



Exclusion and Suspension of Pupils: Policy - 2025/2026

Date approved:	23.02.2026
Approved by:	Board of Directors
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Version History

Version	Date Issued	Brief Summary of Change	Owners Name
0.1	31.10.2019	New Policy	Wendy Ainscough
1.1	14.05.2019	Policy updated to provide clarification for action to be taken when HT offsite	Wendy Ainscough
1.2	15.10.2019	Annual Review	Wendy Ainscough
1.3	01.09.2020	Annual Review - see <u>Exclusion Policy Addendum</u> which remains in place until 24.09.2020	Wendy Ainscough
1.4	07.09.2021	Annual Review	Wendy Ainscough
1.5	06.09.2022	Updated to include reference to the Director of Education	Rachael Sharpe
1.6	04.09.2023	Annual review - in line with DoFE guidance released in May 2023	Dee Seddon
1.7	19.01.2025	Annual Review	Caroline Merrit
1.8	12.01.2026	Annual Review – changes to number 11	James Creek



Policy Statement

Alumnis Multi Academy Trust places the **highest priority on the safety, social, emotional, mental health and wellbeing** of all members of our school communities. We work proactively to ensure that our ethos and environments support **character development, positive behaviour, learning and long-term success**.

Exclusion and suspension are used **only as a last resort**, and the Trust is committed to reducing their use wherever possible through **early intervention, reasonable adjustments, restorative approaches and partnership working with families and agencies**. This policy is underpinned by the Trust's **Attitude to Learning and Character Development Policy** and aligns with current statutory guidance.

1. Legal Framework and Statutory Guidance

This policy has been updated to align with:

- **DfE: Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from Maintained Schools, Academies and Pupil Referral Units (most recent statutory guidance)**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE – current edition)**
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989 and **Children Act 2004**

2. Power to Exclude or Suspend

The **Headteacher** is the only member of staff within the school who may suspend or permanently exclude a pupil, either for a fixed-term or permanently.

The **Board of Directors** may review the Headteacher's decision and consider representations from parents/carers. They may direct reinstatement or uphold the exclusion but **cannot impose an exclusion themselves**.



Headteachers may withdraw an exclusion that has not yet been reviewed by the Board of Directors. If this occurs, parents/carers, the Board of Directors and the Local Authority must be notified and, where applicable, the pupil's **social worker and Virtual School Head**.

In the event that a Headteacher is unavailable and uncontactable, the school must consult the **Director of Education**, who will advise and make a decision based on the available evidence. **All statutory notification and reintegration duties remain the responsibility of the school.**

3. Reasons for Exclusion or Suspension

Exclusion or suspension may occur where there has been:

- A **serious breach** of the school's Attitude to Learning and Character Development Policy; and/or
- A situation where allowing the pupil to remain in school would **seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others**.

Unacceptable behaviours may include (this list is not exhaustive):

- Verbal abuse towards staff or pupils;
- Physical assault against staff or pupils;
- Sexual abuse or assault;
- Serious actual or threatened violence;
- Carrying an offensive weapon;
- Supplying illegal drugs;
- Arson;
- Persistent disruptive behaviour where **previous sanctions and interventions have not been successful**.

4. Types of Exclusion

4.1 Permanent Exclusion

Permanent exclusion is an **exceptional measure** and will be used only:



- As a **last resort**, or
- Where the seriousness of the incident makes it necessary as a **first response**.

Examples include:

- Serious violence against another pupil or staff member;
- Sexual abuse or assault;
- Supplying illegal drugs;
- Carrying an offensive weapon;
- Arson.

All permanent exclusions are reviewed by the Board of Directors to ensure they are lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair.

4.2 Fixed-Term Suspension

Fixed-term suspensions may be issued for serious breaches of behaviour policy or persistent disruptive behaviour.

- A pupil may not be suspended for **more than 45 school days in a single academic year**.
- **Suspensions cannot be extended or converted**, although further sanctions may be applied where new evidence emerges.

During a suspension, **parents/carers are responsible for the pupil during school hours**.

4.3 Lunchtime Suspension

A lunchtime suspension is a form of fixed-term suspension and counts as **half a school day**. It will:

- Be used only where behaviour at lunchtime is disruptive or unsafe;
- **Not exceed one school week**;
- Not restrict access to **free school meals**, where eligible.

5. Making the Decision to Exclude



Exclusion decisions are taken **with extreme care**. Wherever possible, schools will demonstrate that:

- **Reasonable adjustments** have been made;
- Support strategies have been implemented;
- The pupil's **SEND, safeguarding status and wider context** have been considered.

The Headteacher must, **without delay**, notify:

- Parents/carers;
- The Local Authority;
- The pupil's social worker and/or Virtual Schools, where applicable.

6. Alternative Strategies and Early Intervention

Internal Exclusion

Short-term internal exclusion may be used where separation is necessary but removal from site is not. **Parents/carers will be informed.**

Restorative and Relational Approaches

Staff are trained in **restorative practice**, supporting pupils to understand impact, repair harm and rebuild relationships. **Sanctions remain available where necessary but are framed within learning and accountability.**

Managed Move

Managed moves are voluntary and will occur **only with informed parental consent**, Local Authority involvement and Board of Directors oversight. **Parents will never be pressured to agree to a managed move.**

7. Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children

The Trust recognises the additional vulnerabilities faced by looked-after and previously looked-after children. Before exclusion, schools will:



- Consult with the Local Authority and relevant professionals;
- Involve the social worker and Virtual School **at the earliest opportunity**;
- Explore all reasonable alternatives to exclusion.

8. Pupils with SEND and Disabilities

Pupils with SEND

Schools will take **every practicable step** to support pupils with SEND and SEMH needs. Where exclusion is unavoidable, schools will work with parents and the Local Authority to ensure appropriate provision and, where necessary, review or amend an EHCP.

Pupils with Disabilities

A pupil with a disability will only be excluded for behaviour related to their disability where there is a **material and substantial reason**, and where **reasonable adjustments have already been made**, in line with the Equality Act 2010.

9. Investigating Incidents

Before exclusion, the Headteacher will:

- Conduct a thorough investigation;
- Consider all evidence;
- Allow the pupil to give their account;
- Consult the Director of Education and CEO;
- Maintain accurate written records.

10. Recording, Confidentiality and Notification

All exclusions and suspensions are:

- Recorded formally;
- Logged on safeguarding systems where appropriate;
- Notified to the Local Authority **within statutory timescales**;



- Managed confidentially on a need-to-know basis.

11. Reviewing Exclusions

The Board of Directors will:

- Review all permanent exclusions;
- Review fixed-term suspensions that exceed 15 school days in a term or result in a pupil missing a public examination;
- Consider parental representations fairly, impartially and in line with statutory guidance.

Informing Parents/Carers

Parents/carers will be informed in writing, without delay, of:

- The reason for the exclusion or suspension;
- The length of the exclusion (where fixed-term);
- Their right to make representations to the Board of Directors;
- The date, time and format of any review meeting;
- Their right to be accompanied or represented at review meetings;
- Their right to request an Independent Review Panel, where applicable.

Parental Rights and Representation

Parents/carers have the right to:

- Attend the Board of Directors' review meeting;
- Be accompanied by a friend, advocate or legal representative;
- Submit written evidence or statements in advance of the meeting;
- Speak and make representations during the meeting.

Independent Review Panel

Where a permanent exclusion is upheld by the Board of Directors, parents/carers may request an Independent Review Panel. The Independent Review Panel is arranged by the Local Authority and must be requested within the statutory timescale (currently 15 school days from receipt of the decision letter).

Parents/carers may also request the appointment of a Special Educational Needs expert to attend the Independent Review Panel where SEND is a relevant consideration.



Whom to Contact

For advice, support, or to submit representations, parents/carers may contact:

- **Clerk to the Board of Directors:** J Robilliard
- **Email:** trustclerk@alumnismat.org

Where appropriate, parents/carers will also be signposted to independent sources of advice and support, including:

- **Local Authority Education Inclusion Service (EIS):**
The Education Inclusion Service provides information and guidance in relation to suspensions, permanent exclusions, review processes and parental rights. Further information can be found at:
<https://www.devon.gov.uk/support-schools-settings/school-effectiveness/governance/dealing-with-exclusion/>
- **Devon Information, Advice and Support (DIAS):**
DIAS offers impartial information, advice and support to parents/carers and young people in relation to SEND, exclusions and education-related matters.
<https://www.devonias.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/DPP15-exclusion-or-at-risk-of-exclusion.pdf>

For further information on the Independent Review Panel process please contact appeals@devon.gov.uk.

Suspension and permanent exclusion guidance outlines the process – **DfE statutory guidance:** [Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from Maintained Schools, Academies and Pupil Referral Units](#)

12. Education During Exclusion

For the **first five school days**, schools will set and mark work.

From day six:

- For fixed-term suspensions, the school will arrange suitable full-time education;
- For permanent exclusions, the Local Authority will arrange provision.



Where a pupil has an **Education, Health and Care Plan**, alternative provision will meet the identified needs.