



SUSPENSION AND PERMANENT EXCLUSION POLICY

Purpose and principles

Warlingham is committed to maintaining a calm, safe, respectful and disruption-free environment in which students and staff can flourish. Suspension and permanent exclusion are lawful and necessary behaviour-management tools, but they are serious interventions. Suspension is used where required to mark unacceptable conduct, protect education or welfare, and support improvement. Permanent exclusion is used only as a last resort.

The policy is governed by the following principles:

- Every decision is lawful, reasonable, procedurally fair and made on the individual facts.
- Safety, the education and welfare of others, and the impact of conduct are considered alongside the needs and circumstances of the student whose exclusion is being considered.
- Suspension is not an automatic product of a point score, behaviour label or number of previous suspensions.
- Support and consequence are distinct and may occur together; identifying need does not remove accountability, and applying a consequence does not remove the duty to support.
- The school considers SEND, disability, vulnerability, safeguarding, reasonable adjustments and whether provision has been implemented as intended.
- Child-on-child safeguarding, safety planning, fact-finding, formal consequence, education, support and restorative work remain separate but connected processes.
- History informs understanding; it does not determine status or automatically dictate the next sanction.
- Reintegration communicates belonging, provides a fresh start and addresses recurrence.

Scope and legal framework

This policy applies to all pupils on the school roll, including pupils in the school sixth form. It applies to disciplinary conduct inside or outside school where the Behaviour Policy applies. Only the Headteacher or acting Headteacher may suspend or permanently exclude a pupil on disciplinary grounds.

The school has regard to Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from Maintained Schools, Academies and Pupil Referral Units in England, including Pupil Movement (DfE, July 2026), and to the legislation and guidance identified in that document, including:

- the Education Act 2002, as amended by the Education Act 2011;
- the School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012;
- the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and Education Act 1996;
- the Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended and modified;
- the Education (Educational Provision for Improving Behaviour) (Application to Academies and Pupil Referral Units and Minor Amendments) Regulations 2026;
- the Equality Act 2010 and Children and Families Act 2014;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026; and
- the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.

The detailed statutory guidance forms part of the school's procedure even where every requirement is not reproduced in this policy.

Definitions

Term	Meaning
Suspension	A fixed period during which a pupil is excluded from school on disciplinary grounds. Legislation also describes this as exclusion for a fixed period.
Permanent exclusion	Permanent removal from the school on disciplinary grounds, subject to the statutory governing-board and independent-review processes.
Cancelled exclusion	An exclusion cancelled before the governing board has met to consider whether the pupil should be reinstated.
Internal suspension	A time-limited, supervised in-school consequence with continued education. It is not a statutory suspension.
Off-site direction	A temporary, lawful direction that a pupil attend another education setting to improve behaviour, subject to consultation, safeguards and regular review.
Managed move	A permanent transfer agreed by the parent, original school and receiving school. It is not used as a trial placement.
Alternative provision (AP)	Education arranged outside mainstream provision under an identified lawful route, with clear purpose, oversight and review.
Parent	A person with parental responsibility or care of the pupil. For statutory representations, the relevant person is the parent where the pupil is under 18 and the pupil where aged 18 or over.
School day	A day on which there is a school session; an INSET or staff-training day does not count for suspension-length purposes.

Distinguishing suspension from other arrangements

A pupil will not be sent home for disciplinary reasons without a formal suspension. This remains the case even if a parent agrees. The school will not disguise exclusion as cooling-off, safeguarding separation, remote learning, an authorised absence, a part-time timetable or another informal arrangement.

In certain circumstances, the school may temporarily prevent a pupil from attending the school site where this is necessary for safeguarding purposes, for example where pupils need to be physically separated following an allegation of harm. This is not a disciplinary suspension. Any such arrangement will be exceptional, necessary and proportionate, led by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, recorded clearly, notified to parents and the governing board, and accompanied by suitable education arrangements in accordance with statutory guidance.

A pupil will not be suspended or permanently excluded because the school feels unable to meet SEND, because of poor academic performance, or because the pupil or parent has not attended or completed a reintegration meeting. Part-time timetables will not be used to manage behaviour.

The Headteacher's decision

Threshold

A decision to suspend may be taken in response to a serious incident or persistent breaches of the Behaviour Policy. It may be used where in-school responses would not adequately protect safety, education, welfare, standards or the integrity of an investigation, or where a clear signal is required that conduct is unacceptable and places the pupil at risk of permanent exclusion.

Permanent exclusion may be used only:

- in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the Behaviour Policy; and
- where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others, including staff.

Both conditions must be met. Permanent exclusion is a last resort, but the law does not require the school to exhaust every possible intervention where a single incident is sufficiently serious.

Facts and evidence

The Headteacher makes findings on the balance of probabilities: whether it is more likely than not that the conduct occurred. This differs from the criminal standard. Complete certainty is not required. The Headteacher considers relevant facts and evidence, including provocation where applicable, and will ordinarily allow the pupil an age-appropriate opportunity to give their account before deciding, unless it would not be appropriate or safe to do so at that point.

Police or social-care involvement does not automatically prevent the school from making a disciplinary decision. However, the school will liaise appropriately, preserve evidence and avoid prejudicing a criminal investigation, while continuing to meet its safeguarding and educational duties.

Matters considered

Before deciding, the Headteacher considers, as relevant:

- the conduct, chronology, impact, risk and seriousness;
- the pupil's account and other available evidence;
- whether the conduct falls within the scope of the Behaviour Policy and the policy has been applied fairly;
- the pupil's age, understanding, SEND, disability, communication, health, vulnerability and safeguarding circumstances;
- reasonable adjustments, the provision in any EHC plan and whether agreed provision or support was delivered;
- whether the pupil is looked after, previously looked after or has a social worker;
- the education, welfare and safety of other pupils and staff, including measures for any child affected;
- relevant history, recurrence, previous response and the impact of interventions;
- available alternatives and why they would or would not be sufficient in the circumstances; and
- whether the proposed decision and length are necessary and proportionate.

Decision record and timing

Safety action may be immediate. The substantive decision will be made as soon as sufficient information is available and will not be held open merely to resolve every minor discrepancy. Where a more complex investigation is necessary, the responsible leader, expected timescale and interim arrangements will be recorded and overseen.

Safeguarding and child-on-child conduct

A safeguarding report and a disciplinary finding serve different purposes. The school may implement proportionate interim safety arrangements before fact-finding is complete; such arrangements are not findings of guilt. The wishes and feelings of a child affected will be sought and given significant weight, but the school retains responsibility for safeguarding decisions.

A suspension may be imposed where the conduct and statutory threshold justify it, including in a child-on-child case, but not merely because an allegation has been made. Information about another child, including their account, sanction, support or safeguarding arrangements, will not be disclosed to satisfy a parent's request for comparison or detail.

A complaint or parental disagreement does not automatically pause safeguarding action, interim safety arrangements or a lawful exclusion decision. Restorative contact is never a condition of support, reintegration or cooperation and is used only where safe, suitable and consistent with the welfare and wishes of those affected.

SEND, disability and vulnerability

The school will not assume that every incident involving a pupil with SEND is caused by SEND, nor that SEND prevents a consequence. However in all such incidents the SENDCo or member of the SEND team will be required to evaluate the extent to which the behaviour is related to the area of need or vulnerability. It will consider whether the pupil understood the expectation, could act differently at the time, was substantially disadvantaged, and received the agreed provision and reasonable adjustments.

Where there is concern about the behaviour of a pupil with an EHC plan, the school will involve the local authority at an early stage and consider whether an early annual review is required. Where needs may be unidentified or unmet, the school considers assessment, strengthened provision, early help, safeguarding or multi-agency action.

Where a pupil has a social worker, is looked after or was previously looked after, the Headteacher will involve the social worker and/or Virtual School Head as required by statutory guidance, consider the PEP and Pupil Premium Plus where relevant, and invite them to statutory meetings as required.

Duration and operation of suspension

A suspension will be for the shortest period judged necessary and proportionate. A pupil may be suspended for one or more fixed periods, up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year. A lunchtime suspension counts as half a school day.

The Headteacher may cancel an exclusion before the governing board has met to consider reinstatement. The required parties will be informed without delay, reasons provided, the pupil allowed to return without delay, and the statutory effect of days already spent out of school recorded.

A suspension is not extended informally. If further disciplinary action is considered necessary because of new information or separate conduct, the Headteacher will follow the applicable statutory process and issue the required notice.

Notification following a decision

Parents and students

Parents will be informed without delay, ordinarily by telephone or in person, followed by written notice. The written notice will include all information required by statutory guidance, including:

- the reason for the suspension or permanent exclusion;
- the length of a suspension or the fact that the exclusion is permanent;
- the right to make representations to the governing board and how to do so;

- when the governing board is required to meet, and rights to attend, be represented and bring a friend;
- the right and process for requesting a remote meeting;
- for a compulsory-school-age pupil, the parent's duty during the first five school days to ensure the pupil is not present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, and the days to which that duty applies; and
- where known, the arrangements for work or alternative provision.

If alternative-provision details are not available in the initial notice, they will be provided without delay and within the statutory notice requirements. All those with parental responsibility will be involved where practical. The pupil will receive an age-appropriate explanation of the decision and next steps.

The notice will also signpost the current DfE guide for parents and carers, the local SEND Information, Advice and Support Service, Coram Child Law Advice and IPSEA, together with any locally required sources of free and impartial information.

Governing board, local authority and professionals

The Headteacher will notify the local authority of every suspension and permanent exclusion without delay, including the reason and length. For a permanent exclusion, the pupil's home authority will also be notified without delay where it differs from the school's local authority.

The Headteacher will notify the governing board without delay of: every permanent exclusion, including one following a suspension; any exclusion taking the pupil's total to more than five school days or more than ten lunchtimes in a term; and any exclusion causing a public examination or National Curriculum test to be missed. The Headteacher will inform the governing board once per term of every other suspension not previously notified. A cancellation and its reason will be notified without delay to the parent, governing board, local authority and, where applicable, social worker and Virtual School Head.

The pupil's social worker and/or Virtual School Head will be informed and invited as required. Relevant safeguarding and welfare information will accompany the notice on a need-to-know basis.

Education during suspension or permanent exclusion

For the first five school days of a suspension or permanent exclusion, where the pupil is not attending alternative provision, the school will set achievable, accessible and appropriately challenging work and arrange for it to be submitted and marked. Reasonable adjustments will be made. A named contact will support communication about learning.

For a pupil of compulsory school age whose suspension extends beyond five consecutive school days, suitable full-time education must begin no later than the sixth school day. The school and Trust will make the necessary operational arrangements in accordance with the statutory duty, with the governing board assuring itself that appropriate processes and suitable provision are in place. Following permanent exclusion, the local authority is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education from the sixth school day.

Reintegration after suspension

The purpose of reintegration is a rapid, supported return to successful learning, conduct and belonging. A strategy will be prepared for every returning pupil and explained before or on return. It will normally include:

- a warm welcome and an explicit fresh start;
- reflection on conduct, choice, impact, triggers and recurrence;
- a personalised strategy to be rehearsed and used;
- clarification of expectations and likely consequences of recurrence;

- reasonable adjustments and a proportionate support plan;
- safe restorative steps where appropriate and agreed;
- support for any pupil affected by the conduct; and
- named monitoring, review and early-response arrangements.

Maple is ordinarily used for a structured, time-limited post-suspension reintegration before return to normal lessons. The Head of Year identifies the strategy; behaviour-support staff deliver the induction, reflection, micro-conference and rehearsal process; relevant SEND, safeguarding, attendance, disadvantage or wellbeing professionals contribute where needed.

Parents and relevant professionals will be invited where appropriate, but a meeting may proceed without a parent who cannot or does not attend. Neither the pupil nor parent is required to agree with the decision, apologise or complete restorative contact before the pupil may return to education.

Repeated Suspension Response

The number of suspensions in the current academic year triggers increasing review and coordination; it never automatically determines the length or outcome of a future suspension. The count restarts each September. Earlier history remains available to inform understanding.

Following	Required review action; not an automatic sanction
A first suspension this academic year	Head of Year leads reintegration and parent conversation; checks the immediate strategy, existing provision and monitoring.
A second suspension	Head of Year and appropriate senior/pastoral leader review recurrence, implementation of support, family engagement and whether intervention needs to change.
A third suspension	The case is presented to Inclusion Review. The school establishes a complete, cumulative and decision-ready Continuum of Support record which informs every subsequent reintegration and review. Inclusion Review confirms or changes the case lead and actively considers a time-limited partner-school intervention through an appropriate lawful route.
A fourth suspension	A formal decision is made on whether an off-site direction to a partner school or other suitable setting is now necessary and proportionate. If directed, its objectives, information sharing, education, safeguarding, transport, reviews and return are recorded.
A fifth suspension	After the off-site direction has occurred and been reviewed, Inclusion Review and the Headteacher make an explicit AP decision: whether mainstream return remains sustainable or a different alternative-provision pathway must now be pursued.
Further suspension	The Headteacher and Inclusion Review evaluate placement sustainability, specialist provision and proximity to the permanent-exclusion threshold. Any permanent-exclusion consideration remains an individual statutory decision, never the automatic next step.

The default case lead remains the Head of Year unless Inclusion Review formally transfers leadership to a better-placed professional. From the third suspension, the cumulative record must enable each decision-maker and reintegration lead to see the suspension rationales, pattern analysis, intervention passports, support and reasonable-adjustment records, implementation and impact evidence, commitments, review outcomes and pupil/parent contributions. Its purpose is continuity, accountability and informed decision-making. Its operational format, ownership and storage—including whether a physical file is used—are set out in the Repeated Suspension Response protocol.

Off-site direction

Off-site direction is a temporary intervention used to improve future behaviour; it is not a suspension, permanent exclusion or trial managed move. The school remains responsible for the pupil and will comply with the 2026 statutory and regulatory framework.

Before directing a pupil off site, the school will consider the pupil's best interests, views, SEND, health, safeguarding, education, travel, suitability of the placement, objectives, duration and proposed return. Parents will be consulted. Consent is not the legal basis of a direction, but consultation must be genuine and recorded.

The written direction will identify the purpose, placement, start arrangements, education, safeguarding responsibilities, information sharing, transport, attendance, contact, reviews and reintegration plan. The school will review the placement at the statutory intervals and sooner where necessary, involving the parent, pupil, receiving setting and relevant professionals. The governing board will oversee use and impact.

A direction ends when its objectives have been met, it is no longer suitable or lawful, or another lawful educational arrangement is agreed. Successful temporary attendance does not automatically become permanent. A managed move requires the agreement of all parties.

Alternative provision and managed moves

Alternative provision is commissioned only through an identified lawful route and where it is suitable, safe and in the pupil's best interests. The school will specify the intended educational and behavioural outcomes, curriculum, safeguarding, attendance, SEND provision, review, quality assurance and route back or onward. AP will not be used to remove a pupil for the school's benefit or evade statutory exclusion procedures.

A managed move is a permanent move to another mainstream school. It must be voluntary and agreed by the parent, original school and receiving school, be in the pupil's best interests and follow a clear transition plan. It will not be used as a trial placement, pressure tactic or alternative label for off-site direction.

Governing-board consideration

The statutory governing-board function is exercised by the Trust board or a committee, including the Local Governing Committee, only where the Trust's articles and scheme of delegation permit. The governing board will consider parental representations and decide whether to reinstate where required by law. Its decision is whether to decline reinstatement or direct reinstatement immediately or on a specified date where it has power to do so.

Circumstance	Governing-board duty
Permanent exclusion	Convene and decide on reinstatement within 15 school days of receiving notice.
Suspension taking the term total above 15 school days	Convene and decide on reinstatement within 15 school days of receiving notice, including where the total exceeds 15 by part of a day.
Exclusion causing a public examination or National Curriculum test to be missed	Convene and decide within 15 school days and, so far as reasonably practicable, before the examination or test.
Suspension taking the term total above five but not above 15 school days	If the parent makes representations, convene and decide on reinstatement within 50 school days of receiving notice. Without representations, no meeting is required and the governing board cannot direct reinstatement.

Circumstance	Governing-board duty
Suspension not taking the term total above five school days	Consider any parental representations; no meeting is required and the governing board cannot direct reinstatement.

The governing board will consider whether the original decision was lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair, having regard to the Headteacher's statutory duties, the interests and circumstances of the pupil, the welfare and safeguarding of the pupil and peers, the interests of staff and other pupils, and the evidence presented. Facts are considered on the balance of probabilities.

Minutes and the evidence considered will be retained, the outcome recorded on the educational record, and written reasons provided without delay to all required parties. Where a permanent exclusion is upheld, the notice will set out the right, deadline and process for independent review, including the right to request a SEN expert and the applicable discrimination routes.

Independent review and remote meetings

Following a governing-board decision not to reinstate a permanently excluded pupil, the parent—or the pupil if aged 18 or over—may apply in writing for an independent review panel within 15 school days of being notified of that decision. Where no application was made in that period, a further 15-school-day application period follows the final determination of a discrimination claim relating to the permanent exclusion. An out-of-time application must be rejected.

Where a valid application is made, the Trust will arrange an independent review panel at its own expense in accordance with the statutory guidance. The review must begin within 15 school days of the application. The parent may request the attendance of a SEN expert. The panel may uphold the decision, recommend reconsideration, or quash and direct reconsideration where the governing-board decision is flawed on public-law principles. Detailed constitution, training, SEN-expert and reconsideration arrangements follow the statutory guidance and Trust procedure.

Parents, or pupils aged 18 or over, may request remote access for a governing-board meeting or independent review panel. Remote meetings will be used only where the statutory conditions for access, full participation, fairness and transparency are satisfied. Social workers and Virtual School Heads may join remotely as permitted.

Removal from the admission register after permanent exclusion

The pupil's name remains on the admission register while the permanent-exclusion review process is open. It will be removed only when 15 school days have passed since the parent was notified of the governing board's decision not to reinstate and no independent-review application has been made, or when the parent has stated in writing that no application will be made.

Where a valid independent-review application has been made, removal will not occur until the review has been determined or abandoned and the governing board has completed any reconsideration recommended or directed by the panel. Removal will not be backdated to the date the permanent exclusion began. The school will make the prescribed return to the local authority, use the correct attendance codes while the pupil remains registered, and transfer educational and safeguarding records within the applicable statutory timescales.

Records, confidentiality and complaints

The school retains the decision record, evidence, notices, work and alternative-provision arrangements, reintegration plan, governing-board papers and outcomes in accordance with retention and data-protection requirements. Behaviour records, safeguarding records and statutory exclusion records are connected but remain appropriately distinguished.

Parents may make representations or complain through the applicable statutory or Trust process. A complaint does not replace the statutory governing-board or independent-review routes and does not automatically pause an exclusion, safety arrangement, off-site direction or reintegration plan. The school will reconsider where material new evidence,

procedural unfairness or another substantial reason is identified, not solely because a parent disagrees or seeks indefinite resolution of minor discrepancies.

Monitoring and governance

Leaders and governors monitor suspensions, permanent exclusions, cancellations, internal suspensions, off-site directions, managed moves and AP. Analysis includes reasons, duration, recurrence, timing, pupil outcomes, reintegration, placement reviews and disproportionality by relevant characteristics, including SEND, disability, sex, ethnicity, disadvantage, looked-after status, social-worker involvement and attendance.

The school samples decision records for evidence quality, procedural fairness, reasonable adjustments, support implementation, victim protection and reintegration. The Trust and Local Governing Committee challenge patterns, placement quality, cost, potential off-rolling and whether policy or provision is producing unintended effects.

Roles and operational documents

Role	Core responsibility
Headteacher	Makes and records suspension and permanent-exclusion decisions; fulfils notification duties; ensures legality, proportionality and education.
Local Governing Committee / Trust	Exercises statutory review and oversight; monitors patterns, equality, pupil movement and provision; arranges independent review where required.
Deputy Headteacher – Behaviour and Attitudes	Quality assures evidence, procedure, repeated-suspension response and reintegration; ensures operational alignment with the Behaviour Policy.
Head of Year / case lead	Leads family communication, reintegration, pattern analysis, intervention and review; maintains the case file and completes agreed actions.
SENDCo / DSL / Attendance and Safeguarding lead	Advise on statutory duties, need, vulnerability, reasonable adjustments, safeguarding, attendance and multi-agency action.
Behaviour support / Maple	Deliver structured reintegration, reflection and strategy rehearsal; record readiness, completion and handover.
Parents and pupil	Provide relevant information and views, comply with statutory requirements and engage with education, reintegration and review arrangements.

The following documents provide the operational detail and must remain consistent with this policy:

- Warlingham Behaviour Policy and Choices and Consequences guide;
- Suspension Decision Record and evidence checklist;
- Suspension notification letter templates;
- Repeated Suspension Response and Inclusion Review protocol;
- Maple reintegration form, reflection and strategy-rehearsal materials;
- Off-site Direction / partner-school written protocol and review form;
- Intervention Passport, Continuum of Support file and Safety Plan; and
- Trust governing-board and independent-review procedures.

Appendix A – Statutory decision and notification checklist

Point	Minimum assurance
Authority	Decision made by Headteacher or acting Headteacher on disciplinary grounds.
Threshold	Relevant Behaviour Policy breach; permanent exclusion meets both statutory conditions.
Evidence	Chronology, accounts, balance-of-probabilities findings and pupil voice recorded.
Duties	SEND, disability, reasonable adjustments, EHC provision, vulnerability, safeguarding, LAC/social-worker status considered.
Impact and alternatives	Education/welfare/safety impact, victim protection, alternatives and why insufficient recorded.
Proportionality	Type and length individually reasoned; annual 45-day maximum checked.
Notification	Parent, pupil, LA, governing board, social worker/VSH and home authority notified as required.
Education	Work and, where applicable, alternative provision arranged within statutory timescales.
Reintegration or movement	Named plan, owner, support, review and return/onward route established.
Record	Decision rationale and required papers retained on the educational record.