



Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions Policy 2026

Date Approved: September 2026

Review Date: September 2027

1. Vision and Values

St Margaret's CE Primary School is a community where every child and adult is *Created to Shine*, growing in love for one another and aspiring to be the best they can be.

The school is committed to maintaining a safe, calm, inclusive and supportive environment where all pupils can learn and thrive. Good behaviour supports successful learning and positive relationships.

The school seeks to avoid suspension and permanent exclusion wherever possible through early intervention, pastoral support, reasonable adjustments, restorative approaches and partnership working with families. However, suspensions and permanent exclusions may be necessary where behaviour seriously breaches the school's Behaviour Policy or where allowing a pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others.

2. Legal Framework

This policy is based upon:

- Education Act 2002
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- SEND Code of Practice 2015
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- School Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions Guidance (DfE, July 2026)
- West Sussex County Council exclusion procedures and guidance.

3. Principles

Suspensions and permanent exclusions will be implemented only on disciplinary grounds and will be lawful, reasonable, fair, proportionate, non-discriminatory and based on evidence. In making any decision, the Headteacher will ensure that all relevant circumstances have been carefully considered and that the response is appropriate to the individual case

The Headteacher will carefully consider:

- the facts of the incident
- the age and stage of development of the pupil
- any safeguarding concerns
- SEND needs
- disability discrimination risks
- vulnerability factors
- the welfare and safety of the school community.

4. Definitions

There are two lawful forms of exclusion:

Suspension

A suspension is where a pupil is temporarily removed from school for a fixed period.

A pupil may not be suspended for more than 45 school days in a single academic year.

Permanent Exclusion

A permanent exclusion means that a pupil's name will ultimately be removed from the school roll and they will not return to the school.

Permanent exclusion will normally be used only as a last resort except where a serious one-off incident justifies such action.

5. Safeguarding, SEND and other needs

Before deciding whether to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil, the Headteacher will consider any relevant safeguarding, SEND, disability, mental health or vulnerability factors and whether additional support, reasonable adjustments or agency

involvement are required. Where a pupil is looked after, previously looked after, or has a social worker, the school will involve relevant professionals as appropriate when considering a suspension or permanent exclusion

Particular consideration will be given to pupils with SEND, EHCPs, looked-after and previously looked-after children, and children who have or have previously had a social worker. Such factors will be considered carefully but will not prevent a suspension or permanent exclusion where the decision is lawful, reasonable, fair, proportionate and necessary.

6. Alternatives to suspension

The school will normally consider appropriate pastoral, behavioural, safeguarding and educational interventions before issuing a suspension. However, where behaviour is sufficiently serious, or where the safety or welfare of pupils or staff is at risk, suspension or permanent exclusion may be necessary without prior use of all available interventions.

7. Grounds for Suspension or Permanent Exclusion

A suspension or permanent exclusion may be considered following a serious breach, or persistent breaches, of the school's Behaviour Policy, where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously affect the education, safety or welfare of the pupil or others. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis and will take account of the nature, seriousness and context of the behaviour, alongside any relevant safeguarding, SEND or equality considerations.

Behaviours that may result in a suspension or permanent exclusion include, but are not limited to, violence, threatening or abusive behaviour, bullying or harassment, discriminatory behaviour, serious disruption to learning, unsafe behaviour, misuse of technology, possession of prohibited items, criminal or potentially criminal behaviour, damage to property, or conduct that has a serious adverse impact on the safety, welfare, reputation or orderly running of the school.

These examples are not exhaustive and the Headteacher retains discretion to consider all relevant circumstances when determining an appropriate sanction in accordance with statutory guidance and the school's Behaviour Policy.

Online Behaviour

The school may sanction behaviour occurring outside school where there is a clear link to the school community.

This includes:

- cyberbullying
- serious online harassment
- threats
- sharing harmful content
- AI-generated abuse

- creation or distribution of manipulated images
- misuse of social media which affects the safety, welfare or discipline of the school community.

Behaviour outside School

The school's Behaviour Policy applies both within and beyond the school premises where there is a clear link to the school or its pupils. The school recognises that responsibility for a child's behaviour outside school primarily rests with parents and carers, and that the school cannot regulate every aspect of a pupil's conduct beyond the school environment. However, the Headteacher may consider a suspension or permanent exclusion in response to behaviour occurring on educational visits, sporting events, while travelling to or from school, online, or in other circumstances where the behaviour has affected the safety, welfare, reputation or orderly running of the school, or has impacted pupils, staff or members of the school community. Any decision will be made on a case-by-case basis, taking account of the individual circumstances and the extent to which the behaviour has a sufficient connection to the school.

8. Decision Making

Only the Headteacher may suspend or permanently exclude a pupil.

When establishing the facts of a case, the Headteacher will apply the civil standard of proof, namely whether it is more likely than not that an event occurred (the balance of probabilities).

The pupil will be given an opportunity to provide their account where appropriate.

9. Notification to Parents and the Local Authority

Parents will be informed without delay and provided with written confirmation explaining:

- the reasons for the decision;
- the length of any suspension;
- arrangements for education;
- their rights to make representations;
- review arrangements;
- sources of support and advice.

Parents will also be notified that they must ensure that during the initial 5 days their child is not found in a public place during school hours without justifiable reason and may be given a fixed penalty notice or prosecuted if they fail to do so.

All suspensions and exclusions are reported to the Local Authority in line with their procedures. All relevant paperwork is sent to the Local Authority and Bromcom is updated with the necessary attendance codes.

10. Education During Suspension

The school will meet its statutory duties regarding the provision of education during periods of suspension and will work with the Local Authority where required to ensure suitable education is in place within statutory timescales.

11. Reintegration Meetings

Following a suspension, a reintegration meeting will normally be held involving:

- parents/carers;
- the pupil;
- relevant school staff.

The meeting will:

- review the incident;
- identify support needs;
- consider safeguarding issues;
- agree next steps;
- establish expectations and targets.

12. Governor Responsibilities

The Governing Body will fulfil its statutory duties in relation to suspensions and permanent exclusions in accordance with current legislation and Department for Education guidance.

Where required, governors will consider representations from parents and review decisions made by the Headteacher. Meetings will be convened within the statutory timescales, and parents, the Headteacher and the Local Authority will be invited to provide their views where appropriate.

For permanent exclusions, and for suspensions that meet the statutory thresholds for review, the Governing Body will consider whether the decision was lawful, reasonable, fair and proportionate. Parents will be informed of their rights throughout the process, including any right to request an independent review following a permanent exclusion.

Governors will also maintain oversight of any alternative provision arrangements to ensure that pupils remain safe, receive suitable education and continue to make appropriate progress.

13. Off-Rolling

The school will never:

- pressure parents to remove a child from roll;
- encourage elective home education to avoid exclusion;
- remove a pupil from roll to improve attendance, behaviour or inspection outcomes.

All decisions will be made in accordance with statutory guidance and the welfare of the child.

14. Equality and Inclusion

The school will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Suspension or permanent exclusion decisions will not discriminate on the basis of:

- disability;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy or maternity.

15. Recording and reporting

The school will maintain accurate and confidential records relating to all suspensions and permanent exclusions, including the reasons for the decision, evidence considered, communications with parents, safeguarding considerations, support provided and any reintegration arrangements. The Headteacher will ensure that parents are informed without delay of any suspension or permanent exclusion and that all statutory notifications are made to the Governing Body and the Local Authority within the required timescales.

Where a suspension or permanent exclusion meets the threshold for governor review, the appropriate information will be provided to enable governors to fulfil their statutory responsibilities. The school will work collaboratively with the Local Authority, parents and relevant agencies to ensure that appropriate educational provision, safeguarding arrangements and support are put in place for the pupil where required. All records will be retained securely in accordance with data protection legislation and the school's records management procedures.

Review

The Governing Body will review this policy annually, or sooner where changes to legislation, statutory guidance, local authority procedures or safeguarding requirements make this necessary. The effectiveness of the policy will be monitored through behaviour, safeguarding and exclusion data to ensure that suspensions and permanent exclusions are used fairly, proportionately and in accordance with the school's statutory duties