of the behaviour policy
- Where allowing the pupil to remain would seriously harm the education or welfare of others

Suspension

A suspension may be used where this is a proportionate response to a pupil's behaviour and where other appropriate strategies have been considered.

Permanent exclusion

A decision to permanently exclude a pupil 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 in the school.
- Permanent exclusion will normally be a last resort. There may, however, be exceptional circumstances where it is appropriate for a first or one-off offence.

Before making a decision, the Co-headteacher will:

- Consider all relevant facts and evidence on the balance of probabilities
- Allow the pupil to give their version of events
- Consider SEND and reasonable adjustments
- Consider vulnerability (including social worker or looked-after status)

- Consider whether the behaviour is linked to safeguarding concerns and consult the DSL where appropriate
- Consider whether alternative strategies have been explored
- Consider whether suspension has become a regular occurrence for the pupil and, where this is the case, whether suspension remains an effective response and whether additional support or alternative strategies are required.

Further Evidence

Where further evidence comes to light following an initial suspension, in exceptional circumstances the Co-Headteacher may issue a further suspension to begin immediately after the first suspension, or a permanent exclusion to begin immediately after the suspension. Each decision will be made and recorded separately and parents will be notified accordingly.

Where safeguarding concerns are identified, appropriate action will be taken in line with the safeguarding policy. Exclusion will not be used as a substitute for safeguarding intervention.

Maximum Period of Suspension

A pupil may be suspended for one or more fixed periods, up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year. This includes suspensions totalling 45 days across the academic year. Once the statutory maximum has been reached, no further suspension can be issued during that academic year.

Informing parents

Parents will be informed without delay and in writing of the suspension or permanent exclusion and the reasons for it.

- The reason(s) for the suspension or exclusion
- The length of the suspension or permanence of the exclusion
- Their rights to make representations Parents will also be informed that:
- For the first 5 school days, they must ensure the child is not in a public place during school hours without good reason
- They may face a fixed penalty notice or prosecution if they fail to do so

Where alternative provision is arranged, parents will receive:

- Start date
- Times of attendance
- Location

- Reporting arrangements

This information will be provided within statutory timescales.

Informing the governing board and local authority

The Co-Headteacher will notify the governing board and local authority in accordance with the notification requirements and timescales set out in the DfE statutory guidance.

Informing social workers / VSH

Where a pupil has a social worker or is looked-after:

- They will be informed as early as possible
- They will be invited to relevant meetings
- Their advice will be sought regarding safeguarding risks, contextual factors and appropriate support strategies

Cancelling suspensions and permanent exclusions

The Co-headteacher may cancel an exclusion that has not yet been reviewed by the governing board.

Where this occurs:

- All relevant parties will be notified without delay and informed of the reason for the cancellation
- The pupil will return to school without delay
- Parents will be offered a meeting

Any time already spent out of school will count towards the statutory maximum.

Education during a suspension or permanent exclusion

Work will be provided and marked during the first 5 days.

For vulnerable pupils, the school will work with the local authority to provide education from day 1 where appropriate.

Where a suspension is for more than five school days, the school must arrange suitable full-time education from the sixth school day.

Where a pupil is permanently excluded, the local authority must arrange suitable full-time education from the sixth school day.

4.2 The governing board

The governing board will:

- Consider reinstatement decisions within statutory timeframes
- Review the lawfulness, reasonableness and fairness of decisions
- Consider safeguarding, welfare and contextual factors

In making decisions, the board will consider:

- Whether safeguarding needs were identified and addressed
- Whether appropriate support was in place
- The welfare and safety of all pupils

The board will monitor:

- Patterns of exclusion
- Disproportionality
- Effectiveness of interventions

4.3 The local authority

The local authority will:

- arrange suitable full-time education from the sixth school day following a permanent exclusion, for pupils of compulsory school age;
- fulfil its statutory responsibilities towards pupils with an EHC plan and looked-after children; and
- work with the school and other agencies to support vulnerable pupils as appropriate.

5. Considering reinstatement

The governing board will consider reinstatement within statutory timescales, including:

- the pupil has been permanently excluded;
- a suspension would bring the pupil's total number of suspended school days to more than 15 in a term; or

- the suspension/permanent exclusion would result in the pupil missing a public examination or national curriculum test.

Where suspensions total more than 5 but no more than 15 school days in a term, the governing board must consider reinstatement if parents make representations.

6. Independent review

Parents may request an independent review panel within statutory timelines.

The panel will:

- Consider the circumstances of the exclusion
- Review whether procedures were followed
- Consider whether safeguarding needs and vulnerabilities were properly taken into account

The panel may:

- Uphold the decision
- Recommend reconsideration
- quash the governing board's decision and direct the governing board to reconsider the exclusion.

Parents may request the appointment of an SEN expert, regardless of whether the school recognises that the pupil has SEN.

7. School registers

The school will:

- Maintain accurate attendance records
- Remove a permanently excluded pupil's name from the admission register only when the statutory conditions for deletion from roll have been met.
- Notify the local authority with required pupil details

8. Returning from a suspension

8.1 Reintegration strategy

A reintegration strategy will be implemented, including:

- Consideration of safeguarding needs

- Review of existing safeguarding plans
- Identification of additional support

Where appropriate, a risk assessment will be completed.

8.2 Reintegration meetings

- Parents
- Staff
- Relevant professionals
- Safeguarding staff where appropriate

A pupil's return to school will not be conditional upon the pupil or parent attending a reintegration meeting

9. Remote access to meetings

Meetings may be held remotely where:

Governing board reinstatement meetings and Independent Review Panels may be held remotely where permitted by the relevant regulations and statutory guidance. Where a parent requests a remote meeting, arrangements will be made in accordance with the statutory requirements.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The school will monitor:

- Exclusion data
- Patterns across groups
- Timing and frequency

The governing board will regularly review suspension, permanent exclusion and pupil movement data, including:

- frequency and duration of suspensions;
- repeat suspensions;
- patterns by year group and pupil group;
- SEND, disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils;
- disproportionality;
- use and effectiveness of preventative interventions; and
- off-site directions and managed moves.

Analysis will be used to ensure fairness and compliance with equality duties.

11. Links with other policies

This policy links to:

- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- SEN Information Report
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Restrictive Interventions Policy
- Equality Policy/Objectives
- Alternative Provision procedures, where applicable

Statement on Off-Rolling

Finlay Community School does not engage in off-rolling or informal/unofficial exclusion. A pupil will not be sent home for disciplinary reasons without the formal suspension process being followed. This includes sending a pupil home to “cool off”.

The school will not place pressure on parents to remove a pupil from the school, electively home educate or accept a managed move in order to avoid suspension or permanent exclusion.

Off Site Direction and Managed Moves

Off-site direction

Off-site direction may be used where requiring a pupil to attend another education setting for the purpose of improving their behaviour is considered appropriate. It will not be used as a disciplinary sanction or as an alternative to following the statutory suspension or permanent exclusion process.

Decisions will be made in accordance with statutory requirements and DfE guidance. The school will consider the pupil's individual circumstances, SEND, safeguarding needs and best interests and will seek and take account of the pupil's views.

Placements will be regularly reviewed to determine whether the placement continues to be appropriate and whether the pupil should return to Finlay.

Managed moves

A managed move is a permanent move to another mainstream school and will only take place where this is considered to be in the pupil's best interests.

Managed moves will be undertaken with the agreement of the relevant parties and in accordance with statutory guidance. Parents and pupils will be involved in the process and their views will be taken into account.

A managed move will not be used to circumvent the statutory exclusion process or exert pressure on a family to remove a pupil from Finlay Community School

