



Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions Policy

The Axholme Academy

Summer 2026

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1. Aims

We are committed to following all statutory exclusion and suspension procedures to ensure that every child receives an education in a safe and caring environment. The Axholme Academy aims to:

- Ensure that the exclusions process is applied fairly, consistently, and transparently.
- Help governors, staff, parents, and students understand the distinct legal frameworks for suspensions, permanent exclusions, and student movements.
- Ensure that students in The Axholme Academy are safe and happy.
- Prevent students from becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training).
- Ensure all suspensions and permanent exclusions are carried out lawfully.

A Note on Off-Rolling and Unlawful Exclusions

The Axholme Academy is aware that off-rolling is unlawful. Ofsted defines off-rolling as:

“The practice of removing a student from the school roll without a formal, permanent exclusion or by encouraging a parent to remove their child from the school roll, when the removal is primarily in the interests of the school rather than in the best interests of the student.”

We will not suspend or exclude students unlawfully by directing them off site, or not allowing students to attend The Axholme Academy:

- Without following the statutory procedure or formally recording the event (e.g., sending them home to 'cool off').
- Because they have special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND) that the Academy feels unable to support.
- Due to poor academic performance.
- Because they haven't met a specific condition, such as attending a reintegration meeting.
- By exerting undue influence on a parent to encourage them to remove their child from the Academy.
- By attempting to enforce "trial managed moves" or "trial admissions", which are strictly unlawful under DfE guidance.

2. Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy is based on statutory guidance from the Department for Education: *Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and student referral units in England, including student movement* (in force from 26 July 2026).

It is based on the following legislation, which outlines The Axholme Academy's powers to exclude students:

- Section 51a of the Education Act 2002, as amended by the Education Act 2011.
- The School Discipline (student Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012.

- The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 (governing updated provisions for off-site direction and safeguarding separations).

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 students.
- Section 579 of the Education Act 1996, which defines 'The School Day'.
- The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded students) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended.
- The Equality Act 2010.
- Children and Families Act 2014.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Definitions

- **Suspension:** When a student is temporarily removed from the Academy for a fixed period on disciplinary grounds. This may include lunchtime suspensions. A suspension is used to provide a clear signal of unacceptable behaviour where standard interventions have failed.
- **Permanent Exclusion:** When a student is permanently removed from the Academy roll on disciplinary grounds. This is a measure of absolute last resort.
- **Off-Site Direction:** A formal, temporary requirement for a student to attend another education setting (such as alternative provision or a partner academy/school) to improve their behaviour.
- **Safeguarding Separation:** A temporary, formal measure where an academy must prevent a student from attending the main premises for safeguarding reasons (e.g., separating a complainant and an accused student while an allegation of serious harm is investigated). This is procedurally tracked separate from disciplinary exclusions.
- **Managed Move:** A process where a student is transferred to another school permanently from the outset. No "trial periods" are permitted. All parties, including parents, the student, and the admission authority for the new school, must consent. A student cannot be permanently excluded for refusing a managed move.
- **Parent:** Any person who has parental responsibility and any person who has care of the child.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The Principal

Deciding Whether to Suspend or Exclude

Only the Principal, or acting Principal, can suspend or permanently exclude a student from the Academy on disciplinary grounds. The decision can be made in respect of behaviour inside or outside of the school gates.

The Principal must treat suspensions and permanent exclusions as distinct interventions:

- **Suspensions** may be used where necessary to address serious behaviour breaches and signal boundary limits.
- **Permanent Exclusions** will only be issued as an absolute last resort.

A decision to permanently exclude a student will be taken only:

1. In response to serious or persistent breaches of the Academy's *Ready to Learn Behaviour policy*, **and**
2. If allowing the student to remain in the Academy would seriously harm the education or welfare of others.

Before deciding whether to suspend or exclude, the Principal will:

- Consider all relevant facts and evidence on the balance of probabilities.
- Ensure the student is supported to give their version of events.
- Consider duties under the Equality Act 2010, confirming whether reasonable adjustments were made for students with SEND.
- Consider vulnerability factors (e.g., if the student has a social worker or is a looked-after child (LAC)).
- Actively gather the views of the student regarding any proposed suspension, exclusion, off-site direction, or managed move, ensuring they are informed of how their input was weighted.

Student Movement & Early Notification Protections

- **Looked-After Children & Social Work Involvement:** If a student with a social worker or a LAC is *at risk* of a managed move, off-site direction, or suspension, the Principal will notify the social worker and/or Virtual School Head (VSH) at the point the move is first contemplated, not after the decision is finalised, to ensure early safeguarding alignment.

Informing Parents

If the Principal decides to suspend or exclude a student, the parents will be informed via telephone or in-person without delay. Written notification must be issued by the end of the afternoon session on the first day, explicitly detailing:

- The precise reasons, objectives, and length of the suspension or permanent exclusion.
- Parents' legal duty to ensure their child is not in a public place during school hours for the first 5 days.
- Clear instructions on how parents and the student can make representations to the governing board.

- Prescribed information regarding Alternative Provision (AP) placements if applicable (including start dates, precise morning/afternoon session times, physical address, and the specific contact person the student must report to).

Cancelling Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions

The Principal may cancel an ongoing suspension or permanent exclusion before it is reviewed by the governing board. Upon cancellation, parents, the local authority (LA), and any involved social worker/VSH must be notified without delay. The student must be readmitted immediately, and a reintegration strategy must be deployed.

4.2 The Governing Board

Duties Regarding Reinstatement & Meetings

The governing board holds a statutory duty to consider parents' representations and determine the reinstatement of a suspended or permanently excluded student within designated legal timeframes (see Section 5).

- **Enhanced Support Allocation:** Parents are legally entitled to bring more than one friend or representative to a governing board reinstatement meeting, subject only to a reasonable limit on total numbers set by the chair.

Robust Data Oversight and "student Movement" Scrutiny

The governing board will deploy maximum challenge to school leadership by routinely analysing, evaluating, and reviewing the following data trends every term:

- Deployed **safeguarding separation** instances and their durations.
- The characteristics of suspended/excluded students (including SEND, LAC, FSM status).
- The frequency, patterns, and ultimate success rates of off-site directions and managed moves.
- A strict evaluation of the cost implications and educational quality of alternative provisions used.

4.3 The Local Authority (LA)

For permanent exclusions, the LA is responsible for organising suitable, full-time alternative education to begin no later than the sixth school day of the exclusion. For vulnerable students (LAC/Social Worker involved), the LA and the Academy will collaborate to implement this provision from day one.

5. Considering the Reinstatement of a student

The Academy Governing Board will review decisions and decide on reinstatement within **15 school days** of receiving notice if:

- It is a permanent exclusion.
- The suspension brings the student's cumulative total to more than 15 school days in a single term.

- The suspension results in the student missing a public examination or National Curriculum test.

Cumulative Suspensions Per Term	Parent Makes Representations	Governing Board Requirement
5 school days or fewer	Yes	Must consider written representations; no meeting required; cannot direct reinstatement.
Between 5.5 and 15 school days	Yes	Must hold a hearing and decide within 50 school days of notification.
Between 5.5 and 15 school days	No	Not required to meet; cannot direct reinstatement.
More than 15 school days (or exam miss)	Mandated Automatically	Must hold a hearing and decide within 15 school days.

6. Independent Review Panel (IRP)

If the governing board upholds a permanent exclusion, parents retain the legal right to apply for an Independent Review Panel within **15 school days** of written notice.

- IRP configurations require a 3- or 5-member panel consisting of a lay chair, experienced school governors, and current/recent headteachers.
- The panel can uphold the decision, recommend reconsideration, or quash the decision entirely if it is found to be legally, procedurally, or reasonably flawed.

7. Academy Registers and Absences

A student's name will only be removed from the Academy admission register once:

- 15 school days have elapsed since the governing board's decision notification and no IRP application has been lodged.
- The parents confirm in writing they waive their right to an IRP.
- The IRP process has formally concluded and upheld the exclusion.

Managed Moves Registration Rule: In the case of a managed move, the student's name must remain on The Axholme Academy's register until the destination school officially confirms the permanent admission has been finalised.

8. Returning from a Suspension (Reintegration)

8.1 Reintegration Strategy

Following any suspension or period of off-site direction, the Academy will execute a tailored reintegration strategy. This strategy will be formalized during a Reintegration Meeting with parents and the student. Part-time timetables will never be used as a disciplinary tool and will only be applied as a short-term, strictly reviewed transition support mechanism.

8.2 Reintegration Meetings & Behaviour Adjustments

The meeting will identify pastoral pathways, behaviour support targets, and potential diagnostic SEND assessments.

Correction to Previous Internal Restraints: A student cannot be refused re-entry to mainstream lessons or held in isolation/reflection solely because a parent fails or is unable to attend a reintegration meeting. Denying access to education for non-attendance or non-disciplinary administration is unlawful. If a parent cannot attend, alternative communication pathways will be established, and the student will be safely reintegrated with staff support.

9. Monitoring Arrangements

Suspension and student movement tracking will be overseen dynamically. anonymized data categorised by protected characteristics, time factors, and intervention categories will be reviewed by the Data Manager and provided to the Principal and Governing Board to maintain full regulatory compliance.

10. Links with Other Policies and Guidance

This policy directly interacts with:

- Ready to Learn Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy and Information Report
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- [Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England July 2026](#)