



The First Federation Trust Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 The First Federation Trust's suspension and permanent exclusion policy aims to set out the process that will be followed and the additional considerations around suspensions and permanent exclusions that the Trust will apply. Good behaviour and self-discipline lead to effective learning and help prepare children and young people for life beyond the school gate.
- 1.2 Where the First Federation Trust's approaches towards behaviour management have been exhausted, then suspensions and permanent exclusions will sometimes be necessary as a last resort. This is to ensure that other pupils and teaching staff are protected from disruption and can learn in safe, calm, and supportive environments.
- 1.3 The Trust will have regard to the Department for Education statutory guidance ['Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement'](#) (July 2026), and any subsequent updates (when making decisions on suspensions and exclusions and will follow the law, as set out in the following:
 - Section 52 of the Education Act 2002, as amended by the Education Act 2011
 - The School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012
 - Part 7, chapter 2 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, which looks at parental responsibility for excluded pupils
 - Section 579 of the Education Act 1996, which defines 'school day' The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations
 - 2007, as amended by The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014
- 1.4 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:
 - Anti-bullying policy
 - Pupil behaviour policy
 - Individual school relational policy and practice
 - Equality policy
 - Safeguarding and child protection policy
 - SEND policy and information report

2 Application of policy

- 2.1 This policy applies to all members of the Trust community. Each school within the Trust will apply suspensions and permanent exclusions in accordance with this policy and ensure that its contents are relayed to all staff, parents, and pupils.

3 Definitions for Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions

- 3.1 Suspensions (previously called fixed-term exclusions) are where a pupil is temporarily removed from the school as an essential behaviour management tool consistent with a school's behaviour policy for one or more fixed periods (up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year) and does not have to be for a continuous period. A suspension can also be for parts of the school day. For example, if a pupil's behaviour at lunchtime is disruptive, they may be suspended from the school premises for the duration of the lunchtime period. A suspension

may be used to provide a clear signal of what is unacceptable behaviour as part of the school's behaviour policy and show a pupil that their current behaviour is putting them at risk of permanent exclusion.

- 3.2 Permanent exclusions are where, subject to a decision of the Governing Board to reinstate the pupil to the school, the pupil is prevented from attending the school again. A decision to permanently exclude will only be taken in response to 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 such as staff or pupils in the school
- 3.3 For the purposes of suspensions and permanent exclusions, the school day is defined as any day which there is a school session. Therefore, INSET or other staff training days do not count as a school day.
- 3.4 Our Trust is aware that off-rolling is unlawful. Ofsted defines off-rolling as: "... the practice of removing a pupil from the school 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 pupil."

4 Roles and responsibilities

All members of the Trust community are expected to follow this policy. Roles, responsibilities and expectations of each section of the Trust community are set out in detail below.

The Head of School

- 4.1 All decisions to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil will be taken by the Head of School after considering all the circumstances, the available evidence and after consulting with their Link Director (or another member of the Trust Educational Senior Leadership Team). Decisions will be lawful, reasonable, fair and proportionate, with reference to the school Behaviour Policy and this policy. When establishing the facts, the Head of School will apply the civil standard of proof, namely "on the balance of probabilities". Particular consideration will be given to pupils with SEND, pupils with an EHCP, looked after and previously looked after children, pupils with a social worker and any safeguarding concerns.
- 4.2 The Head of School can cancel any exclusion that has already begun (or one that has not yet begun), but this can only happen when the Governing Board has not yet met to consider whether the pupil should be reinstated.

The Trustees

- 4.3 The Governing Board and the relevant Trust leaders will be informed, without delay, of all suspensions and permanent exclusions via email.
- 4.4 The Governing Board is responsible for establishing committees to review suspensions and permanent exclusions where required by legislation, where requested by parents, or where it considers it appropriate to review an individual decision. In each case, the decision of the Pupil Discipline Committee, formed by the Governing Board, will determine whether the suspension or permanent exclusion should be upheld or whether the pupil should be reinstated.
- 4.5 The Governing Board and Trustees will monitor suspension, permanent exclusion, off-site direction and safeguarding removal data, including patterns relating to SEND, EHCP status,

disadvantage, ethnicity, looked after status and pupils with a social worker, to identify any disproportionality and ensure exclusion practices are fair and lawful.

Parents

- 4.6 Parents will be informed without delay of any suspension or exclusion and have the right to make representations in regard to any suspension or permanent exclusion decision. Details will be provided in all correspondence issued by the Head of School

Local Authority

- 4.7 The Local Authority will be informed without delay of all suspensions or permanent exclusions regardless of length using the local authority template or online reporting system.
- 4.8 For permanent exclusions, the Local Authority is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education to begin no later than the sixth school day after the first day of the permanent exclusion. Where a pupil has an EHCP, the Local Authority will work with the school and parents/carers to review the plan or reassess the child's needs and provision.

The Virtual School Head

- 4.9 Where a looked after child or previously looked after child is suspended or permanently excluded, the Virtual School Head will be informed without delay in accordance with statutory guidance. The school will work collaboratively with the Virtual School to support the pupil's education, welfare and reintegration.

Social Workers

- 4.10 Where a pupil has a social worker, the school will notify the social worker without delay of any suspension or permanent exclusion and seek to work collaboratively with relevant professionals to support the pupil's education and welfare.

Pupils

- 4.11 All pupils of the schools in the Trust are expected to follow the expectations regarding their behaviour to ensure that all pupils can learn and participate in school life effectively. Where those expectations are breached, the Behaviour Policy will apply.
- 4.12 The Trust recognises that pupils with SEND, pupils with an EHCP, looked after and previously looked after children, and pupils with a social worker are disproportionately represented in suspension and exclusion data nationally. Staff will ensure that decisions are made in consideration of any identified or emerging needs and that reasonable adjustments, appropriate support and preventative interventions have been considered where appropriate.

Safeguarding and Off-Site Provision

- 4.13 Where a pupil is directed off-site or removed from the school site for safeguarding reasons, the school retains responsibility for the pupil's safeguarding, welfare, attendance, and educational provision. Appropriate reviews will be undertaken, parents and relevant professionals will be involved where appropriate, and arrangements will remain in place only for as long as necessary, and will not be used as an alternative to suspension, permanent exclusion or any other unlawful exclusion practice

5 Witness evidence and pupil views

- 5.1 Where witness evidence is relied upon, whether from a pupil or a staff member, the statement(s) will be provided to any Governing Board review meeting or Independent Review Panel. All statements will be signed and dated unless the Head of School has good reason to protect the anonymity of the relevant witness. Such reasons may include safeguarding concerns or a risk of reprisals against the witness.
- 5.2 Before taking a decision to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil, and where appropriate, the Head of School will take the pupil's views into account having regard to their age, understanding and individual needs. The pupil will be informed, where appropriate, how their views have been considered as part of the decision-making process. In considering a pupil's views, the Head of School will take account of any communication needs, SEND, disability, social, emotional or mental health needs that may affect the pupil's ability to participate in the process.
- 5.3 Where relevant, the pupil will be given support to express their views, including through a parent, carer, advocate, social worker or other appropriate professional.
- 5.4 The Head of School will also consider any contributing or mitigating factors identified after an incident of misbehaviour. This will include consideration of information gathered through the Head of School Checklist and discussions with their Link Director (or another member of the Trust Educational Senior Leadership Team to support.

6 Reintegration strategy meetings following suspension or off-site direction

- 6.1 Where a pupil is suspended or is directed to be educated off-site, upon return to the school both the pupil and parents will be invited to a reintegration strategy meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to:
 - offer the pupil a fresh start,
 - help them understand the impact of their behaviour on themselves and others,
 - teach them how to meet the high expectations of behaviour in line with the school culture,
 - foster a renewed sense of belonging within the school community; and
 - rebuild engagement with learning
- 6.2 The aim of the reintegration process is to support the pupil's successful return to school and reduce the likelihood of further suspensions. Staff will work with the pupil and their family to understand the factors that led to the behaviour, identify any additional support that may be required and agree strategies to promote future success. The Trust is committed to a relational approach and recognises that previous behaviour should not be viewed as a barrier to positive outcomes. The school may use various measures to support a pupil's successful reintegration including:
 - daily contact with a trusted adult in school;
 - a Relational Support Plan supported by a Co-Regulation Plan;
 - agreed behaviour targets leading to personalised rewards;

- ensuring the pupil receives academic support upon return to catch up on any lost progress;
- planned pastoral interventions;
- mentoring by a trusted adult or a local mentoring charity;
- regular reviews with the pupil and parents to praise progress being made and raise and address any concerns at an early stage; and
- informing the pupil, parents and staff of potential external support.

Where appropriate, reintegration plans will take account of SEND, disability, social, emotional and mental health needs, safeguarding considerations and any recommendations from external professionals.

- 6.3 Whilst reintegration meetings are highly encouraged by the Trust, pupils will not be prevented from returning to school or being put in mainstream classes because a meeting has not taken place.

7 Suspensions before a permanent exclusion

- 7.1 In exceptional circumstances, a pupil may receive a suspension prior to a decision being made regarding a permanent exclusion. For each decision, the Head of School will issue the appropriate notification letter, setting out the reasons for the decision and the rights of parents/carers. A suspension cannot be converted into a permanent exclusion; therefore any subsequent permanent exclusion must be a separate decision and would take effect immediately following the end of the suspension period. Exceptional circumstances may include where further evidence has come to light, or where the incident is sufficiently serious that time is required to fully consider the circumstances and any alternatives to permanent exclusion.

8 Directing off-site and managed moves

- 8.1 Before taking any decision to permanently exclude a pupil, the Head of School will consider whether a direction to attend alternative provision and/or a managed move as part of a planned intervention would be a reasonable alternative that should be considered.
- 8.2 In the case of directing a pupil off-site to alternative provision, the aim of any off-site direction is for it to be used as a short-term measure within the school's behaviour support strategy, intended to improve outcomes for the pupil and support a successful reintegration into mainstream education. While parental consent is not needed, discussions would take place with parents to feed in their views about the options. The school will remain responsible for the pupil's safeguarding, attendance and educational progress while they are attending alternative provision.
- 8.3 For a managed move to take place there needs to be agreement between the school, the parents and the new school that a managed move should occur. Before a managed move is agreed to, the pupil will attend the new school for a trial period to ensure that the new school would be suitable for them. We will share relevant information with the new school and check that they have an integration strategy. At the end of this period, the relevant parties (including the parents) will review the placement before a decision is taken about whether the move becomes permanent.

- 8.4 Managed moves will only take place with the informed consent of all parties and will not be used as an alternative to permanent exclusion where the legal test for permanent exclusion has been met.

9 Removal from Site for Safeguarding Purposes

- 9.1 In exceptional circumstances, and separately from the suspension and exclusion process, the school may require a pupil to be temporarily removed from the school site, or arrangements may be made to separate pupils, where this is necessary to safeguard and promote the welfare of children while investigations or risk assessments are undertaken.
- 9.2 Such arrangements may be considered where there are serious safeguarding concerns, including but not limited to;
- allegations of child-on-child abuse;
 - allegations of sexual violence or sexual harassment;
 - significant safeguarding risks;
 - situations where the presence of a pupil may compromise the welfare of others.
- 9.3 Any removal from site for safeguarding reasons:
- is not a suspension;
 - is not a permanent exclusion;
 - will be reviewed regularly;
 - will remain in place only for the shortest period necessary;
 - will include arrangements for the pupil to continue accessing education.
- 9.4 The school will retain responsibility for the pupil's safeguarding, welfare, attendance and educational provision throughout the period of removal.
- 9.5 Parents/carers will be informed of the arrangements and involved in reviews wherever appropriate. Relevant agencies will also be involved where required.
- 9.6 Removal from site for safeguarding reasons will not be used as an alternative to suspension, permanent exclusion or any other unlawful exclusion practice.
- 9.7 The decision and rationale for any safeguarding removal will be recorded, including review dates and education arrangements.

10 Independent review panels (IRPs)

- 10.1 Following a decision by the Governing Board to uphold a permanent exclusion, parents/carers have the right to request an Independent Review Panel (IRP). Requests must be made within 15 school days of being notified of the Governing Board's decision. The Trust has arrangements in place for the administration of Independent Review Panels and details of how to request a review will be provided to parents/carers in writing following the Governing Board's decision.
- 10.2 Independent Review Panels cannot direct a school to reinstate a pupil. However they may:
- uphold the Governing Board's decision;

- recommend the Governing Board reconsider the decision; or
 - quash the decision and direct the Governing Board to reconsider the exclusion.
- 10.3 Further information regarding the role, powers and procedures of Independent Review Panels can be found in the [Department for Education's statutory guidance Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from Maintained Schools, Academies and Pupil Referral Units in England, including Pupil Movement](#).

11 Reconsideration by the Governing Board

- 11.1 Where an IRP either recommends that the Governing Board reconsider its decision, or quashes the decision and directs the Governing Board to reconsider the exclusion, the Governing Board will reconvene within 10 school days of receiving the IRP's decision.
- 11.2 In reconsidering the exclusion, the Governing Board will have regard to the findings and recommendations of the IRP. This may involve a further meeting at which oral representations are heard from the school and parents/carers, or a reconsideration of the available evidence by the Governing Board with the support of the clerk.
- 11.3 Following reconsideration, the Governing Board will notify parents/carers, the Local Authority and other relevant parties of its decision in writing.

12 Complaints

- 12.1 If parents have any concerns or complaints over the application or implementation of this policy, or believe that they are being inappropriately pressured to agree to a managed move, they should raise their concerns with the school in the first instance in accordance with the Trust's Complaints Policy.
- 12.2 Where concerns relate to a suspension or a permanent exclusion, the statutory review and appeals processes set out in the DfE Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance will apply. These processes take precedence over the Trust's Complaints Policy in relation to the exclusion itself.
- 12.3 The statutory guidance provides parents/carers with specific rights to make representations and seek review of suspension and permanent exclusion decisions. There is no equivalent statutory right for other parents/carers to make representations regarding whether a pupil should be suspended or permanently excluded.
- 12.4 Decisions regarding suspension or permanent exclusions will be made in accordance with the law, statutory guidance, the school's Behaviour Policy and the individual circumstances of the case. Such decisions will not be determined solely by complaints or representations from other parents/carers.

13 Monitoring, Reporting and Quality Assurance

- 13.1 The Trust will maintain accurate records of all suspensions, permanent exclusions, off-site directions and safeguarding removals from site.
- 13.2 Suspension, permanent exclusion, off-site direction and safeguarding removal data will be reviewed weekly by the Inclusion Team, including the Director of Inclusion, the SEND and Vulnerable Learners Lead, Safeguarding Lead, Safeguarding Officer, and Attendance Officer. The review will consider individual cases, repeat suspensions, vulnerable learners and any

emerging themes or concerns. Where disproportionality is identified, the Trust will review its practice and take appropriate action to promote equality, inclusion and positive outcomes for all pupils.

- 13.3 A strategic review of suspension, permanent exclusion, off-site direction and safeguarding removal data will take place at least half-termly with the relevant Trust leaders. This review will consider trends, patterns and outcomes across the Trust.
- 13.4 Monitoring will include analysis of:
- pupils with SEND;
 - pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP);
 - disadvantaged pupils;
 - pupils from different ethnic groups;
 - looked after and previously looked after children;
 - pupils with a social worker;
 - repeat suspensions;
 - off-site direction placements; and
 - safeguarding removals from site
- 13.5 Where disproportionality, concerning trends, or areas requiring improvement are identified, appropriate action will be taken to review practice, strengthen provision and improve outcomes for pupils.
- 13.6 The Governing Board and Trustees will receive regular information regarding suspensions, permanent exclusions, off-site direction and safeguarding removals to enable effective oversight and challenge.

14 Equality Impact

- 14.1 The Trust is committed to ensuring that the application of this policy is fair, consistent and non-discriminatory. Decisions relating to suspension, permanent exclusion, off-site direction and safeguarding removals will be made in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and will not unlawfully discriminate against any pupil on the basis of a protected characteristic.
- 14.2 Particular consideration will be given to pupils with SEND, disabilities and other vulnerabilities. The Trust will consider whether reasonable adjustments, additional support or alternative interventions may be appropriate before deciding to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil.