



Exclusions Policy 2026-27

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Author	Governance and Compliance Manager
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Version	3
Description of changes	• Section 1 & 2: Updated to reflect the revised DfE Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance (July 2026) and associated legislative changes. • Section 4: Expanded Guiding Principles section, including expectations regarding proportionality, SEND, equality duties, early intervention and governance oversight. • Section 4: New provisions on safeguarding separation, including its purpose, use, decision-making arrangements and oversight requirements. • Section 5: Preventative measures updated to incorporate revised guidance on off-site direction and managed moves as alternatives to exclusion. • Section 6: Strengthened requirements around exclusion decision-making, including consideration of safeguarding, SEND, vulnerability and equality factors. • Sections 7-10: Revised statutory processes relating to education provision, notification requirements, governor review arrangements and parental rights.

	• Throughout: Terminology, definitions and governance references updated to improve alignment with current DfE guidance and Trust procedures.
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1. Introduction

SHINE Academies is committed to maintaining calm, safe and supportive schools in which all pupils and staff are respected and able to learn and work safely.

This policy reflects the [statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education in July 2026](#) and applies to all schools within SHINE Academies Trust.

This policy complies with the Trust's Articles of Association and Funding Agreement.

2. Legal Framework

This policy is based on:

- Education Act 2002
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Education Act 1996
- School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012
- Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) Regulations 2007 (as amended)
- Education (Educational Provision for Improving Behaviour) Regulations 2026

This policy also takes account of:

- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- SEND Code of Practice

3. Definitions

In this guidance:

- **exclusion** of a pupil from a school, means exclusion on disciplinary grounds (and “exclude” is to be interpreted accordingly). It does not include situations where a pupil is sent away from school or told not to attend for reasons that are not disciplinary
- **the term ‘governing board’** means the governing body of a maintained school, the management committee of a PRU and the academy trust of an academy or alternative provision (AP) academy. For the purposes of this policy the terminology of ‘governors’ and ‘governing board’ can be used interchangeably to describe both Trustees and Local Governors, as they are so engaged to participate in review of decisions to suspend and exclude pupils.
- **the definition of a ‘parent’** can be found in the Education Act 1996, and this applies to all the legislation to which this guidance relates. In addition to the child's birth parents, references to parents in this guidance include any person who has parental responsibility (which includes the local authority where it has a care order in respect of the child) and any person (for example, a foster carer) who has care of the child. To reflect this, this guidance uses ‘parent’ to refer to both parents and carers. Where practical, all those with parental responsibility should be involved in the suspension and permanent exclusion process

4. Guiding Principles

All decisions to prevent a child from attending school through suspension, permanent exclusion or safeguarding separation, must be made in accordance with statutory guidance and must be lawful, reasonable, fair and proportionate.

SHINE Academies recognises that suspension and permanent exclusion are serious sanctions and must be used only where necessary. For the vast majority of pupils, other strategies should be sufficient to manage behaviour. Permanent exclusion must only be used as a last resort.

The decision to enact a safeguarding separation is not a sanction, this is intended to be a '**rare and justified**' measure taken to physically keep one pupil from one or more other pupils for safeguarding reasons. This is not an exclusion on disciplinary grounds.

4.1 Use of exclusion as part of a wider behaviour strategy

Suspensions and permanent exclusions form part of a broader approach to behaviour management. Schools should only consider their use where:

- appropriate behaviour strategies, interventions and support have been implemented; and
- these approaches have not been successful, or a serious one-off incident has occurred.

Schools and the Trust must not adopt a "no exclusion" policy as an end in itself, as this can create safeguarding risks and may expose pupils and staff to harm.

4.2 Use of safeguarding separation as a safeguarding strategy

Under the DfE's Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance (effective from 26 July 2026), safeguarding separation is a **temporary safeguarding measure**, not a suspension or permanent exclusion. It may be used only in rare and justified circumstances where pupils need to be kept apart to manage a significant safeguarding risk and no suitable in-school alternative can safely achieve this. Decisions should be led by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy), supported by relevant agencies where appropriate, and must be proportionate, time-limited and focused solely on protecting the welfare of those involved.

4.3 Proportionality and Individual Circumstances

Any decision to suspend or permanently exclude must take account of the individual circumstances of the pupil, including:

- age and maturity;
- behaviour history and prior interventions;
- whether the incident represents a one-off or a pattern of behaviour;
- the impact on the safety, welfare and education of others.

Sanctions must be proportionate to the behaviour and consistent with the school's behaviour policy.

4.4 SEND, vulnerability, and equality duties.

Schools must give careful consideration to whether vulnerability or unmet needs have contributed to a pupil's behaviour, particularly in relation to:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Safeguarding concerns
- Looked-after children or previously looked-after children.

Schools must comply with the Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. A failure to do so may render an exclusion unlawful.

4.5 Early Intervention and Preventative Action

The Trust expects schools to take a proactive approach to behaviour by:

- identifying pupils at risk of suspension or exclusion early;
- working with parents/carers and external agencies;
- using appropriate interventions such as pastoral support, off-site direction or managed moves.

The DfE statutory guidance on Suspensions and Exclusions July 2026 emphasises that schools should be able to demonstrate that alternative strategies have been explored before exclusion is used, unless the circumstances are exceptional.

4.6 Transparency and Accountability

Processes must be transparent and clearly communicated to parents, pupils and relevant professionals.

Schools must ensure that:

- decisions are explained clearly and promptly;
- parents understand their rights and the next steps;
- appropriate records are kept demonstrating compliance with statutory guidance.

4.7 Consistency Across the Trust

SHINE Academies will ensure that:

- this policy is applied consistently across all schools;
- leaders receive appropriate support and guidance;
- decision-making is subject to appropriate oversight through governance structures.

5. Preventative Measures Alternatives

Before considering permanent exclusion, schools will use a range of strategies including:

- Behaviour interventions
- Pastoral support
- Targeted support plans

Where appropriate, schools may use:

5.1 Off-site direction (please see separate Off-Site Direction Protocol)

- Time-limited placement in another setting
- Reviewed at least every 30 school days
- Pupil remains on roll at the home school

5.2 Managed moves (please see separate Managed Moves Protocol)

- Used as an alternative to exclusion
- Requires agreement from all parties
- Pupil is permanently removed from roll to be enrolled at another setting - there is no legal basis for a trial period for a Managed Move.

6. The decision to suspend/exclude

6.1 Only the Headteacher alone (or the Acting Headteacher, if the Headteacher is absent) has the power to suspend or exclude pupils.

6.2 Suspensions may be for a fixed period, up to a maximum of 45 days in an academic year.

6.3 A decision to permanently exclude will only be taken:

- In response to a serious one-off or persistent breaches of the Behaviour Policy
- Where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others.

6.4 The Headteacher must also:

- Consider any contributing factors (including SEND)
- Ensure all relevant duties have been met
- Consider any mitigating circumstances
- Consult the SHINE Director of Primary Education and Governance and Compliance Manager prior to a decision to permanently exclude a child being issued.

7. Education During a Suspension or Exclusion

7.1 During the first five school days following a permanent exclusion:

- Schools will set and mark work
- Work should be accessible and cover core subjects where possible

From the sixth school day:

- Local authorities must arrange provision following permanent exclusion

Looked-after children should receive suitable education from day 1 wherever possible.

7.2 For a suspension of more than five school days, the school must arrange suitable full-time education for any child of compulsory school age. This provision is commonly called alternative provision and must begin no later than the sixth school day of the suspension. Where a child

receives consecutive suspensions, these are regarded as a cumulative period of suspension for the purposes of this duty. This means that if a child has more than five consecutive school days of suspension, then education must be arranged for the sixth school day of suspension, regardless of whether this is because of one decision to suspend the child for the full period or multiple decisions to suspend the child for several periods in a row.

8. Separation of pupils for safeguarding purposes

In certain circumstances, the school may temporarily forbid a pupil from attending the school premises for safeguarding reasons. Where this occurs, the school should inform the pupil's parents of the reason for the safeguarding separation. The Trust Board of SHINE Academies should also be notified without delay and should satisfy itself that this measure is used only in rare circumstances where separating pupils is essential and cannot reasonably be achieved whilst allowing all pupils to remain on the school site. The decision should be made on a case-by-case basis, led by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy), with support from other agencies where appropriate. Where neither the school nor the parent arranges education for the pupil during the period of separation, the local authority must arrange suitable education.

Below is a non-exhaustive list of example scenarios where safeguarding separation might be used:

8.1 A. Risk of harm between pupils

- Allegations of peer-on-peer abuse (including sexual harm, serious bullying, or violence)
- Situations where:
 - pupils must be kept physically apart, and
 - the school cannot reasonably achieve this on site safely

8.2 Exceptional safeguarding risk requiring immediate separation (restricted use)

Safeguarding separation may only be used in exceptional circumstances where there is a clear and evidenced safeguarding risk of significant harm, and where:

- the risk cannot be safely managed within the school environment, even with reasonable adjustments, and
- no viable in-school safeguards (e.g. supervision, timetable changes, internal separation) can sufficiently reduce the risk.

This may include situations where:

- there is a specific and credible risk of harm to an identified pupil or group of pupils, supported by safeguarding information or professional judgement;
- an incident has occurred involving serious harm or credible threat of serious harm, and the school cannot safely keep pupils apart on site;
- there is multi-agency involvement (e.g. police or social care) indicating that immediate physical separation is necessary to protect those involved.

Safeguarding separation must not be used solely on the basis of:

- general disruptive, aggressive or non-compliant behaviour;
- repeated behavioural incidents which should be managed through the behaviour policy;
- low-level or emerging concerns that can be addressed through internal school measures.

The use of safeguarding separation must be justified by a recorded safeguarding risk assessment, demonstrating why it is not possible to maintain safety within the school at that time.

8.3 Ongoing safeguarding investigation requiring separation

Where:

- a safeguarding investigation is underway (e.g. police/social care involvement), and
- remaining on site would compromise:
 - the integrity of the investigation, or
 - the safety or wellbeing of those involved
- Separation must not be used simply to “pause” while considering whether to exclude
- Schools must already have internal processes to investigate behaviour incidents.

8.4 Situations where no reasonable in-school alternative exists

Where the school has considered and cannot safely implement:

- internal separation
- supervised provision
- timetable adjustments

8.5 Exceptional safeguarding incidents involving vulnerable pupils

Where a pupil is:

- a victim of serious incident
- or experiencing significant distress following an incident

And temporary removal from the school site is necessary to:

- protect their welfare
- stabilise the situation

9. Duty to Inform

9.1 When a Headteacher suspends or permanently excludes a child, they must inform the following people as soon as possible, explaining the length and reason for the decision:

- all parents/carers (including those at different addresses)
- the local authority
- the child’s home local authority (if different)
- the child’s social worker and/or Virtual School Head (where relevant)

9.2 They must also, without delay, provide the following information:

- the reason(s) for the suspension or permanent exclusion.
- the period of a suspension or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent.
- parents’ right to make representations about the suspension or permanent exclusion to Governors/Trustees and how the child may be involved in this.
- how any representations should be made.
- where there is a legal requirement for Governors/Trustees to consider the suspension or permanent exclusion, that parents or the child (if aged 18 years or older) have a right to

attend a meeting, to be represented at that meeting (at their own expense) and to bring a friend.

- Social workers and virtual school heads right to make representations about the suspension or permanent exclusion to Governors/Trustees.

9.3 This written information can be given by:

- handing it directly to the parent/carer
- leaving it at their last known address
- posting it to that address

It can also be sent electronically if the parent/carer has agreed to receive communication this way.

9.4 Where a suspended or permanently excluded child is of compulsory school age, the Headteacher must also notify the child's parents of the days on which they must ensure that the child is not present in a public place at any time during school hours.

9.5 This applies for the first five school days of a suspension or permanent exclusion (or until alternative provision begins, or the suspension ends if sooner).

Parents who do not follow this requirement without a valid reason may:

- commit an offence, and
- receive a fixed penalty notice or be prosecuted

Parents must be informed of these dates without delay, and no later than the end of the first day of the suspension or permanent exclusion.

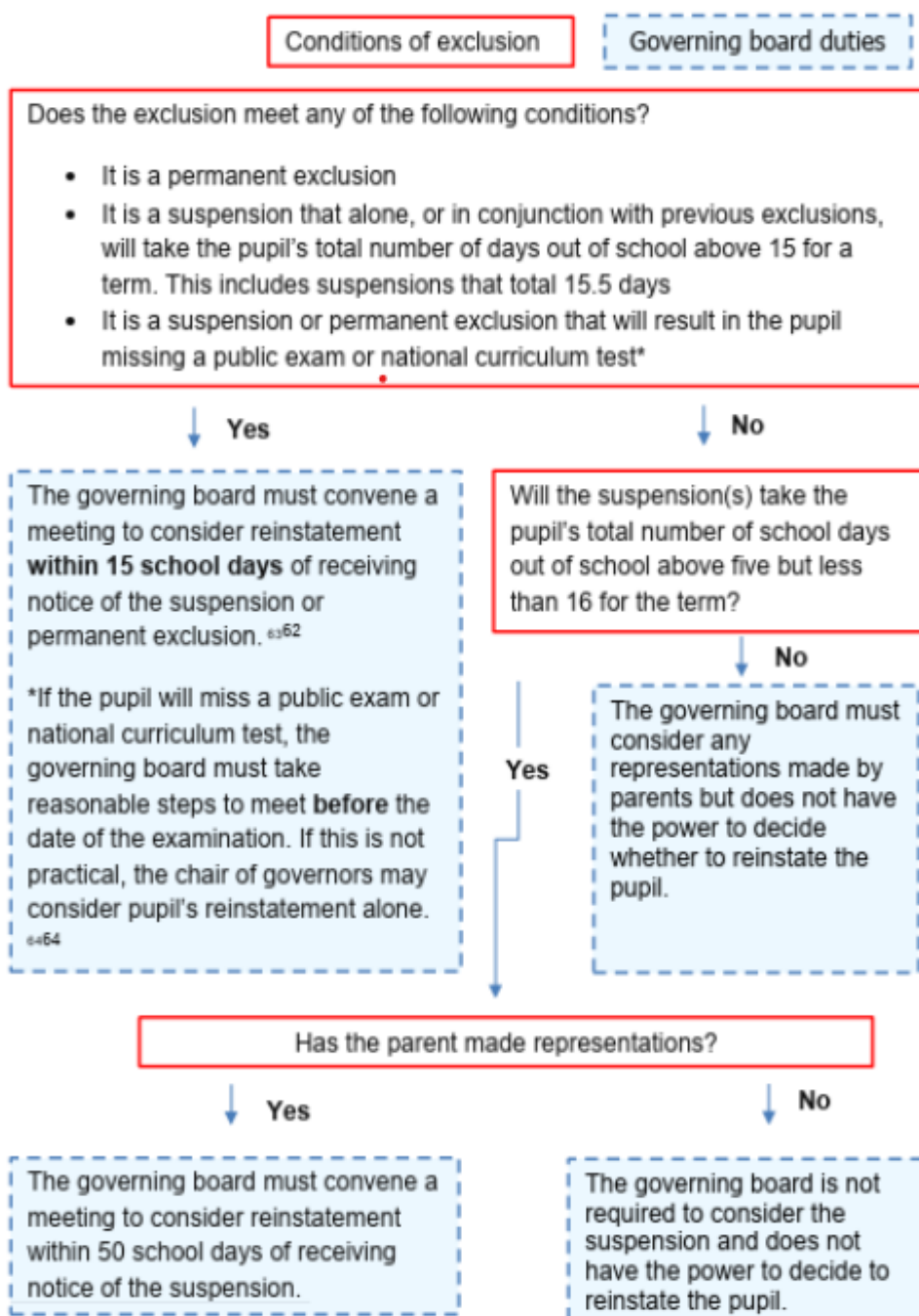
10. Informing the Local Governing Body

10.1 Where the appropriate criteria are met, a pupil disciplinary committee comprising Governors and Trustees from SHINE Academies must be convened to hear the relevant case. The SHINE central governance team will support with sourcing committee members.

10.2 A pupil discipline committee will comprise at least one Trustee from the SHINE Academies Trust Board, and two serving Governors from the school in question. If a second or third member from the relevant school cannot be identified for valid reasons, SHINE Academies will appoint (a) Governor(s) from a different school in the Trust to join the panel. Any Governor with any prior knowledge of the pupil will not be permitted to sit on the committee.

10.3 The Headteacher must, without delay, notify the clerk to the Governor disciplinary committee who will in turn convene a committee of three Governors/Trustees to consider a suspension or exclusion. To ascertain whether the convening of a panel is required, please refer to the DfE's flowchart below:

A summary of the governing board's duties to consider reinstatement⁶²⁶³⁶⁴



⁶² Parents on diagram refer to parent if the pupil is under 18 or the excluded pupil, aged 18 or over.

⁶³ The governing board may delegate its functions to consider a suspension or permanent exclusion to a designated committee.

⁶⁴ The ability for a chair to review in the case of public exams refers only to maintained schools.

- 10.4 Where governors 'must convene a meeting' a pupil discipline committee should be formed, and all parties invited. Any meeting, where parents are entitled to attend, must be convened by at least 3 governors.
- 10.5 For suspensions of 5 days or fewer, where those governing must consider any written representations made by parents, at least two governors must convene to consider those written representations and write to the parents with their decision.
- 10.6 Where the governors are considering a suspension of over 15 days, the committee should consider only the 'trigger' exclusion that took the child over 15 days.
- 10.7 Where a child's case is due to be heard at a panel meeting to consider a suspension, and in the time between the suspension being issued and the date of the meeting, the child is permanently excluded, both suspension and exclusion can be considered by the same panel subject to the consent of the parent. The panel should make two separate decisions.
- 10.8 Where permanently excluded, the child should only be taken off-roll when the deadline for an IRP has passed, or the IRP process has been concluded.

11. Cancelling Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions

- 11.1 The Headteacher may cancel a suspension or permanent exclusion that has already begun, or one that has not yet begun, but only where it has not yet been reviewed by the pupil discipline committee.
- 11.2 Where there is a cancellation, the following must be informed in writing:
- The parents/carers, and those governing (and LA for permanent exclusions) without delay
 - Where relevant, any social worker and VSH will be notified without delay
 - The notification must provide the reason for the cancellation
- 11.3 If a suspension/exclusion is lawfully cancelled, the duty to hold a meeting and consider reinstatement ceases.
- 11.4 Parents/carers will be offered the opportunity to meet with the Headteacher to discuss the cancellation, which will be arranged without delay.
- 11.5 The pupil will be allowed back in the school without delay.
- 11.6 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 academic year.
- 11.7 A permanent exclusion cannot be cancelled if the pupil has already been excluded for more than 45 school days in an academic year or if they will have been so by the time the cancellation takes effect.

12. Independent Review Panels

- 12.1 Following a permanent exclusion, parents will be given the opportunity to request an independent review panel (IRP) who will consider the pupil discipline committee decision to decline reinstatement. The request must include the parents' grounds for the appeal.
- 12.2 If applied for by parents within the legal time frame (15 school days), the school is responsible for securing an independent external clerking service/clerk who will arrange for an IRP to review the decision of a governing body not to reinstate a permanently excluded pupil.
- 12.3 Any application made outside the legal time frame will be rejected by the school.
- 12.4 Parents may request an IRP even if they did not make representations against the exclusion or attend the meeting at which the governors made their decision.

12.5 The IRP will be comprised of people completely independent of the school.

12.6 The role of the IRP is to review the governing body's decision not to reinstate a permanently excluded pupil. In reviewing the decision, the IRP must consider the interests and circumstances of the excluded pupil, including the circumstances in which the pupil was excluded and have regard to the interests of other pupils and people working at the school. The IRP must also apply the civil standard of proof "on the balance of probabilities" rather than the criminal standard of "beyond reasonable doubt".

12.7 Following its review, the IRP can decide to:

- Uphold the decision to permanently exclude
- Recommend that the governing body reconsiders their decision or,
- Quash the decision and direct the governing body to consider the exclusion again

12.8 The IRP cannot direct the school to reinstate a child.

12.9 The decision of the IRP is binding on the: pupil, parents, school, governing body, LA, and SHINE Academies.

12.10 New supporting evidence may be presented to the IRP, but the school may not introduce new reasons for the exclusion and the IRP will disregard any new reasons that are introduced.

12.11 Where present the IRP must seek and have regard to the SEND expert's view of how SEND might be relevant to the pupil's exclusion.

12.12 A member of the original pupil discipline committee and the Headteacher will be invited to attend the hearing to present their case to the IRP.

12.13 As with the original pupil discipline committee hearing, parents will be invited to attend and may bring a friend, if they are not present the case will be heard in their absence.

12.14 Following the independent review, the panel must issue written notification to all parties without delay. This notification must include:

- The IRP's decision and the reason for it
- Where relevant, details of any financial payment to be made if the governing body subsequently decides not to offer to reinstate a pupil
- Any information that must be recorded on the pupil's educational record to reflect the decision

12.15 If the IRP upholds the decision, the clerk to the IRP will immediately notify the LA and if the pupil lives out of the LA of the school, the pupil's 'home local authority' as well.

12.16 If the IRP quashes or recommends the reconsideration of the pupil discipline committee's decision, the pupil discipline committee must reconvene within ten school days of being given notice of the IRP's decision.

13. Responsibility of the School and Governors in an Independent Review Panel

13.1 Where the IRP directs or recommends that governors reconsider whether a child should be reinstated, the pupil discipline committee must reconvene to do so, within 10 school days of being given notice of the IRP's decision. Notice is deemed to have been given on the day of delivery if it is delivered directly, or on the second working day after posting if it is sent by first class mail.

- 13.2 The reconvened pupil discipline committee should consist of 3 governors. Where directed to reconsider, ideally the reconvened committee should consist of a majority (i.e. 2) of governors who are new to the matter.
- 13.3 It is important that the pupil discipline committee conscientiously reconsiders whether the child should be reinstated, whether the IRP has directed or merely recommended it to do so. Whilst the committee may still reach the same conclusion as it first did, it may face challenge in the courts if it refuses to reinstate the child, without strong justification.
- 13.4 Following a direction to reconsider, unless within 10 school days of receiving notice of the IRP's decision the pupil discipline committee decides to reinstate the child, SHINE Academies may be required to make a payment of £4,000 directly to the local authority in whose area the school is located. This payment will be in addition to any funding that would normally follow a permanently excluded child.
- 13.5 If the pupil discipline committee offers to reinstate the child within the specified timescale, but this is declined by the parents, no budget adjustment or payment can be made. The pupil discipline committee must comply with any direction of the IRP to place a note on the child's educational record.
- 13.6 The clerk must also note, where a child is reinstated following a direction or recommendation to reconsider, or would have been reinstated if it had been practical to do so, the permanent exclusion does not count towards the rule that an admission authority may refuse to admit a child who has been permanently excluded twice; nor, in the case of a community or voluntary controlled school, does it count for the purposes of the rule that the pupil discipline committee may appeal against the decision of the local authority as the admission authority to admit the child.
- 13.7 In the case of either a recommended or directed reconsideration, the governor disciplinary committee must notify the following people of their reconsidered decision, and the reasons for it, in writing and without delay:
- the parents;
 - the Headteacher;
 - the local authority; and, where relevant, the 'home authority'
 - social worker (where relevant)
 - virtual school head (where relevant)
- 13.8 The reconsideration provides an opportunity for the pupil discipline committee to look afresh at the question of reinstating the child, in light of the findings of the IRP. There is no requirement to seek further representations from other parties or to invite them to the reconsideration meeting. The committee is not prevented from taking into account other matters that it considers relevant. It should, however, take care to ensure that any additional information does not make the decision unlawful. This could be the case, for example, where new evidence is presented, or information is considered that is irrelevant to the decision at hand.
- 13.9 The pupil discipline committee should ensure that clear minutes are taken of the meeting as a record of the evidence that was considered by the committee. These minutes should be made available to all parties on request.
- 13.10 The pupil discipline committee should ask any parties in attendance to withdraw before making a decision. Where present, the clerk should stay to help the committee by reference to their notes of the meeting and with the wording of the decision letter.
- 13.11 The pupil discipline committee should note the outcome of its consideration on the child's educational record, and copies of relevant papers should be kept with the educational record.

- 13.12 The pupil discipline committee should base its reconsideration on the presumption that a child will return to the school if reinstated, regardless of any stated intentions by the parents or child. Any decision of the committee to offer reinstatement, which is subsequently turned down by the parents, should be recorded on the child's educational record. The decision should demonstrate how the pupil discipline committee has addressed the concerns raised by the IRP.

14. Reintegration Strategy

- 14.1 Following suspension, or cancelled suspension or exclusion, the school will put in place a strategy to help the pupil reintegrate successfully into school life and full-time education.
- 14.2 Where necessary, the school will work with third-party organisations to identify whether the pupil has any unmet special educational and/or health needs.
- 14.3 The following measures may be implemented, as part of the strategy, to ensure a successful reintegration into school life for the pupil:
- Maintaining regular contact during the suspension and welcoming the pupil back to school
 - Daily contact in school with a designated pastoral professional
 - Mentoring by a trusted adult or a local mentoring charity
 - Regular reviews with the pupil and parents/carers to praise progress being made and raise and address any concerns at an early stage
 - Informing the pupil, parents/carers and staff of potential external support
- 14.4 The strategy will be regularly reviewed and adapted where necessary throughout the reintegration process in collaboration with the pupil, parents/carers, and other relevant parties.

15. Remote Access to Meetings

- 15.1 Parents/carers can request that a meeting of the pupil discipline committee or independent review panel be held remotely. If the parents/carers don't make this request, the meeting will be held in person.
- 15.2 In case of extraordinary or unforeseen circumstances, which mean it is not reasonably practicable for the meeting to be held in person, the meeting will be held remotely (with the agreement of the parents/carers)
- 15.3 Remotely accessed meetings are subject to the same procedural requirements as in-person meetings.
- 15.4 The pupil discipline committee and SHINE Academies should make sure that the following conditions are met before agreeing to let a meeting proceed remotely:
- All the participants have access to the technology that will allow them to hear, speak, see and be seen within a private environment
 - All the participants will be able participate fully
 - The remote meeting can be held fairly and transparently
- 15.5 With the agreement of the parents/carers, social workers and the VSH can join remotely, whether the meeting is being held in person or not, as long as they can meet the conditions for remote access listed above.

15.6 The meeting will be rearranged to an in-person meeting without delay if technical issues arise that can't be reasonably resolved and:

- Compromise the ability of participants to contribute effectively, or
- Prevent the meeting from running fairly and transparently

16. Monitoring of Suspensions and Exclusions

The Trust Board retains ultimate accountability for ensuring that this policy and its implementation comply with all statutory requirements. The Performance and Standards Committee of SHINE Academies Trust Board will routinely monitor suspensions and exclusions data to consider the level of pupil moves and the characteristics of pupils who have been permanently excluded to ensure the sanction is only used when necessary as a last resort. The Local Governing Body for all schools will also receive an update at each meeting noting the number of suspensions and exclusions which have been issued since the last meeting.

Appendix 1 – Guidance for Parents and Carers

When a child is suspended or excluded, the school must follow the DfE Exclusions Guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>. There is additional guidance for parents here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusions-guide-for-parents>

Q: My child has been suspended. What does this mean?

A: Headteachers or Acting Headteachers have the right to suspend a pupil who has broken the school's rules (this is sometimes referred to as a breach of the behaviour policy). A pupil can be suspended for a specified length of time or permanently excluded which means that they will not be able to return to school, unless the pupil discipline panel directs their reinstatement. The suspension or exclusion issues will depend on the seriousness of the breaking of the school's rules.

Q: I disagree with the decision. What can I do?

A: The letter you have received from the Headteacher of the school explains how you can challenge the decision (this is referred to as "making representations"). How you do this will depend on the total number of days of suspension your child has received this term.

- If your child has been suspended for 5 days or fewer in total this term, you can make representations to the governing body, but the governing body has no power to reinstate your child for suspensions totalling 5 days or fewer in a term. However, they **must still consider** any written representations you make, and may decide to place a note on your child's educational record.
- If your child has been suspended for more than 5 days and up to 15 days in total this term, you can make representations to the governing body. If you do this, then the governing body must meet to consider your representations within 50 school days, and the decision can be overturned – this would be termed 'reinstatement'.
- If your child has been suspended for more than 15 days in total this term, the governing body must meet to consider this decision within 15 school days, regardless of whether you ask for a meeting to happen. The Governing body has the power to overturn the principal's decision.

Q: My child has been permanently excluded. What does this mean?

A: A Headteacher can permanently exclude a pupil from the school if they have broken one of the more serious rules in the school's behaviour policy. This is referred to as a **serious one-off incident**.

A pupil can also be permanently excluded if they repeatedly break some of the general rules of the policy over a period of time. This is referred to as **persistent breaches of the behaviour policy or persistent disruptive behaviour**.

It also means that the Headteacher has concluded that allowing the pupil to remain in the school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others within the school community.

Q: Why does my child have to be permanently excluded? Why can't they be disciplined in another way and remain at the academy?

A: A Headteacher's duty is to ensure that pupils and staff are safe. If they believe that the actions of pupil breaking the rules – whether this is a serious one-off incident or persistent disruptive behaviour – would potentially cause harm to the education or welfare of the pupil or of other pupils or staff, then they can permanently exclude a pupil.

The word “harm” does not only mean physical harm. It is possible for a pupil to harm other pupils' education or welfare if they continually disrupt learning, or if pupils are scared or worried about coming to school because of what another pupil has done.

Q: What happens about my child's education now?

A: The letter from the Headteacher explains the arrangements for your child's education.

If your child has been suspended, the school will provide work during that time. This may be a hard copy pack, or it might be via online education.

If your child has been permanently excluded, then the school will provide work to your child for the first 5 school days. From the 6th school day, your local authority is responsible for providing your child with education. This can be in another school or another education environment, or it can be online education. Information is included in the Headteacher's decision letter of who will provide education for your child from the 6th school day.

Q: What is the purpose of the pupil discipline committee meeting?

A: The meeting is to consider the Headteacher's decision to suspend or permanently exclude your child. Three Governors – known as the pupil discipline committee – will review all the information about the decision to consider if it was made in accordance with the Department for Education's guidance on suspensions and exclusions. This panel will meet for suspensions over 15 days in a term and for permanent exclusions. A panel may also be convened where parents want to make representations about a suspension over 5 days in a term. Once a governor has been involved in a panel for a child, they cannot be involved in a future panel for that child (unless selected to sit on or attend a reconsideration hearing following an Independent Review Panel Hearing).

Q: What will the pupil discipline committee look at?

The pupil discipline committee will meet to consider the decision of the Headteacher to suspend or permanently exclude your child. If they are meeting to consider a suspension, they will focus on the most recent suspension. This means the suspension that took the total number of days- suspended for the term to over 5 days or over 15 days – the pupil discipline committee will not make a decision about the other suspensions, though they will receive information about them as part of their discussions.

Q: Who else attends the meeting?

A: The Headteacher will attend the meeting, and will sometimes bring another member of the senior team or the SENCo if appropriate.

You are invited to the meeting to put forward your views. Your child is encouraged to attend so that they can offer their own view about the decision. You can choose not to attend the meeting, but it will still go ahead.

You can bring with you a friend or relative for support. The local authority will be informed about the decision and the meeting. You should confirm with them directly if you want them to attend.

The clerk to the pupil discipline committee will attend the meeting. The clerk is there to provide advice to the committee about the Department for Education guidance to help the committee make

its decision. The clerk is also there to take notes of the meeting. They will usually be the person who will be in touch with you to organise the meeting and to inform you of the decision after the meeting. If your child has a social worker or virtual school head, they must also be invited to attend.

Q: I would like to attend but am not available on the date given - what can I do?

The Department for Education guidance states that the Governing Body must review the decision of the principal within 15 school days of the exclusion. However, in exceptional circumstances, it is possible for a meeting to happen after this deadline (but still within a reasonable timescale) if that ensures people are available. If you cannot make the suggested date, please contact the clerk as soon as possible.

Q: I do not want to attend the meeting. Does this matter?

The pupil discipline committee would always prefer parents and pupils to attend the meeting as it is important to ensure they have the chance to put forward their views. However, there is no obligation for you or your child to attend, nor is non-attendance considered in a negative light.

The key duty of the pupil discipline committee, as stated by the DfE Guidance, is to review and challenge the decision of the Headteacher. It is possible (but not preferable) to do this without the parent attending the meeting.

Q: Will I receive any information about the reasons for the decision in advance of the meeting?

A: The letter from the Headteacher confirming the suspensions or permanent exclusion contains some information about the reasons. However, you will also receive the committee pack (or PEX pack for permanent exclusions) no less than 5 school days before the meeting. This Pack will include a statement from the Headteacher, along with other information such as accounts from witnesses, a statement or statements from your child, and notes of any meetings. The Pack will explain why the Headteacher believes your child broke the behaviour policy and should be suspended or permanently excluded.