



The Brickfields Trust

Exclusion and Suspension Policy

September 2026

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Version: September 2026

Review Cycle: Annual

1. Introduction

1.1

This policy sets out the principles and procedures that The Brickfields Trust and its academies will follow when considering the suspension or permanent exclusion of a pupil. It aims to ensure that all decisions are lawful, reasonable, fair, proportionate and made consistently across the Trust.

1.2

The Trust is committed to providing safe, calm, orderly and inclusive learning environments where positive behaviour is promoted and all pupils are supported to achieve success. Good behaviour and self-discipline enable effective teaching and learning and prepare children and young people for life beyond school.

Suspension and permanent exclusion form only one part of the Trust's wider behaviour strategy and will only be used where appropriate after careful consideration of all the circumstances of an individual case.

1.3

The Trust recognises that suspension and permanent exclusion should normally be used only as a last resort where appropriate interventions have been considered and where remaining in school would seriously affect the education or welfare of the pupil or others.

Where appropriate, schools will consider whether additional support, reasonable adjustments, pastoral intervention or alternative strategies could successfully address the behaviour before suspension or permanent exclusion is imposed.

1.4

The Trust and its academies will have regard to the Department for Education statutory guidance **Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England** (effective from **26 July 2026**) together with the School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended). Suspension and permanent exclusion decisions will always be made consistently with the Trust's Behaviour Policy.

1.5

This policy should be read alongside the Trust's:

- Behaviour Policy
 - SEND Policy
 - Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
 - Equality Policy
 - Complaints Policy
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2. Application of this Policy

2.1

This policy applies to all academies within The Brickfields Trust.

All academies will apply this policy consistently and ensure that staff, pupils, parents and trustees are familiar with its contents.

Only Headteachers have the authority to agree a suspension or exclusion. In the event that a Headteacher is absent, the CEO will act in their absence and will agree any suspension or exclusion relating to that academy. No other staff are able to authorise a suspension or exclusion.

2.2

The policy will be published on academy websites and made available to parents, pupils, staff and other interested parties on request.

2.3 Safeguarding Separation Arrangements

There may be exceptional circumstances where it is necessary, for safeguarding reasons, to require a pupil to remain away from the school site for a temporary period. This is a safeguarding measure to protect one or more pupils and is **not** a disciplinary sanction.

A safeguarding separation arrangement does **not** constitute a suspension or permanent exclusion and must not be used as an alternative to the statutory suspension or permanent exclusion process.

Safeguarding separation arrangements are detail in the Trust's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

3. Suspension and Permanent Exclusion

3.1

A suspension is where a pupil is prevented from attending school for a fixed period. A pupil may not be suspended for more than 45 school days in any academic year.

3.2

A permanent exclusion is where the pupil is removed from the school roll (subject to any reinstatement decision made through the statutory review process).

Permanent exclusion will only be considered:

- following a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy; and
- where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others.

3.3

Every decision to suspend or permanently exclude will be considered individually.

The Headteacher will ensure that every decision is:

- lawful;
 - reasonable;
 - procedurally fair;
 - proportionate;
 - evidence-based; and
 - consistent with statutory guidance.
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4. Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for making decisions regarding suspension and permanent exclusion.

Before making any decision the Headteacher will consider:

- the seriousness of the incident;
- the evidence available;
- the pupil's version of events;
- previous behaviour support;

- safeguarding information;
- any special educational needs or disabilities;
- whether the pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan;
- whether the pupil is looked after or previously looked after;
- whether the pupil has a social worker;
- any known vulnerabilities;
- whether reasonable adjustments are required under the Equality Act 2010;
- whether suspension or permanent exclusion is proportionate in all the circumstances.

The reasons for every suspension or permanent exclusion will be recorded in writing.

Before deciding to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil, the Headteacher will consider whether appropriate alternative strategies, interventions or reasonable adjustments could address the behaviour safely and effectively. Where these have been considered but are not appropriate, the reasons will be recorded.

Trustees

Trustees will fulfil their statutory duties regarding suspension and permanent exclusion.

They will:

- review suspensions and permanent exclusions where required by law;
- monitor exclusion data across the Trust;
- scrutinise trends affecting vulnerable groups;
- ensure statutory guidance is followed consistently;
- review repeat suspensions;
- monitor use of alternative provision;
- seek assurance that exclusion decisions are lawful and proportionate.

Trustees will review the following data with regarding to suspension and permanent exclusion:

- safeguarding separations
- suspensions
- permanent exclusions
- repeat suspensions
- managed moves
- off-site direction
- alternative provision

Parents

Parents will be informed without delay of any suspension or permanent exclusion.

They will receive information regarding:

- reasons for the decision;
- statutory rights of representation;
- review procedures;
- Independent Review Panels where applicable;
- sources of advice and support.

Parents will be encouraged to participate in reintegration planning wherever possible.

Parents remain responsible for ensuring that their child is not present in a public place during school hours on the first five school days of a suspension unless there is reasonable justification.

Pupils

Where appropriate, pupils will be given the opportunity to express their views before a decision is made.

Reasonable adjustments will be made where necessary to enable pupils with SEND or communication needs to participate fully.

5. CCTV, Witness Evidence and Pupil Views

Where available, CCTV recordings may be considered during investigations into behavioural incidents.

Where CCTV forms part of the evidence supporting a suspension or permanent exclusion, appropriate arrangements will be made for the evidence to be considered during any review meeting, subject to safeguarding and data protection requirements.

Witness statements relied upon by the school will normally be signed and dated. Where anonymity is necessary to protect a witness, the Headteacher will record the reasons for withholding identifying information.

Before making a suspension or permanent exclusion decision the Headteacher will, wherever appropriate, seek and consider the pupil's views having regard to the pupil's age, understanding and communication needs.

Reasonable adjustments will be made to enable pupils with SEND or communication difficulties to express their views effectively.

The Headteacher will maintain a written record of:

- evidence considered;
- mitigating factors;
- views obtained;
- equality considerations;
- safeguarding considerations;
- the reasons for the final decision.

6. Reintegration Following Suspension

6.1

Following a suspension, the school will take active steps to support the pupil's successful reintegration into school. Reintegration planning should begin during the suspension period wherever practicable to ensure appropriate support is in place before the pupil returns.

6.2

A reintegration strategy meeting will normally take place before, or as soon as reasonably practicable after, the pupil returns to school. The purpose of the meeting is to:

- welcome the pupil back to school;
- discuss the circumstances leading to the suspension;
- identify any support required;
- agree expectations moving forward;
- minimise the likelihood of further suspensions or permanent exclusion.

6.3

The meeting should normally involve:

- the pupil;
- the pupil's parent(s) or carer(s);
- an appropriate senior member of staff;
- any other professionals whose involvement would assist successful reintegration.

6.4

The reintegration plan will take account of the individual needs of the pupil, including, where appropriate:

- safeguarding considerations;

- attendance concerns;
- SEND or an Education, Health and Care Plan;
- mental health or wellbeing needs;
- any reasonable adjustments required under the Equality Act 2010;
- curriculum support;
- pastoral support;
- any identified risk factors.

6.5

Where appropriate, the school will seek advice and support from external agencies, including:

- Children's Social Care;
- Early Help services;
- Educational Psychology;
- SEND services;
- Health professionals;
- Alternative Provision providers;
- other relevant agencies.

6.6

A named member of staff will normally oversee the reintegration plan, monitor progress and arrange review meetings where appropriate.

7. Cancelling a Suspension or Permanent Exclusion

7.1

The Headteacher may cancel a suspension or permanent exclusion where permitted by legislation and where it is appropriate to do so.

7.2

Where a suspension or permanent exclusion is cancelled:

- parents will be informed without delay;
 - relevant school records will be amended;
 - any notifications to the governing board or local authority will be updated where required;
 - the reasons for the cancellation will be recorded.
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8. Suspension Prior to Permanent Exclusion

8.1

In exceptional circumstances, a suspension may be used while the Headteacher gathers additional evidence before deciding whether permanent exclusion is appropriate.

8.2

This approach will only be used where it is reasonable, proportionate and in accordance with statutory guidance.

The Headteacher will record:

- why suspension is necessary;
- the evidence still to be obtained;
- why immediate permanent exclusion would be inappropriate at that stage.

8.3

Any further evidence obtained during the suspension will be considered fairly before a final decision is reached.

Where appropriate, parents will be informed of significant new evidence before a permanent exclusion decision is made.

9. Off-site Direction and Managed Moves

9.1 Off-site Direction

The Headteacher may direct a pupil off-site for education to improve behaviour where permitted by legislation.

Before making such a decision the Headteacher will satisfy themselves that the alternative provision:

- is suitable for the pupil's age, aptitude and ability;
- provides a safe learning environment;
- has appropriate safeguarding arrangements;
- is capable of meeting identified SEND needs where applicable;
- will provide suitable full-time education unless a reduced timetable is lawful and appropriate.

9.2

The reasons for directing a pupil off-site, the intended outcomes and review arrangements will be recorded in writing.

The school will maintain regular contact with the provider and monitor:

- attendance;
- behaviour;
- safeguarding;
- academic progress;
- wellbeing.

Placements will be reviewed regularly to determine whether they continue to meet the pupil's needs.

The Trust will cooperate with the Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol where applicable.

9.3 Managed Moves

A managed move is a voluntary agreement between schools to support a pupil to transfer to another educational setting.

A managed move:

- must be in the best educational interests of the pupil;
- must not be used as an alternative to permanent exclusion;
- requires the informed agreement of parents (and, where appropriate, the young person);
- should only take place following appropriate discussion between the schools involved.

Parents will be provided with sufficient information to make an informed decision and will not be placed under pressure to agree to a managed move.

10. Independent Review Panels (IRPs)

10.1

Where a permanent exclusion has been upheld by the Board of Trustees, parents may request an Independent Review Panel in accordance with statutory guidance.

10.2

Parents will be provided with information explaining:

- how to request an Independent Review Panel;
- the relevant statutory timescales;
- the right to request the attendance of a SEND Expert;
- sources of independent advice and support.

10.3

The Trust will ensure that clerks, trustees and panel members receive appropriate training regarding exclusion legislation, procedural fairness and their statutory responsibilities.

10.4

The Trust will cooperate fully with the Independent Review Panel process and will implement any recommendations or directions in accordance with the relevant legislation and statutory guidance.

11. Reconsideration Following an Independent Review Panel

11.1

Where an Independent Review Panel directs or recommends that the Board of Trustees reconsider its decision not to reinstate a permanently excluded pupil, the Board of Trustees will reconsider the case in accordance with the relevant legislation and Department for Education statutory guidance.

11.2

The Board of Trustees will ensure that:

- all relevant evidence is considered objectively and fairly;
- any recommendations or directions made by the Independent Review Panel are fully considered;
- the decision-making process is impartial and transparent.

11.3

The Board of Trustees will maintain a written record of its reconsideration, including:

- the evidence considered;
- the factors taken into account;
- the reasons for its decision;
- any actions arising from the meeting.

11.4

Any trustee or academy committee member who has previously participated in the original exclusion decision, or who has a conflict of interest, will not participate in the reconsideration meeting.

12. Remote Meetings

12.1

Where legislation permits, meetings relating to suspension or permanent exclusion may be conducted remotely using suitable technology.

12.2

Remote meetings will only be used where they are fair and accessible for all participants.

Reasonable adjustments will be made where required, including the provision of:

- interpreters where practical and possible (or alternative translation technology);
- communication support;
- accessible technology;
- additional time where appropriate.

12.3

The Trust will ensure that:

- confidentiality is maintained;
 - documents are circulated securely;
 - all participants can fully participate;
 - decisions are recorded appropriately.
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13. Complaints

13.1

Complaints regarding the administration of the suspension or permanent exclusion process will normally be considered under the Trust's Complaints Policy.

13.2

Complaints seeking to challenge the decision to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil cannot be considered through the Complaints Policy where a statutory review process applies. Such matters must follow the procedures set out within the relevant legislation and Department for Education statutory guidance.

13.3

Where a managed move is proposed, parents will be provided with sufficient information to make an informed decision and will not be pressured into agreeing to the arrangement.

14. Equality, Inclusion and Vulnerable Pupils

14.1

The Trust is committed to ensuring that suspension and permanent exclusion decisions are made fairly, consistently and without unlawful discrimination.

The Trust will comply with:

- the Equality Act 2010;
- the Public Sector Equality Duty;
- the Human Rights Act 1998;
- relevant SEND legislation;
- Department for Education statutory guidance.

14.2

Before making any decision to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil, the Headteacher will consider:

- whether the pupil has Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND);
- whether the pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP);
- whether reasonable adjustments are required;
- whether additional support or alternative strategies should be implemented;
- whether the proposed decision is proportionate.

The Trust recognises that behaviour may be influenced by unmet social, emotional or mental health needs. Where appropriate, these factors will be considered before deciding whether suspension or permanent exclusion is a proportionate response

14.3

Particular consideration will be given where the pupil is:

- looked after;
- previously looked after;
- supported by a social worker;
- known to safeguarding services;
- a young carer;
- otherwise identified as vulnerable.

Where a pupil has an allocated social worker, the school will seek to involve them, where appropriate and lawful, in discussions regarding support, reintegration and future planning.

14.4

The Trust recognises that pupils with SEND or other vulnerabilities may require additional support and intervention. Decisions will always be taken on an individual basis, having regard to the particular circumstances of the pupil and the incident.

15. Monitoring, Reporting and Review

15.1

The Trust will maintain accurate records of all suspensions and permanent exclusions in accordance with statutory requirements.

15.2

Trust leaders will monitor exclusion practice across all academies to ensure that decisions are:

- lawful;
- reasonable;
- proportionate;
- consistent;
- evidence-based.

15.3

Trustees will review safeguarding on an annual basis including analysis of:

- suspension rates;
- permanent exclusions;
- repeat suspensions;
- trends over time;
- use of alternative provision.

The report will include analysis of:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities;
- disadvantaged pupils;
- looked after and previously looked after children;
- children with a social worker;
- ethnicity;
- sex;
- year group;
- academy.

15.4

The CEO is responsible for the quality assurance of exclusion case files to ensure compliance with statutory guidance and identify opportunities for continuous improvement. Trustees will exercise oversight of quality assurance through CEO reporting to the board.

15.5

Learning arising from:

- exclusion reviews;
- Independent Review Panels;
- complaints;
- internal quality assurance;
- external audits;

will be used to improve policy, procedures, staff training and behaviour practice across the Trust.

15.6

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where changes in legislation, statutory guidance or operational practice require amendment.