

**St Monica's Catholic
Primary School**



**Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy
2026-2028**

Approved by:	Governing Body	Date: July 2026
Created by:	Headteacher	
Next review due by:	July 2028	

Contents

1. Policy statement and aims	2
2. Scope and application	2
3. Legal framework and statutory guidance	2
4. Definitions	3
5. Roles and responsibilities	3
6. Decision-making	4
7. Safeguarding separation	6
8. Alternatives and pupil movement	6
9. Notification following a decision	7
10. Education during suspension or permanent exclusion	8
11. Governing board consideration of reinstatement	8
12. Independent review panel	9
13. Admission register, attendance and records	10
14. Reintegration	10
15. Remote access to meetings	10
16. Monitoring, equality and governance assurance	11
17. Policy review and linked policies	11
Appendix 1: Headteacher decision and notification checklist	11
Appendix 2: Independent review panel training	12
Appendix 3: Key external guidance	12

1. Policy statement and aims

St Monica's Catholic Primary School is committed to maintaining a calm, safe and supportive environment in which every pupil can learn and every member of the community is treated with dignity. Our Catholic ethos requires decisions to be compassionate, just, evidence-based and focused on the common good, while recognising that decisive action may be necessary to protect pupils and staff.

Suspension and permanent exclusion are lawful behaviour-management sanctions. A suspension may be used where warranted; permanent exclusion will be used only as a last resort and only when the statutory threshold is met. The school will not adopt a “no exclusion” approach that exposes pupils or staff to unreasonable risk, and it will not use exclusion as a substitute for appropriate SEND, safeguarding, pastoral or attendance support.

This policy aims to:

- ensure that every suspension and permanent exclusion is lawful, reasonable, fair, proportionate and procedurally sound
- apply the process consistently while considering each pupil's individual circumstances and vulnerability
- enable pupils to express their views and ensure those views are taken into account
- engage parents and relevant professionals early to prevent avoidable escalation
- protect the education, welfare and safety of the pupil, other pupils and staff
- ensure continued education, effective reintegration and appropriate support
- prevent unlawful informal exclusion, coercive pupil movement and off-rolling
- enable the governing board to scrutinise patterns, disproportionality and the effectiveness of support.

Core principle

No pupil will be sent home for disciplinary reasons unless the absence is formally recorded as a suspension or permanent exclusion and the statutory process is followed. A pupil may not be prevented from returning because a parent has not attended a reintegration meeting.

2. Scope and application

This policy applies to all pupils registered at the school, including pupils below compulsory school age. It applies to behaviour in school and may apply to behaviour outside school, including online behaviour, where the conduct falls within the scope of the Positive Behaviour and Relationships Policy or affects the safety, welfare, orderly running or reputation of the school community.

Only the headteacher, or a person formally appointed as acting headteacher, may suspend or permanently exclude a pupil on disciplinary grounds. A deputy headteacher may not exercise this power merely because the headteacher is unavailable unless formally acting as headteacher.

This policy distinguishes disciplinary exclusion from:

- off-site direction, which is a temporary placement intended to improve future behaviour
- a managed move, which is a voluntary and permanent transfer agreed by all relevant parties
- temporary separation from the school premises for safeguarding purposes, which is not a disciplinary exclusion
- a lawful part-time timetable agreed for a limited period for reasons other than punishment.

3. Legal framework and statutory guidance

This policy has been prepared with regard to the following legislation, regulations and statutory guidance, as amended from time to time:

- Education Act 2002, including section 51A and section 175
- School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Education Act 1996
- Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended in 2014 and 2026

- Education (Educational Provision for Improving Behaviour) (Application to Academies and Pupil Referral Units and Minor Amendments) Regulations 2026
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Equality Act 2010 and the public sector equality duty
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Department for Education, Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement, July 2026, effective from 26 July 2026.

The school will also have regard to current DfE guidance on behaviour, alternative provision, attendance, safeguarding, mental health, SEND and the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children. If this policy conflicts with legislation or statutory guidance, the legislation and current statutory guidance will take precedence.

4. Definitions

Term	Meaning
Suspension	A disciplinary exclusion for a fixed period with a defined start and end date. A pupil may be suspended for one or more periods up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year. This was previously called a fixed-term exclusion.
Permanent exclusion	A disciplinary decision that the pupil is no longer allowed to attend the school, unless reinstated through the statutory process.
Exclusion	A collective term covering both suspension and permanent exclusion.
School day	Any day on which there is a school session. In calculating statutory time limits, weekends, school holidays, bank holidays and days when the school is closed are not counted.
Parent	A person with parental responsibility for the pupil and any person who has care of the pupil. Where practicable, all those with parental responsibility will be involved.
Relevant person	The parent where the pupil is under 18, or the pupil where the pupil is aged 18 or over.
Off-site direction	A requirement, made by the governing board, for a pupil to attend another education setting temporarily in order to improve future behaviour.
Managed move	A voluntary, planned and permanent transfer to another mainstream school, agreed by the parent, the pupil where appropriate, the current school and the admission authority of the receiving school.
Alternative provision (AP)	Suitable education arranged away from the pupil's usual school, including education for a pupil who is suspended, permanently excluded or directed off-site.
Cancelled exclusion	A suspension or permanent exclusion cancelled by the headteacher before the governing board has met to consider reinstatement.
Safeguarding separation	A rare, temporary decision to prevent a pupil attending the school premises in order to separate pupils and manage safeguarding risk. It is not a disciplinary exclusion.
Remote access meeting	A governing board or independent review panel meeting conducted through live video or equivalent technology that allows all participants to hear, speak, see and be seen.

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 The headteacher

The headteacher will:

- make all suspension and permanent exclusion decisions and apply the civil standard of proof, on the balance of probabilities
- ensure each decision is lawful, reasonable, fair, proportionate and based on the individual facts
- consider the pupil's views, age and understanding, and explain how those views were taken into account
- consider contributing factors, SEND, disability, mental health, safeguarding, vulnerability and whether reasonable adjustments or further support are required
- ensure the decision and reasons are recorded accurately and supported by evidence
- notify parents, the governing board, Sefton Council and relevant professionals within the required timescales
- ensure work and education are arranged and that reintegration is planned
- monitor the cumulative number of suspension days, including suspensions imposed by previous schools in the same academic year where known
- report exclusion and pupil-movement data to the governing board.

5.2 The governing board

The governing board may delegate its statutory exclusion functions to a designated committee of at least three governors. The school's delegated committee is referred to in this policy as the governing board committee. A governor must not take part where they have prior involvement, a conflict of interest or any connection that could reasonably call their impartiality into question.

The governing board will:

- consider parents' representations and decide reinstatement where required by law
- ensure fair procedures, reasonable adjustments, pupil participation, accurate minutes and properly reasoned decisions
- arrange suitable full-time education from the sixth consecutive school day of a suspension of more than five school days
- ensure off-site directions are lawful, time-limited, notified and reviewed
- scrutinise suspensions, permanent exclusions, managed moves, off-site education, admission-register deletions and safeguarding separation
- challenge any pattern suggesting disproportionality, ineffective support, coercive movement or off-rolling
- ensure this policy and related policies are implemented consistently.

5.3 Sefton Council and the home local authority

Sefton Council will be notified without delay of every suspension and permanent exclusion. If a permanently excluded pupil lives in another local authority, the pupil's home local authority will also be notified without delay.

The home local authority is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education from the sixth school day after the first day of a permanent exclusion. For a looked-after child or a child with a social worker, the school and local authority should work together to arrange alternative provision from the first day following a suspension or permanent exclusion wherever possible.

6. Decision-making

6.1 Early intervention and prevention

Where a pupil's behaviour gives rise to a risk of suspension or permanent exclusion, the school will normally engage parents at an early stage and consider the causes of the behaviour, the support already provided and what further intervention may be necessary. This may include pastoral support, targeted teaching, a risk assessment, SEND review, external agency support, an off-site direction or a managed move.

Where the pupil has a social worker, the social worker and the designated safeguarding lead will be involved as early as possible. For a looked-after child, the designated teacher and Virtual School Head (VSH) will be involved. For a previously looked-after child, advice may be sought from the VSH where appropriate.

6.2 Matters the headteacher will consider

Before deciding to suspend or permanently exclude, the headteacher will:

- establish the relevant facts on the balance of probabilities and consider all available evidence, including evidence that supports the pupil's account

- give the pupil an opportunity to explain what happened, unless there is a clear reason why this is inappropriate at that time
- provide support or an advocate where the pupil needs help to communicate their views
- consider whether the behaviour was provoked, related to bullying, exploitation, trauma, bereavement, mental health, communication difficulty or unmet need
- consider the school's duties under the Equality Act 2010, including reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils
- consider SEND support, the graduated approach, the school's best endeavours duty and whether an EHC needs assessment, review or reassessment should be requested
- consider whether the pupil has a social worker, is looked after, has previously been looked after, is a young carer or is otherwise especially vulnerable
- consider the likely effect of the decision on the pupil's education and welfare and on the safety, education and welfare of others
- consider whether the proposed sanction is consistent with the Positive Behaviour and Relationships Policy and proportionate to the circumstances
- consider whether a less severe intervention would be sufficient, while recognising that permanent exclusion may be necessary in a serious case.

6.3 Lawful grounds and prohibited practices

A suspension or permanent exclusion may be imposed only on disciplinary grounds. It will not be imposed solely because:

- the pupil has SEND or a disability that the school considers difficult to support
- the pupil has poor academic attainment or attendance
- a parent or pupil refuses a managed move or another voluntary arrangement
- a parent does not attend a reintegration meeting
- the school seeks to manage a safeguarding risk without the disciplinary threshold being met
- the school wishes to improve its performance data or reduce the cost of support.

The school will not use informal, unofficial or unlawful exclusions. It will not ask a parent to collect a pupil early for disciplinary reasons without recording a suspension, place a pupil on prolonged study leave or remote education as a disciplinary measure, pressure a parent to electively home educate, or use pupil movement primarily in the interests of the school rather than the pupil.

6.4 Suspension

A suspension may be used to provide a clear signal that behaviour is unacceptable and to protect the safety and orderly education of the school community. It will have a fixed end date and may be for part of a school day. A lunchtime suspension counts as half a school day for the statutory thresholds.

The total period of suspension must not exceed 45 school days in a single academic year. Where suspensions become frequent, the headteacher will review whether suspension remains effective and what additional or different intervention is required.

6.5 Permanent exclusion

A decision to permanently exclude will be taken only:

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

Both parts of the statutory test must be met. Permanent exclusion is a last resort, but it may be the appropriate response to a single exceptionally serious incident.

6.6 Further evidence and consecutive decisions

A suspension cannot simply be extended or converted into a permanent exclusion. If significant further evidence comes to light during a suspension, the headteacher may make a separate decision for a further suspension or a permanent exclusion to begin immediately after the original suspension ends. A fresh notice and full statutory process are required for each decision.

6.7 Police investigations and criminal proceedings

The headteacher need not postpone a decision solely because a police investigation or criminal proceedings are underway. The decision will be made on the evidence available at the time, with additional steps taken where needed to ensure fairness and to avoid prejudicing safeguarding or criminal processes. The governing board cannot postpone a statutory reinstatement meeting solely because criminal proceedings are continuing.

7. Safeguarding separation

In rare circumstances, the school may temporarily forbid a pupil from attending the school premises because physical separation from one or more pupils is essential to manage an immediate safeguarding risk and cannot practicably be achieved while all pupils remain on site. This is not a disciplinary suspension or permanent exclusion.

Any safeguarding separation will:

- be led by the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy and decided case by case
- be necessary, proportionate, procedurally fair and compliant with the Equality Act 2010, Human Rights Act 1998 and current safeguarding guidance
- be used only for the shortest period necessary and reviewed frequently
- be explained to the parent, including the reason for the temporary restriction
- be notified to the governing board without delay
- involve children's social care, police or other agencies where required
- include arrangements for suitable education and welfare contact; the school will liaise with the local authority where education cannot be arranged by the school or parent
- include a reintegration plan when the pupil returns.

Important distinction

Safeguarding separation must not be used as a disguised disciplinary exclusion. If the conduct itself warrants suspension or permanent exclusion, the disciplinary process must be used and recorded separately.

8. Alternatives and pupil movement

8.1 Alternative provision

Any alternative provision commissioned by the school will be selected and quality-assured in accordance with current DfE guidance. The commissioner remains responsible for ensuring the provision is safe, suitable, ambitious, accessible, appropriately registered where required and capable of meeting the pupil's educational, SEND, health and safeguarding needs.

The placement will have clear objectives, curriculum arrangements, attendance monitoring, review dates and a plan for reintegration or progression. The school will securely share relevant safeguarding and educational information and will maintain regular contact with the pupil and provider.

8.2 Off-site direction

Off-site direction is a temporary intervention to improve future behaviour. It is not a punishment for past misconduct and should normally be considered after in-school intervention or outreach has been unsuccessful or is inappropriate. Parental consent is not a legal prerequisite, but the school will seek constructive collaboration and take account of the pupil's and parent's views.

The governing board will ensure that:

- the purpose, objectives, maximum proposed period, curriculum, support and reintegration plan are defined before the placement starts
- the parent and, where the pupil has an EHC plan, the local authority receive written notice as soon as practicable and no later than two school days before the placement starts
- the notice includes the placement address, reporting arrangements, number of days, reasons, objectives and session times
- the placement and reintegration plan are reviewed at intervals appropriate to the pupil's needs for as long as the direction remains in force

- parents and the local authority where the pupil has an EHC plan are invited in writing at least six days before each review and may submit written views
- a written review decision, reasons and any further period are issued no later than six days after the review
- a written request for a review is considered as soon as reasonably practicable unless a review has taken place within the previous 10 weeks
- the attendance register uses the correct statutory code, including Code D where the pupil is dual registered at another school.

8.3 Managed moves

A managed move is a permanent move to another mainstream school. It will be used only when it is in the pupil's best interests, is planned, and is freely agreed by the parent, the pupil where appropriate, both schools and the receiving admission authority. The school will not pressure a parent to agree and will not permanently exclude a pupil because a managed move is refused.

Before a managed move, the school will evidence the support and assessment already considered, share relevant attainment, SEND, safeguarding and risk-management information securely, agree an integration plan and follow the statutory process for amending an EHC plan where applicable.

9. Notification following a decision

9.1 Informing parents

The headteacher will notify the parent without delay, normally by telephone or in person first, of the decision, the period of suspension or the fact of permanent exclusion, and the reasons. This initial contact will not delay the written notice.

Written notice will be provided without delay and will include:

- the full and specific reason or reasons for the decision
- the length of the suspension or the fact that the exclusion is permanent
- the parent's right to make representations to the governing board and how to do so
- how the pupil may be involved and the pupil's right to attend and participate where appropriate
- where a meeting is required, the right to attend, be represented at the parent's expense and bring a friend
- the right to request a remote-access meeting, how to request it and the factors to consider
- arrangements for the pupil's education and work
- the days on which the parent must ensure the pupil is not present in a public place during school hours and the possible consequences of non-compliance
- details of any alternative provision, or a statement that the details will follow within the statutory timescale
- up-to-date sources of free and impartial advice, including the DfE parent guide, Sefton SENDIASS, Coram Child Law Advice and IPSEA.

Formal written notice will be delivered by a method permitted by law. Electronic notice will be used for the statutory notification where the parent has agreed in writing that notices of this kind may be sent electronically.

9.2 Public-place duty and alternative provision information

For the first five school days of a suspension or permanent exclusion, or until full-time alternative provision starts or the suspension ends if earlier, a parent of a pupil of compulsory school age must ensure that the pupil is not present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification. The school will specify the days to which this duty applies without delay and no later than the end of the afternoon session on the first day.

Where alternative provision has been arranged, the notice will state the start date, start and finish times, address and reporting arrangements. If these details cannot reasonably be obtained on the first day, they will be sent without delay and no later than 48 hours before the provision starts, except that shorter notice may be given with parental consent where provision starts before the sixth day.

9.3 Informing the governing board and local authorities

The headteacher will notify the governing board without delay of:

- every permanent exclusion, including a permanent exclusion following a suspension
- Every suspension that is issued within school by the headteacher
- any suspension or permanent exclusion that takes the pupil's total to more than five school days, or more than 10 lunchtimes, in a term

- any suspension or permanent exclusion that would cause the pupil to miss a public examination or national curriculum test
- every cancelled suspension or permanent exclusion and the reason for cancellation.

Sefton Council will be notified without delay of every suspension and permanent exclusion, regardless of length, and of every cancellation. If a permanently excluded pupil lives outside Sefton, the pupil's home local authority will also be notified without delay.

9.4 Social worker, VSH and SEND notifications

Where the pupil has a social worker, the social worker will be notified without delay of the decision, period and reasons. Where the pupil is looked after, the VSH will be notified without delay. The social worker and VSH will be invited to any governing board meeting and permitted to join remotely where the remote-access conditions are met.

Where a pupil has an EHC plan, the local authority will be involved as required, including in relation to alternative provision, off-site direction and any review or reassessment of the plan.

9.5 Cancelling a suspension or permanent exclusion

The headteacher may cancel a suspension or permanent exclusion that has begun or has not yet begun, but only before the governing board has met to consider reinstatement. The headteacher will notify the parent, governing board, local authority and, where relevant, the social worker and VSH without delay and will give the reason for cancellation.

The pupil will be allowed to return without delay and the parent will be offered a prompt meeting with the headteacher. The governing board's duty to consider reinstatement will cease. Days already spent out of school will count towards the 45-day annual maximum. A permanent exclusion cannot be cancelled if the pupil has already been excluded for more than 45 school days in that academic year, or would have exceeded that limit when cancellation takes effect.

10. Education during suspension or permanent exclusion

10.1 The first five school days

The school will take reasonable steps to set work that is accessible and achievable and to ensure it is marked. Online pathways may be used, but remote learning will not be treated as a substitute for recording a disciplinary suspension. Reasonable adjustments will be made for pupils with SEND or disabilities.

For a looked-after child or a pupil with a social worker, the school and local authority should work together to arrange suitable alternative provision from the first day following the suspension or permanent exclusion. Where this is not possible or appropriate, work will be set and marked and the pupil's welfare will be monitored.

10.2 From the sixth school day

For a suspension of more than five consecutive school days, the governing board will arrange suitable full-time education to begin no later than the sixth school day. Consecutive suspensions are cumulative for this purpose. For permanent exclusion, the pupil's home local authority will arrange suitable full-time education to begin no later than the sixth school day after the first day of the permanent exclusion.

The school will provide the information necessary to support a safe transition, monitor attendance and quality, use the correct attendance code, and securely transfer safeguarding information as early as possible.

11. Governing board consideration of reinstatement

11.1 When the governing board must meet

Circumstance	Duty	Time limit
Permanent exclusion	Meet and decide whether the pupil should be reinstated	Within 15 school days of receiving notice
Suspension taking the total above 15 school days in a term	Meet and decide whether the pupil should be reinstated	Within 15 school days of receiving notice
Suspension or permanent exclusion causing the pupil to miss a public examination or national curriculum test	Meet and decide; so far as reasonably practicable, meet before the examination or test	Within 15 school days; before the test where practicable

Circumstance	Duty	Time limit
Suspension taking the total above 5 but not above 15 school days in a term, where the parent makes representations	Meet and decide whether the pupil should be reinstated	Within 50 school days of receiving notice
Suspension taking the total to 5 school days or fewer in a term	Consider any written representations; no meeting is required and the board cannot direct reinstatement	Without a separate statutory meeting deadline

A total exceeding 15 days includes a half day, for example 15.5 school days. Where it is not practicable for a committee to meet before a national curriculum test or public examination, the chair of governors, or vice-chair if necessary, may consider reinstatement alone.

11.2 Preparation and attendance

Where a meeting is required, the governing board committee will:

- avoid discussing the case with any party outside the meeting
- request relevant written evidence, including witness statements, the pupil's record and information about SEND, safeguarding and support
- where possible, circulate the evidence and a list of attendees to all parties at least five school days before the meeting
- invite the parent, pupil, headteacher, Sefton Council representative, social worker where applicable and VSH where the pupil is looked after
- allow the parent and pupil to bring a friend or representative and make reasonable adjustments for disability or communication need
- enable and encourage the pupil to attend and speak, or to provide their views by another suitable method
- appoint a clerk to advise on procedure and produce an accurate record.

11.3 The decision

The committee will consider the interests and circumstances of the pupil and the interests of other pupils, staff and the school community. It will consider all representations, apply the balance-of-probabilities standard and decide whether the headteacher's decision was lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair, including whether legal duties and safeguarding considerations were properly addressed.

The committee may:

- decline to reinstate the pupil; or
- direct reinstatement immediately or on a specified date, except where the law does not give it power to do so.

The committee must still consider the case even if reinstatement would have no practical effect because the suspension has ended or the parent does not wish the pupil to return. All parties other than the clerk will withdraw while the committee makes its decision. The minutes and decision letter will explain clearly how the decision was reached.

11.4 Notification of the decision

The governing board will notify the parent, headteacher, Sefton Council, the home local authority where different, the social worker where applicable and the VSH where the pupil is looked after, in writing and without delay. The outcome and relevant papers will be recorded on the pupil's educational record.

Where a permanent exclusion is upheld, the letter will also explain:

- the right to request an independent review and the deadline of 15 school days from written notice
- where and how to apply and the grounds and evidence that may be submitted
- the right to require the local authority to appoint an SEN expert at no cost, whether or not the pupil has identified SEN
- the role of the SEN expert and the need to state in the application whether one is requested
- the right to appoint a representative at the parent's own expense and bring a friend
- the right to request that the review be held remotely
- the routes and six-month time limit for a discrimination claim under the Equality Act 2010.

12. Independent review panel

If an application is made within the legal time limit, Sefton Council will arrange and fund an independent review panel (IRP). The application must normally be made within 15 school days after written notice of the governing board's decision not to reinstate, or within 15 school days of the final determination of a related discrimination claim where that is later. An application outside the statutory period must be rejected.

The IRP will consist of three or five trained and independent members drawn from the required categories: a lay chair, serving or former governors, and serving or former headteachers. A person with a relevant connection or conflict of interest cannot serve. The parent may require the appointment of an SEN expert at no cost.

The panel may:

- uphold the governing board's decision
- recommend that the governing board reconsiders reinstatement
- quash the decision and direct reconsideration where the decision was flawed on judicial-review principles.

The IRP cannot directly reinstate the pupil. Where reconsideration is recommended or directed, the governing board must reconsider within 10 school days of being notified of the panel's decision. The panel's decision and reasons will be issued in writing without delay.

13. Admission register, attendance and records

13.1 Removal from the admission register

The pupil's name will be removed from the admission register following a permanent exclusion only when:

- 15 school days have passed since the parent was notified of the governing board's decision not to reinstate and no application for an IRP has been made; or
- the parent has stated in writing that no IRP application will be made.

If a timely IRP application is made, the school will wait until the review is determined or abandoned and any required governing board reconsideration is complete. The deletion will not be backdated. The school will make the required return to Sefton Council as soon as the ground for deletion is met and no later than the date of deletion.

13.2 Attendance coding

While a permanently excluded pupil remains on the admission register, attendance will be recorded using the appropriate statutory code. Code D may be used where the pupil is dual registered and scheduled to attend another school; Code B may be used for an approved off-site educational activity that does not involve registration at another school; Code E will be used where the pupil is suspended or permanently excluded and is not attending alternative provision.

13.3 Information transfer and retention

When the pupil is registered at a new school, the common transfer file will be sent within the statutory timescale. The designated safeguarding lead will transfer the child-protection file separately and securely as soon as possible, and within five days for an in-year transfer or within the first five days of a new term, and will obtain confirmation of receipt.

Records and evidence relating to an exclusion will be retained in accordance with the school's retention schedule and for at least six months because an Equality Act claim may be made within that period. Records will be accurate, factual, access-controlled and handled in accordance with data-protection law.

14. Reintegration

Following a suspension, cancelled exclusion, off-site direction or safeguarding separation, the school will plan a positive and supported return to full-time education. The strategy will offer a fresh start, rebuild belonging and engagement, help the pupil understand the effects of behaviour, teach the behaviours expected in school and address unmet need.

The reintegration strategy may include:

- regular contact during absence and a named adult to welcome the pupil back
- a reintegration meeting before or at the start of the pupil's return
- pupil and parent involvement, while making clear that parental non-attendance will not delay the return
- pastoral intervention, mentoring, reasonable adjustments, SEND support and external agency involvement
- academic support to address lost learning and ensure an equivalent curriculum

- clear, personalised targets, recognition of progress and regular reviews
- risk-management measures that are proportionate and kept under review.

A part-time timetable will not be used to manage behaviour. Where one is exceptionally used for another lawful reason, it will be for the shortest necessary period, formally agreed and regularly reviewed, with an explicit plan and date for return to full-time education and the correct leave-of-absence arrangements.

15. Remote access to meetings

A parent may request that a governing board meeting or IRP is held remotely. In-person meetings are encouraged and remote access is not the default. A meeting may also be held remotely because extraordinary or unforeseen circumstances make an in-person meeting not reasonably practicable.

Before agreeing to a remote meeting, the governing board or arranging authority must be satisfied that:

- all participants can hear, speak, see and be seen
- all participants can participate fully, including with reasonable adjustments and interpretation where needed
- the meeting can be conducted fairly and transparently
- joining instructions, technical support and a named contact are provided in good time.

No pressure will be placed on a parent to request a remote meeting. If technical problems compromise effective participation, fairness or transparency and cannot be resolved, the meeting will be adjourned and rearranged in person without delay. A meeting cannot be conducted solely through an exchange of written papers.

16. Monitoring, equality and governance assurance

The headteacher will analyse data at least half-termly and report to the governing board. The board will challenge and evaluate:

- the number, reason, length and timing of suspensions and permanent exclusions
- repeat suspensions and the cumulative number of days
- patterns by year group, sex, ethnicity, disability, SEND, disadvantage, looked-after status, social-worker involvement and other relevant characteristics
- whether reasonable adjustments, SEND provision, pastoral support and external intervention were timely and effective
- managed moves, off-site directions, elective home education following school contact, admission-register deletions and other pupil movement
- the quality, attendance, cost, review and outcomes of alternative provision
- arrangements that keep pupils apart for safeguarding purposes and whether they are reviewed sufficiently often
- the correct use of attendance codes and the education provided during absence
- pupil, parent and staff experiences and any evidence of disproportionality or discrimination.

Small-number data will be handled carefully to protect confidentiality. Where patterns or disparities are identified, the school will investigate root causes and amend policy, practice, training or provision. The governing board will use maximum challenge where data may indicate off-rolling, coercive movement or systemic weakness.

17. Policy review and linked policies

This policy will be reviewed by the headteacher at least every two years and approved by the full governing body. It will be reviewed earlier where legislation, statutory guidance, local authority procedures or school circumstances change. Operational letters and procedures will be updated promptly even where a full policy review is not yet due.

This policy should be read alongside the school's:

- Positive Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy and SEN Information Report
- Attendance Policy
- Equality Information and Objectives
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Complaints Policy

- Data Protection Policy.

Appendix 1: Headteacher decision and notification checklist

Check	Requirement	Completed / evidence
Authority	Decision made by the headteacher or formally appointed acting headteacher.	
Grounds	Disciplinary grounds identified; no informal or non-disciplinary exclusion.	
Evidence	Relevant evidence gathered; pupil account and exculpatory evidence considered; balance of probabilities applied.	
Lawfulness and proportionality	Decision checked against behaviour policy, statutory threshold, administrative law, Equality Act and SEND duties.	
Individual circumstances	Contributing factors, vulnerability, safeguarding, social worker, LAC/PLAC, mental health, reasonable adjustments and support considered.	
Decision record	Specific reasons, duration, start/end dates, cumulative days and evidence recorded.	
Parent notice	Immediate contact and complete written notice issued by a lawful method; education and public-place duty included.	
Other notifications	Governing board, Sefton Council, home authority, social worker, VSH and EHC-plan authority notified as required.	
Education	Work set and marked; sixth-day or earlier AP planned and quality-assured; safeguarding information shared.	
Reintegration	Named lead, meeting and support plan arranged; return not conditional on parental attendance.	

Appendix 2: Independent review panel training

Sefton Council must ensure that all IRP members and clerks have received the required training within the two years before the review. Training must cover:

- the primary legislation, regulations and statutory guidance governing disciplinary suspensions and permanent exclusions, including the principles applicable to judicial review
- procedural fairness and the rules of natural justice
- the role of the panel chair and clerk
- the duties of headteachers, governing boards and panels under the Equality Act 2010
- the effect of section 6 of the Human Rights Act 1998 and the need to act compatibly with protected rights.

Appendix 3: Key external guidance

The following sources should be checked for the current version when applying this policy:

- [School suspensions and permanent exclusions - GOV.UK](#) - DfE publication page and current statutory guidance
- [A guide for parents on school behaviour and exclusion](#) - DfE parent and carer guidance
- [Behaviour in schools](#) - DfE advice for headteachers and school staff
- [Arranging alternative provision](#) - DfE guidance for local authorities and schools
- [Working together to improve school attendance](#) - DfE statutory guidance
- [Keeping children safe in education](#) - current statutory safeguarding guidance
- [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years](#) - statutory SEND guidance
- [Coram Child Law Advice - school exclusion](#) - free and impartial legal information

- [IPSEA](#) - independent SEND information and advice