



Aletheia
Academies Trust

Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy

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1. Aims

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

1.2 Our school aims to ensure that:

- ▶ The exclusions process is applied fairly and consistently
- ▶ The exclusions process is understood by governors, staff, parents and pupils
- ▶ Pupils in school are safe and happy
- ▶ Pupils do not become NEET (not in education, employment or training)
- ▶ Suspensions are used proportionately and purposefully, with a strong presumption that pupils remain on-site wherever safe and appropriate
- ▶ Internal suspension is used as a structured, educational response to non-violent or disruptive behaviour, focused on reintegration
- ▶ Decisions take full account of pupils' special educational needs, disabilities, safeguarding vulnerabilities, and pastoral context
- ▶ All suspensions and permanent exclusions are carried out lawfully.

A note on off-rolling

1.3 'Off-rolling' is a form of gaming 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



- Schools with sixth forms: Encourage a sixth-form student not to continue with the course of study, or
- Retain a pupil on the school admission register but not allow them to attend the school normally, without a formal permanent exclusion or suspension, or
- Move a pupil to alternative provision (AP) where this is not in their best interests, or
- Send a pupil home without formally recording a suspension regardless of whether it occurs with the agreement of parents/carers, or
- Place a pupil on a part-time timetable for behavioural reasons, or
- Remove a pupil from the school roll without following due process.

1.4 Accordingly, we will not suspend or permanently exclude a pupil unlawfully by telling or forcing them to leave, encouraging their parent(s)/carer(s) to remove them from the school, or not allowing them to attend school without following the statutory procedure contained in the [School Discipline \(Pupil Exclusions and Reviews\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#), or formally recording the event.

1.5 Any suspension or exclusion will be made on disciplinary grounds, and will not be made:

- Because a pupil has special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND) that the school feels unable to support, or
- Due to a pupil's poor academic performance, or
- Because the pupil hasn't met a specific condition, such as attending a reintegration meeting.

1.6 If any pupil is suspended or permanently excluded on the above grounds, this will also be considered as 'off-rolling'.



2. Legislation and statutory guidance

- 2.1 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](#).
- 2.2 It is based on the following legislation, which outlines schools' powers to exclude pupils:
- ▶ Section 51a of the Education Act 2002, as amended by the Education Act 2011
 - ▶ The School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012
 - ▶ School Attendance (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2024
 - ▶ The Education (Educational Provision for Improving Behaviour) (Application to Academies and Pupil Referral Units and Minor Amendments) Regulations 2026.
- 2.3 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](#)
 - ▶ [The Equality Act 2010](#)
 - ▶ [Children and Families Act 2014](#)
- 2.4 This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.



3. Definitions

Suspension	when a pupil is removed from the school for a fixed period. This was previously referred to as a 'fixed-term exclusion'.
Permanent Exclusion	when a pupil is removed from the school permanently and taken off the school roll. This is sometimes referred to as an 'exclusion'
Off-site Direction	Off-site direction is a temporary measure used to improve a pupil's behaviour and must be subject to regular review. The pupil remains on roll at the school, and the governing board retains responsibility for the pupil's educational outcomes, safeguarding and welfare.
Parent	any person who has parental responsibility and any person who has care of the child.
Internal Suspension	A time-limited, structured intervention where a pupil is removed from their usual timetable but remains on the school site under supervision. Internal suspension must: • Be purposeful and educational, not punitive isolation • Include access to learning • Be focused on reflection, support and reintegration



	• Be recorded and monitored in line with Trust procedures
Safeguarding Separation	A temporary measure where a pupil is prevented from attending school for safeguarding reasons rather than disciplinary reasons. A safeguarding separation is not a suspension or permanent exclusion and must not be recorded as such. The school will ensure that safeguarding separations are: • lawful, necessary and proportionate; • regularly reviewed; • recorded appropriately; • supported by a reintegration plan where required; • communicated clearly to parents.
Managed Move	A voluntary and permanent move to another school, agreed by all parties and processed through the applicable in-year admissions arrangements. Managed moves are not temporary or trial arrangements. Where a temporary placement is required to improve behaviour, off-site direction arrangements will be considered instead.



School Day	Any day on which there is a school session. Therefore, INSET or staff training days do not count as a school day.
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4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The Headteacher/Head of School

Deciding whether to suspend or exclude

4.1.1 In line with current Department for Education guidance, where behaviour is non-violent and does not present a serious risk to the safety or welfare of others, the Headteacher/Head of School will give due consideration to the use of internal suspension or alternative in-school interventions before deciding to suspend a pupil off site.

4.1.2 Only the Headteacher/Head of School, or Acting Headteacher/Head of School¹, can suspend or permanently exclude a pupil from school on disciplinary grounds. The decision can be made in respect of behaviour inside or outside of school. The Headteacher/Head of School will only use permanent exclusion as a last resort. For the purposes of the statutory guidance, the Executive Headteacher when exercising the functions of the Headteacher, has authority to make the decision to permanently exclude.

4.1.3 A decision to suspend or exclude a pupil will be taken only:

¹ A Deputy Headteacher or other senior leader does not have the power to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil unless they have been formally appointed to carry out the functions of the Headteacher/Head of School during the Headteacher's absence.



- ▶ In response to serious or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy, **and**
- ▶ If allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others

4.1.4 Before deciding whether to suspend or exclude a pupil, the Headteacher/Head of School will:

- ▶ Consider all the relevant facts and evidence, including any extenuating circumstances on the balance of probabilities, including whether the incident(s) leading to the exclusion was/were provoked
- ▶ Allow the pupil to give their version of events
- ▶ Consider whether the behaviour may be linked to special educational needs, disability, safeguarding concerns or unmet pastoral needs, and whether reasonable adjustments or additional support are required as part of the response.
- ▶ Consider whether the pupil is especially vulnerable (e.g. the pupil has a social worker, or is a looked-after child (LAC))
- ▶ Consider whether appropriate alternatives have been explored, including pastoral support, reasonable adjustments, early help, alternative provision, off-site direction and managed moves where suitable and lawful.

4.1.5 The Headteacher/Head of School will consider the views of the pupil, in light of their age and understanding, before deciding to suspend or exclude, unless it would not be appropriate to do so.

4.1.6 Pupils who need support to express their views will be allowed to have their views expressed through an advocate, such as a parent or social worker.



4.1.7 The Headteacher/Head of School will not reach their decision until they have heard from the pupil, and will inform the pupil of how their views were taken into account when making the decision.

Internal suspension

4.1.8 Where an internal suspension is used, the school will ensure that:

- Parents are informed on the day the internal suspension is imposed
The intervention is recorded, time-limited and reviewed.
- The pupil has access to appropriate work and supervision.
- A reintegration discussion takes place before return to normal timetable.
- Any SEND or pastoral needs are reviewed as part of the process.

Use of Off-site Direction

4.1.9 The school may use off-site direction where it is judged to be a suitable intervention to improve a pupil's behaviour.

4.1.10 Off-site direction will only be used where:

- ▶ it is in the pupil's best interests;
- ▶ the placement is appropriate to the pupil's needs;
- ▶ the objectives of the placement are clearly identified;
- ▶ the placement is time limited;
- ▶ parents are informed in writing;
- ▶ the arrangement is reviewed regularly.

4.1.11 The pupil will remain on roll at the school and responsibility for safeguarding, attendance and educational progress remains with the school.

4.1.12 Where the pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan, the local authority will be informed in accordance with statutory requirements.



4.1.13 The governing board will review all off-site directions at appropriate intervals to ensure that the placement remains suitable and continues to meet its intended objectives.

4.1.14 Existing off-site direction placements in place before 26 July 2026 will be reviewed and brought into line with current statutory requirements.

Safeguarding Separation

4.1.15 In exceptional circumstances, the school may require a pupil not to attend school temporarily where this is necessary to manage an immediate safeguarding risk.

4.1.16 Such action is not a suspension or permanent exclusion and will not be recorded as a disciplinary sanction.

4.1.17 The Headteacher/Head of School will:

- ▶ keep the arrangement under regular review;
- ▶ communicate with parents throughout the period;
- ▶ consider any safeguarding, SEND or welfare needs;
- ▶ plan appropriately for reintegration.

4.1.18 The school will maintain appropriate records of any safeguarding separation.

Informing the Trust

The Headteacher will notify the Chief Executive Officer (or nominated Executive Leader) immediately of any proposed permanent exclusion and any suspension that is likely to attract significant media, safeguarding or legal interest.



Informing parents

4.1.19 If a pupil is at risk of suspension or exclusion the Headteacher/Head of School will inform the parents without delay in order to work together to consider what factors may be affecting the pupil's behaviour, and what further support can be put in place to improve the behaviour.

4.1.20 If the Headteacher/Head of School decides to suspend or exclude a pupil, the parents will be informed of the period of the suspension or exclusion, and the reason(s) for it, without delay.

4.1.21 The parents will also be provided with the following information in writing, without delay:

- ▶ 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 about parents' right to make representations about the suspension or permanent exclusion to the governing board and how the pupil may be involved in this
- ▶ How any representations should be made
- ▶ Where there is a legal requirement for the governing board to hold a meeting to consider the reinstatement of a pupil, and that parents (or the pupil if they are 18 years old) have a right to attend the meeting, be represented at the meeting (at their own expense) and to bring a friend.
- ▶ Parents/Carers right to make a request for a remote meeting to be carried out by electronic means e.g. live video link.

4.1.22 The Headteacher/Head of School will also notify parents 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 school days of an exclusion (or until the start date of any alternative provision or the end of the suspension, where this is earlier), the parents are legally required to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours without a good reason. This will include specifying on which days this duty applies
- ▶ Parents may be given a fixed penalty notice or prosecuted if they fail to do this.

4.1.23 If alternative provision is being arranged, the following information will be included, if possible:

- ▶ The start date for any provision of full-time education that has been arranged
- ▶ The start and finish times of any such provision, including the times for morning and afternoon sessions, where relevant
- ▶ The address at which the provision will take place
- ▶ Any information the pupil needs in order to identify the person they should report to on the first day.

4.1.24 If the Headteacher/Head of School does not have all the information about the alternative provision arrangements by the end of the afternoon session on the first day of the suspension or permanent exclusion, they can provide the information at a later date, without delay and no later than 48 hours before the provision is due to start.

4.1.25 The only exception to this is where alternative provision is to be provided before the sixth day of a suspension or permanent exclusion, in which case the school reserves the right to provide the information with less than 48 hours' notice, with parents' consent.



Informing the governing board

4.1.26 The Headteacher/Head of School will, without delay, notify the governing board via the Chair of Governors and Clerk of:

- ▶ Any permanent exclusion, including when a suspension is followed by a decision to permanently exclude a pupil
- ▶ Any suspension or permanent exclusion which would result in the pupil being suspended or permanently excluded for a total of more than 5 school days (or more than 10 lunchtimes) in a term
- ▶ Any suspension or permanent exclusion which would result in the pupil missing a National Curriculum test or public examination.

4.1.27 The Headteacher/Head of School will notify the governing board at the next Local Governing Board meeting of any other suspensions of which they have not previously been notified, and the number of suspensions and exclusions which have been cancelled, including the circumstances and reasons for the cancellation.

Informing the local authority (LA)

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

4.1.29 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
- ▶ For a permanent exclusion, if the pupil lives outside the LA in which the school is located, the Headteacher/Head of School will also, without delay, inform the pupil's 'home authority' of the exclusion and the reason(s) for it.



Informing the pupil's social worker and/or virtual school head (VSH)

4.1.30 If a pupil with a social worker is at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion, the Headteacher/Head of School will inform the social worker as early as possible

4.1.31 If a pupil who is a looked-after child (LAC) is at risk of suspension or exclusion, the Headteacher/Head of School will inform the VSH as early as possible.

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

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

- ▶ They have decided to suspend or permanently exclude the pupil
- ▶ 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 pupils ability to sit a National Curriculum test or public exam (where relevant).

4.1.34 The social worker / VSH will be invited to any meeting of the governing board about the suspension or permanent exclusion. This is so they can provide advice on how the pupil's background and/or circumstances may have influenced the circumstances of their suspension or permanent exclusion. The social worker should also help ensure safeguarding needs and risks and the pupil's welfare are taken into account.



4.1.35 Social workers and VSHs must be allowed to join a meeting via the use of remote access, regardless of the format chosen, as long as the governing board (for a governing board meeting) or arranging authority (for an IRP) are satisfied that they will be able to participate effectively, they can hear and be heard (and see and be seen if participating by video) throughout the meeting, and their remote participation will not prevent the meeting being fair and transparent.

Cancelling suspensions and permanent exclusions

4.1.36 The Headteacher/Head of School may cancel a suspension or permanent exclusion that has already begun, or has not yet started, provided the Governing Board have not yet met to consider whether the pupil should be reinstated. Where there is a cancellation, the following people should be notified without delay:

- ▶ The parents/carers, Chair of the Governing board and LA. The notification must also provide the reason for the cancellation;
- ▶ Where relevant, any social worker and VSH. The notification must also provide the reason for the cancellation;
- ▶ Parents/carers (or the excluded pupil if they are 18 years or older) will be offered the opportunity to meet with the Headteacher/Head of School to discuss the circumstances that led to the exclusion being cancelled;

4.1.37 As referred to above, the Headteacher/Head of School will report to the governing board once per term or at the next LGB meeting on the number of cancellations

4.1.38 The pupil will be allowed back in school without delay.

4.1.39 Any days spent out of school as a result of any exclusion, prior to the cancellation, will count towards the maximum of 45 school days permitted in any school year.



4.1.40 A permanent exclusion cannot be cancelled if the pupil has already been excluded for more than 45 school days in a school year or if they will have been so by the time the cancellation takes effect.

Providing education during the first 5 days of a suspension or permanent exclusion

4.1.41 During the first 5 days of a suspension, if the pupil is not attending alternative (AP) provision, the Headteacher/Head of School will take steps to ensure that achievable and accessible work is set and marked for the pupil. If the pupil has a special educational need or disability, the Headteacher/Head of School will make sure that reasonable adjustments are made to the provision where necessary.

4.1.42 If the pupil is looked after or if they have a social worker, the school will work with the LA to arrange AP from the first day following the suspension or permanent exclusion. Where this is not possible, the school will take reasonable steps to set and mark work for the pupil, including the use of online pathways.

Safety and restrictive interventions

4.1.43 From 1 April 2026, the school will comply with updated statutory guidance on restrictive physical intervention and the use of reasonable force. Any such intervention will be proportionate, recorded, reviewed and used only where necessary to prevent harm.

4.2 The governing board

Considering suspensions and permanent exclusions at panel hearing

4.2.1 Responsibilities regarding exclusions are delegated to a Panel Committee (Committee of the governing board) which will be formed



of a minimum of 3 governors/trust-appointed panel members. A Headteacher from another school may also form part of the committee.

4.2.2 The Chair of the Panel Committee has a duty to consider parents' representations about a suspension or permanent exclusion. It has a duty to consider the reinstatement of a suspended or permanently excluded pupil (see sections 5 and 6) in certain circumstances.

4.2.3 The Panel Committee has a duty to consider parents' representations about a suspension or permanent exclusion. It has a duty to consider the reinstatement of a suspended or permanently excluded pupil (see sections 5 and 6) in certain circumstances.

4.2.4 For any suspension of more than 5 school days, the Panel Committee will arrange suitable full-time education for the pupil. This provision will begin no later than the sixth day of the suspension.

For secondary schools only:

4.2.5 The governing board does not have to arrange such provision for pupils in their final year of compulsory education who do not have any further public exams to sit.

Monitoring and analysing suspensions and exclusions data

4.2.6 The governing board will review, challenge and evaluate the data on the school's use of suspension, exclusion, off-site direction to alternative provision, and managed moves. The governing board will:

- Closely scrutinise patterns of all pupil movement, including suspensions, permanent exclusions, off-site direction and managed moves
- Ensure these measures are only used as a last resort



- ▶ Review any use of separation from site for safeguarding purposes
- ▶ Challenge the school's leadership team to identify and address emerging trends

4.2.7 The governing board will consider:

- ▶ How effectively and consistently the school's behaviour policy is being implemented
- ▶ The school register and absence codes
- ▶ Instances where pupils receive repeat suspensions
- ▶ Interventions in place to support pupils at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion
- ▶ Any variations in the rolling average of permanent exclusions, to understand why this is happening, and to make sure they are only used when necessary
- ▶ Timing of moves and permanent exclusions, and whether there are any patterns, including any indications which may highlight where policies or support are not working
- ▶ The characteristics of suspended and permanently excluded pupils, and why this is taking place
- ▶ Whether the placements of pupils directed off-site into alternative provision are reviewed at sufficient intervals to assure that the education is achieving its objectives and that pupils are benefiting from it
- ▶ The cost implications of directing pupils off-site.

Performance data and benchmarking:

4.2.8 Governors will hold leaders to account and make informed decisions. To enable them to do so, they'll make use of performance data in the following areas:



- ▶ Pupil numbers, attendance and exclusions
- ▶ Attainment and progress
- ▶ Curriculum planning and class sizes
- ▶ Financial management and governance
- ▶ Quality assurance
- ▶ Safeguarding and wellbeing
- ▶ The school community, including staff, pupils, parents/carers and the governing board

4.3 The local authority (LA)

- 4.3.1 For permanent exclusions, the LA will arrange suitable full-time education to begin no later than the sixth school day after the first day of the exclusion.
- 4.3.2 For pupils who are LAC or have social workers, the LA and the school will work together arrange suitable full-time education to begin from the first day of the exclusion.

4.4 Conditions for Remote Meetings

- 4.4.1 Annex A of the guidance sets out the key principles when conducting meetings via the use of remote access. The governing board or arranging authority must not refuse a request solely because a meeting would be more convenient to hold in person.
- 4.4.2 Headteachers/Heads of School and governing boards may advise the parent or pupil (if they are over 18 years old), within their written notification, to consider the following, before requesting a remote access meeting:



- ▶ the technology that will be used for the governing board or Independent Review Panel (IRP);
- ▶ Do the parent/carers or excluded pupil (if they are over 18 years old) have an appropriate space free from other distractions to enable them to participate fully with a remote access meeting;
- ▶ Where the parent/carers or excluded pupil (if they are over 18 years old) have limited access to the Internet, intermittent service or slower speed internet, they should not request a remote meeting for a governing board or IRP;
- ▶ Where the parent or excluded pupil (if they are over 18 years old) initially ask for a meeting to be held via the use of remote access then decide to withdraw the request, they should inform the governing board or arranging authority immediately. The governing board or arranging authority should immediately, arrange the meeting to be held face to face.

4.4.3 To ensure the meeting is capable of being held fairly and transparently, the governing board or arranging authority for IRPs should make every effort to check all participants understand the proceedings and be made aware of how to raise any issues that may prevent their effective engagement. If these conditions are not met, the meeting should not be held via remote access and must be arranged face to face immediately.

4.4.4 To help meetings run smoothly and ensure they are accessible to any participants, governing boards and IRPs should:

- ▶ provide clear instructions about how to join the meeting virtually, and distribute the joining instructions in a timely manner ahead of the meeting;
- ▶ indicate a named person who parents, excluded pupils (if they are over 18 years old) or any participant should contact, if they have any questions before the meeting takes place;



- ▶ consider holding a 'test meeting' with any participant to check the available technology is suitable, and that all participants understand how to access the meeting;
- ▶ ensure that the chair of governors or IRP is prepared to explain the agenda at the start and provide clear guidance on how the meeting will be run, for example:
 - how participants should indicate they wish to speak
 - how any 'chat' functions should be used
 - whether there will be any breaks in proceedings
 - how parents and excluded pupils can access advocacy services during the meeting.

4.4.5 For the purposes of which information is recorded within minutes, the normal rules apply as per the guidance, and the governing board and IRP can instruct the clerk to record any information or instructions that they deem sensible to include so that the minutes provide a clear and sufficient record of all relevant parts of the meeting, for example, how chat functions or messages will be monitored.

5. Considering the reinstatement of a pupil

5.1 The Governing Board (or a Designated Panel Committee) will consider and decide on the reinstatement of a suspended or permanently excluded pupil 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 pupil's total number of days out of school to more than 15 in a term; or



- ▶ It would result in a pupil missing a public exam or National Curriculum test

- 5.2 Where the pupil has been suspended, and the suspension does not bring the pupil's total number of days of suspension to more than 5 in a term, the Governing Board must consider any representations made by parents. However, it is not required to arrange a meeting with parents and it cannot direct the Headteacher/Head of School to reinstate the pupil.
- 5.3 Where the pupil has been suspended for more than 5 days, but less than 16 days, in a single term, and the parents make representations to the board, the Governing Board will consider and decide on the reinstatement of a suspended pupil within 50 school days of receiving notice of the suspension. If the parents do not make representations, the board is not required to meet and it cannot direct the Headteacher/Head of School to reinstate the pupil.
- 5.4 Where a suspension or permanent exclusion would result in a pupil missing a public exam or National Curriculum test, the governing board will, as far as reasonably practicable, consider and decide on the reinstatement of the pupil before the date of the exam or test. If this is not practicable, a panel committee may consider the suspension or permanent exclusion and decide whether or not to reinstate the pupil.
- 5.5 The following parties will be invited to a meeting of the governing board and allowed to make representations or share information:
- ▶ Parents, or the pupil if they are 18 or over (and, where requested, a representative or friend)
 - ▶ The pupil, 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/Head of School
 - ▶ The pupil's social worker, if they have one
 - ▶ The VSH, if the pupil is looked after.
- 5.6 The Governing Board 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. The Clerk should be present to make a record of the discussion, which should state clearly how decisions have been reached. The minutes will be made available to all parties on request.
- 5.7 The Governing Board can either:
- ▶ Decline to reinstate the pupil, or
 - ▶ Direct the reinstatement of the pupil immediately, or on a particular date (except in cases where the board cannot do this – see earlier in this section)
- 5.8 In reaching a decision, the Governing Board will consider:
- ▶ Whether the decision to suspend or permanently exclude was lawful, reasonable, and procedurally fair
 - ▶ Whether the Headteacher/Head of School followed their legal duties
 - ▶ The welfare and safeguarding of the pupil and their peers
 - ▶ Any evidence that was presented to the governing board.
- 5.9 They will decide whether or not a fact is true 'on the balance of probabilities.
- 5.10 Minutes will be taken of the meeting to include the deliberation, and a record kept of the evidence that was considered. The outcome will also



be recorded on the pupil's educational record, and copies of relevant papers will be kept with this record.

5.11 The Governing Board will notify, in writing, the following stakeholders of its decision, along with reasons for its decision in sufficient details to enable all parties to understand how and why the governors reached their decision, without delay:

- ▶ The parents, or the pupil, if they are 18 or older
- ▶ The Headteacher/Head of School
- ▶ The pupil's social worker, if they have one
- ▶ The VSH, if the pupil is looked after
- ▶ The local authority
- ▶ The pupil's home authority, if it differs from the school's.

5.12 Where an exclusion is permanent and the Governing Board has decided not to reinstate the pupil, the notification of decision will also include the following:

- ▶ The fact that it is a permanent exclusion
- ▶ Notice of parents' right to ask for the decision to be reviewed by an independent review panel
- ▶ The date by which an application for an independent review must be made (15 school days from the date on which notice in writing of the governing board's decision is given to parents)
- ▶ The link for the online appeal form to enable a parent to submit an application for review to an independent appeal panel.
- ▶ That any application should set out the grounds on which it is being made and that, where appropriate, it should include reference to



how the pupil's special educational needs (SEN) are considered to be relevant to the permanent exclusion

- ▶ That, regardless of whether the excluded pupil has recognised SEN, parents have a right to require the academy trust to appoint an SEN expert to advise the review panel
- ▶ Details of the role of the SEN expert and that there would be no cost to parents for this appointment
- ▶ That parents must make clear if they wish for an SEN expert to be appointed in any application for a review
- ▶ That parents may, at their own expense, appoint someone to make written and/or oral representations to the panel, and parents may also bring a friend to the review
- ▶ That, if parents believe that the permanent exclusion has occurred as a result of unlawful discrimination, they may make a claim under the Equality Act 2010 to the first-tier tribunal (special educational needs and disability), in the case of disability discrimination, or the county court, in the case of other forms of discrimination. Also that any claim of discrimination made under these routes should be lodged within 6 months of the date on which the discrimination is alleged to have taken place

6. Independent review

- 6.1 If parents apply for an independent review within the legal timeframe, the academy trust will arrange for an independent panel to review the decision of the governing board not to reinstate a permanently excluded pupil.
- 6.2 Parents/carers can request the meeting be held remotely which will be carried out by electronic means e.g via video link.
- 6.3 Applications for an independent review must be made within 15 school days of notice being given to the parents by the Panel Committee of its



decision to not reinstate the pupil **or**, if after this time, within 15 school days of the final determination of a claim of discrimination under the Equality Act 2010 regarding the permanent exclusion.

6.5 A panel of 3 or 5 members will be constituted with representatives from each of the categories below. Where a 5-member panel is constituted, 2 members will come from the school governor category and 2 members will come from the Headteacher/Head of School category. At all times during the review process there must be the required representation on the panel:

- ▶ A lay member to chair the panel who has not worked in any school in a paid capacity, disregarding any experience as a school governor or volunteer
- ▶ Current or former school governors who have served as a governor for at least 12 consecutive months in the last 5 years, provided they have not been teachers or Headteacher/Head of Schools during this time
- ▶ Headteacher/Head of Schools or individuals who have been a Headteacher/Head of School within the last 5 years.

6.6 A person may not serve as a member of a review panel if they:

- ▶ Are a Member or Trustee of the academy trust of the excluding school
- ▶ Are the Headteacher/Head of School of the excluding school, or have held this position in the last 5 years
- ▶ Are an employee of the academy trust, or the governing board, of the excluding school (unless they are employed as a Headteacher/Head of School at another school)
- ▶ Have, or at any time have had, any connection with the academy trust, school, governing board, parents or pupil, or the incident



leading to the exclusion, which might reasonably be taken to raise doubts about their impartiality

- ▶ Have not had the required training within the last 2 years (see appendix 1 for what training must cover).

- 6.7 The panel must consider the interests and circumstances of the pupil, including the circumstances in which the pupil was permanently excluded, and have regard to the interests of other pupils and people working at the school.
- 6.8 Taking into account the pupil's age and understanding, the pupil or their parents will be made aware of their right to attend and participate in the review meeting and the pupil should be enabled to make representations on their own behalf, should they desire to.
- 6.9 Where a SEN expert is present, the panel must seek and have regard to the SEN expert's view of how SEN may be relevant to the pupil's permanent exclusion.
- 6.10 Where a social worker is present, the panel must have regard to any representation made by the social worker of how the pupil's experiences, needs, safeguarding risks and/or welfare may be relevant to the pupil's permanent exclusion.
- 6.11 Where a VSH is present, the panel must have regard to any representation made by the social worker of how any of the child's background, education and safeguarding needs were considered by the Headteacher/Head of School in the lead up to the permanent exclusion, or are relevant to the pupil's permanent exclusion.
- 6.12 Following its review, the independent panel will decide to do 1 of the following:
 - ▶ Uphold the governing board's decision



- ▶ Recommend that the governing board reconsiders reinstatement
- ▶ Quash the governing board's decision and direct that they reconsider reinstatement (only if it judges that the decision was flawed).

- 6.13 New evidence may be presented, though the school cannot introduce new reasons for the permanent exclusion or the decision not to reinstate. The panel must disregard any new reasons that are introduced.
- 6.14 In deciding whether the decision was flawed, and therefore whether to quash the decision not to reinstate, the panel must only take account of the evidence that was available to the governing board at the time of making its decision. This includes any evidence that the panel considers would, or should, have been available to the governing board and that it ought to have considered if it had been acting reasonably.
- 6.15 If evidence is presented that the panel considers it is unreasonable to expect the governing board to have been aware of at the time of its decision, the panel can take account of the evidence when deciding whether to recommend that the governing board reconsider reinstatement.
- 6.16 The panel's decision can be decided by a majority vote. In the case of a tied decision, the chair has the casting vote.
- 6.17 Once the panel has reached its decision, the panel will notify all parties in writing immediately.
- 6.18 This notification will include:
- ▶ The panel's decision and the reasons for it



- ▶ Where relevant, details of any financial readjustment or payment to be made if the governing board does not subsequently decide to offer to reinstate the pupil within 10 school days
- ▶ Any information that the panel has directed the governing board to place on the pupil's educational record.

7. School registers

- 7.1 A pupil's name will be removed from the school admission register if:
- ▶ 15 school days have passed since the parents were notified of the Panel Committee's decision to not reinstate the pupil and no application has been made for an independent review panel, or
 - ▶ The parents have stated in writing that they will not be applying for an independent review panel.
- 7.2 Where an application for an independent review has been made within 15 school days, the governing board will wait until that review has concluded before removing a pupil's name from the register.
- 7.3 While the pupil's name remains on the school's admission register, the pupil's attendance will still be recorded appropriately in accordance with current DfE attendance regulations and guidance.

Making a return to the LA

- 7.4 Where a pupil's name is to be removed from the school admissions register because of a permanent exclusion, the school will make a return to the LA. The return will include:
- ▶ The pupil's full name



- ▶ The full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally resides
- ▶ At least 1 telephone number at which any parent with whom the pupil normally resides can be contacted in an emergency
- ▶ The grounds upon which their name is to be deleted from the admissions register (i.e., permanent exclusion)
- ▶ Details of the new school the pupil will attend, including the name of that school and the first date when the pupil attended or is due to attend there, if the parents have told the school the pupil is moving to another school
- ▶ Details of the pupil's new address, including the new address, the name of the parent(s) the pupil is going to live there with, and the date when the pupil is going to start living there, if the parents have informed the school that the pupil is moving house.

7.5 This return must be made as soon as the grounds for removal is met and no later than the removal of the pupil's name.

8. Returning from a suspension

8.1 Reintegration strategy

- 8.1.1 Reintegration planning applies following internal suspension, suspension from school, safeguarding separation and off-site direction placements. It is a core component of the Trust's behaviour and inclusion approach.
- 8.1.2 Where a pupil has been subject to off-site direction, reintegration planning will begin before the placement ends and will include arrangements for transition back into mainstream provision.
- 8.1.3 Following suspension, the school will put in place a strategy to help the pupil reintegrate successfully into school life and full-time education.



- 8.1.4 Where necessary, the school will work with third-party organisations to identify whether the pupil has any unmet special educational and/or health needs.
- 8.1.5 The following measures may be implemented, as part of the strategy, to ensure a successful reintegration into school life.
- 8.1.6 The points below are suggestions only and should be adapted to the school's specific circumstances.
- ▶ Maintaining regular contact during the suspension or off-site direction and welcoming the pupil back to school
 - ▶ Regular reviews with the pupil and parents to praise progress being made and raise and address any concerns at an early stage.
 - ▶ Informing the pupil, parents and staff of potential external support
- 8.1.7 Part-time timetables will not be used as a tool to manage behaviour and, if used, will be put in place for the minimum time necessary.
- 8.1.8 The strategy will be regularly reviewed and adapted where necessary throughout the reintegration process in collaboration with the pupil, parents, and other relevant parties.

8.2 Reintegration meetings

- 8.2.1 The school will clearly explain the reintegration strategy to the pupil in a reintegration meeting before or on the pupil's return to school. During the meeting the school will communicate to the pupil that they are getting a fresh start and that they are a valued member of the school community.



- 8.2.2 The pupil, parents, a member of senior staff, and any other relevant staff will be invited to attend the meeting.
- 8.2.3 The meeting can proceed without the parents in the event that they cannot or do not attend.
- 8.2.4 The school expects all returning pupils and their parents to attend their reintegration meeting, but pupils who do not attend will not be prevented from returning to the classroom.

9. Monitoring arrangements

- 9.1 The school will collect data on the following:
- ▶ Attendance, permanent exclusions and suspensions
 - ▶ Use of pupil referral units, off-site directions and managed moves
 - ▶ Anonymous surveys of staff, pupils, governors/trustees and other stakeholders on their perceptions and experiences
 - ▶ Use of internal suspensions, including duration and frequency
 - ▶ Patterns linked to SEND, vulnerability or repeat incidents
 - ▶ Safeguarding separations;
 - ▶ Managed move outcomes;
 - ▶ Duration and review of off-site direction placements.
- 9.2 The data will be analysed in a set timeframe by a specified member of staff which will then be reported back to the Headteacher/ Head of School/Governors where appropriate.



- 9.3 The data will be analysed from a variety of perspectives including:
- ▶ At school level
 - ▶ By age group
 - ▶ By time of day/week/term
 - ▶ By protected characteristic
 - ▶ Ethnicity;
 - ▶ Looked-after children;
 - ▶ Previously looked-after children;
 - ▶ Pupils with social workers;
 - ▶ Pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans;
 - ▶ Disadvantaged pupils.
- 9.4 The school will use the results of this analysis to make sure it is meeting its duties under the Equality Act 2010. If any patterns or disparities between groups of pupils are identified by this analysis, the school will review its policies in order to tackle it.
- 9.5 This policy will be reviewed by Aletheia Academies Trust every 2 years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Board of Trustees.

10. Links with other policies

This exclusions policy is linked to individual school's:

- ▶ Behaviour policy
- ▶ SEN policy and information report



The Trust recognises the risk that inappropriate use of off-site suspensions may disengage pupils from education and increase exposure to harmful online environments. Where safe and appropriate, pupils will be supported to remain in school.



Appendix 1: independent review panel training

The academy trust must make sure that all members of an independent review panel and clerks have received training within the 2 years prior to the date of the review.

Training must have covered:

- ▶ The requirements of the primary legislation, regulations and statutory guidance governing suspensions and permanent exclusions on disciplinary grounds, which would include an understanding of how the principles applicable in an application for judicial review relate to the panel's decision making
- ▶ The need for the panel to observe procedural fairness and the rules of natural justice
- ▶ The role of the chair and the clerk of a review panel
- ▶ The duties of Headteacher/Head of Schools, governing boards and the panel under the Equality Act 2010
- ▶ The effect of section 6 of the Human Rights Act 1998 (acts of public authorities unlawful if not compatible with certain human rights) and the need to act in a manner compatible with human rights protected by that Act.