

Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy

Harvills Hawthorn Primary School



Approved by:	Governing Board	Date: September 2025
Last reviewed on:	September 2026	
Next review due by:	September 2028	

Suspension and Permanent Exclusions Policy

1. Introduction

Harvills Hawthorn Primary School is committed to maintaining a calm, safe, and supportive environment that enables all children to thrive. Suspension and permanent exclusion are serious sanctions and only used as a last resort when all other strategies to manage behaviour have been exhausted. This policy complies with the statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) published in September 2023, and is informed by Sandwell local authority procedures.

2. Aims

- To promote positive behaviour and ensure a safe learning environment for all children and staff.
 - To ensure that exclusions are used fairly, lawfully, and consistently.
 - To safeguard the rights and wellbeing of all children, including those with SEND, disabilities, or social care involvement.
 - To work collaboratively with parents, carers, and external agencies to support children at risk of exclusion.
 - To provide clear procedures for suspension and permanent exclusion decisions, in line with DfE and Sandwell guidance.
 - To uphold a commitment to fair, lawful, and supportive behaviour management practises that respect the dignity of every child and promote their well-being.
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3. Principles

- Suspension and permanent exclusion are last-resort measures, used only after other behaviour management strategies have been tried.
 - The school will not adopt a 'no exclusion' policy as this can create safeguarding risks and deny children access to appropriate alternative provision.
 - Reasonable adjustments will be made for children with SEND or disabilities, in compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and Children and Families Act 2014.
 - Early intervention and proactive engagement with parents, social workers, and other professionals will be prioritised for children at risk of exclusion.
 - The school will ensure timely communication with parents, the local authority, social workers, and other relevant parties when exclusions are considered or enacted.
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4. Legal Framework and Guidance

This policy is informed by:

- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from Maintained Schools, Academies and Pupil Referral Units in England, including Pupil Movement (DfE, Sept 2023)
 - Behaviour in Schools Guidance (DfE, Sept 2022)
 - Equality Act 2010
 - Children and Families Act 2014
 - Sandwell Local Authority Exclusion Procedures and Support Services
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5. Suspension (Fixed-term Exclusion)

- Suspensions may be used for serious breaches of the school behaviour policy or where allowing the child to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the child or others.
 - The maximum length of a fixed-term suspension should not exceed 45 school days in a single academic year.
 - The school will notify parents, the local authority, and social workers (where applicable) without delay when a suspension is issued.
 - During suspension, the school will set and mark work to ensure continuity of education.
 - Reintegration meetings will be held on the child's return to school to support their successful re-entry.
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6. Permanent Exclusion

- **Definition:** Permanent exclusion is when a child is no longer allowed to attend the school (unless reinstated by the governing board). It is a serious sanction that should only be used as a last resort.
- **Grounds for Permanent Exclusion:**
Headteachers should only permanently exclude a child:
 - In response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy.
 - Where allowing the child to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the child or others (including staff and other children).
- **Decision-Making Considerations:**
Before making a permanent exclusion decision, the headteacher must:
 - Take reasonable steps to explore and exhaust all other strategies and interventions, including managed moves and off-site direction, where appropriate.
 - For children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), request an early annual review to assess whether the current provision meets the child's needs.
 - For children with SEN but without an EHCP, review the appropriateness of current support arrangements and consider referral for an EHCP assessment if needed.

- Engage proactively with parents, carers, social workers, Virtual School Heads (VSHs) for looked-after children, and other relevant professionals to discuss concerns and possible alternatives to exclusion.
- **Notification and Work Provision:**
 - The headteacher must notify parents, the local authority, social workers, and VSH (where applicable) without delay after the exclusion decision.
 - The school must set and mark work for the first five school days during which the child will not be attending alternative provision, ensuring continuity of education.
 - Appropriate referrals to support services should be considered to address underlying issues contributing to behaviour.
- **Cancelling an Exclusion (Withdrawal):**
 - The headteacher retains the power to cancel a permanent exclusion before the governing board meets to consider reinstatement.
 - If an exclusion is cancelled:
 - Parents, the governing board, the local authority, and relevant professionals (social worker, VSH) must be informed without delay, with reasons for cancellation clearly communicated.
 - The governing board's duty to consider reinstatement ceases, and no meeting is required.
 - The child must be allowed to return to school immediately.
 - Parents should be offered a prompt meeting with the headteacher to discuss the circumstances leading to the cancellation.
- **Governing Board Review:**
 - The governing board must arrange a meeting to consider the exclusion and decide whether to reinstate the child within the statutory timeframe.
 - Meetings may be held via remote access (e.g., video link) if requested by parents, but face-to-face meetings are preferred.
 - The governing board must consider all evidence and representations from the school, parents, and child before making a decision.
 - The board should ensure fairness and transparency, particularly for children with SEND or those with social care involvement.
- **Equality and Safeguarding:**
 - The school must ensure that permanent exclusions do not disproportionately affect children with protected characteristics.
 - Additional support and reasonable adjustments should be provided to children with disabilities or SEN to prevent exclusion where possible.
 - For children with social workers or who are looked-after, the school must work closely with all relevant agencies to provide support and avoid exclusion where possible.
- **Alternative Provision:**
 - The school and local authority must work together to arrange suitable alternative provision for permanently excluded children to ensure ongoing education.

7. Special Considerations

- **Children with SEND or EHCPs:** The school will make reasonable adjustments and engage external specialists to review support before considering exclusion.

- **Children with Social Workers or Looked-After Children:** The school will notify relevant professionals early and involve them in behaviour support planning. Personal Education Plans (PEPs) will be monitored closely.
 - **Equality and Non-Discrimination:** The school will monitor exclusion data to ensure no group is disproportionately affected and take action to address any disparities.
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8. Monitoring and Review

- The Headteacher and governing board will monitor exclusion data and review this policy annually.
 - Patterns and causes of exclusion will be analysed to inform behaviour management strategies and support services.
 - The school will work closely with Sandwell LA to ensure compliance with statutory duties and best practice.
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9. Support and Alternative Provision

- The school will work with Sandwell LA to access alternative provision for excluded children to ensure continued education and support.
 - The school's nurture provision (Treetops) will be integral in supporting children with complex needs to reduce exclusions.
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10. Communication

- Parents will be informed promptly of any exclusion decision, their rights, and the process for appeal or review.
 - The school will maintain open communication with all stakeholders to support the child's behaviour and wellbeing.
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Sources:

- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement Guidance, DfE, September 2023
- Behaviour in Schools Guidance, DfE, September 2022
- Sandwell Local Authority Exclusion Procedures (2024)
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014.