Part of the Branches Education Group

SUSPENSION AND EXCLUSION POLICY

Silver Birch
Empowering Every Learner, Building Skills for Life

Approved By	R Warhurst	Head Teacher	Aug 2026
Amendments Made			
Linked Policies	Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy, Complaints Procedure		
Signed	R Warhurst	Head Teacher	Aug 2026
	L De Hayes	Governance Chair	Aug 2026
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1.0 WHAT IS SUSPENSION?

1.1 Definition

A suspension is a disciplinary sanction whereby a pupil is temporarily prohibited from attending school for a specified period. During a suspension, the pupil must remain at home during school hours under the supervision of a parent or carer.

Silver Birch School is committed to providing an inclusive educational environment and recognises that many pupils may present with complex special educational needs, disabilities, communication needs, social, emotional and mental health difficulties, attachment difficulties and the impact of adverse childhood experiences. As such, suspension will only be used where it is lawful, reasonable, fair, proportionate and necessary, and after appropriate support and intervention strategies have been considered, unless the seriousness of the incident requires an immediate response.

There are two types of exclusion:

1. **Suspension(Fixed-TermSuspension)**
   A suspension is a temporary exclusion from school for a specified period. A pupil may be suspended for one or more fixed periods, up to a maximum of 45 school days within any academic year.

2. **PermanentExclusion**
   A permanent exclusion means that a pupil will no longer be permitted to attend the school and their name will be removed from the Admissions Register. Permanent exclusion will only be considered in exceptional circumstances where all reasonable alternatives have been explored and where remaining in school would seriously undermine the safety, welfare or education of others.

2.0 WHO CAN AUTHORISE A SUSPENSION OR PERMANENT EXCLUSION?

Only the Headteacher, or in their absence the Acting Headteacher, has the authority to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil.

Before making a decision, the Headteacher will consider all available evidence and will ensure that the decision is lawful, reasonable, fair and proportionate. Where appropriate, discussions will take place with Directors and other relevant professionals to explore suitable support, intervention or alternative arrangements before exclusion is considered.

The Headteacher will take account of any safeguarding concerns, the pupil's SEND, EHCP (where applicable), social care involvement, and any other relevant vulnerabilities before reaching a decision.

3.0 REASONS FOR SUSPENSION

3.1 Keeping Everyone Safe

The school has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils and staff. There may be occasions where it is necessary to remove a pupil from school temporarily in order to maintain the safety and wellbeing of the pupil themselves, other pupils or members of staff.

Silver Birch School provides education for pupils with complex needs, including autism, social, emotional and mental health needs, attachment difficulties and the effects of trauma and adverse

childhood experiences. Many pupils may communicate distress through behaviour, and the school is committed to understanding and responding to the underlying causes of behaviour.

The school uses therapeutic, restorative and supportive approaches to behaviour management wherever possible. Individual needs, disabilities, developmental stage, communication needs, safeguarding concerns and the circumstances surrounding any incident will always be carefully considered.

All incidents will be assessed on their individual circumstances, including the pupil's level of understanding, intent, premeditation, vulnerability and any contributing factors. The school will also consider whether additional support, reasonable adjustments, risk management strategies or amendments to provision may be appropriate.

Suspension will therefore be used only as a last resort or where the seriousness of the behaviour necessitates an immediate disciplinary response. Permanent exclusion will only be considered in exceptional circumstances where all reasonable alternatives have been considered and where the safety, welfare or education of others would be significantly compromised by the pupil remaining in school.

This approach reflects the school's commitment to inclusion whilst ensuring that the safety, welfare and learning of all members of the school community are protected.

3.2 Reasons for Suspension

The Headteacher may decide that suspension is necessary where allowing a pupil to remain in school would:

- Present a serious risk to the health, safety or welfare of the pupil concerned.
- Present a serious risk to the health, safety or welfare of other pupils, staff or visitors.
- Seriously disrupt the education of other pupils.
- Significantly compromise the orderly and safe running of the school.
- Prevent the school from effectively safeguarding the pupil or others.

Any decision to suspend will be lawful, reasonable, fair, proportionate and based on the individual circumstances of the case. The Headteacher will consider the pupil's age, SEND, EHCP, social care involvement, safeguarding needs, known vulnerabilities and any relevant mitigating factors before making a decision.

3.3 Unacceptable Conduct Which May Lead to Suspension

Suspension is an absolute last resort. However, the following behaviours may result in suspension where the seriousness of the incident warrants such action:

- Premeditated physical assault.
- Serious actual or threatened violence towards another person.
- Persistent aggressive or dangerous behaviour.
- Misuse, possession, supply, or intent to supply drugs, alcohol or other prohibited substances.
- Carrying, possessing, threatening with, or using an offensive weapon.
- Fire-setting, arson, or behaviour creating a significant fire risk.
- Serious damage to school property.
- Persistent bullying, including cyber-bullying.

- Discriminatory abuse, harassment or victimisation relating to any protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, including:
    - race, ethnicity or nationality;
    - religion or belief;
    - disability;
    - sex;
    - sexual orientation;
    - gender reassignment.
- Sexual harassment, sexual violence or harmful sexual behaviour.
- Conduct that places the safety or wellbeing of others at significant risk.

Offensive weapons are defined in the Prevention of Crime Act 1953 as any article made or adapted for causing injury to a person, or intended by the person carrying it for such use.

3.4 Other Reasons for Suspension

The examples above are not exhaustive. The Headteacher may determine that suspension is the only appropriate disciplinary response to a serious breach of school expectations or where other interventions have been unsuccessful.

Each case will be considered individually, taking account of the pupil's circumstances, support needs, vulnerabilities and the safety and wellbeing of the wider school community.

4.0 PROCEDURE FOR A SUSPENSION

The Headteacher will investigate the incident, consider all available evidence and, wherever appropriate, provide the pupil with an opportunity to present their account before reaching a decision.

The Headteacher will ensure that any decision is lawful, reasonable, fair and proportionate. Consideration will be given to:

- the facts of the incident;
- the seriousness of the behaviour;
- the pupil's SEND and vulnerabilities;
- safeguarding concerns;
- any mitigating circumstances;
- whether discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation may have contributed to the incident.

Where appropriate, the Headteacher will discuss the matter with Senior Leaders and relevant professionals before deciding whether suspension is necessary.

Parents/Carers will be informed as soon as reasonably practicable. Where a pupil has a Social Worker, is a Child Looked After, or is previously looked after, the relevant professionals will be informed as soon as possible.

Written confirmation will be issued to Parents/Carers and the commissioning Local Authority. This will include:

- the reason for the suspension;
- the length of the suspension;

- the date and arrangements for the pupil's return;
- details of any educational provision;
- information regarding the right to make representations or challenge the decision.

All suspensions will be formally recorded on the pupil's file and attendance register.

The school will take reasonable steps to provide and mark work during the first five school days of any suspension.

Where a suspension exceeds five consecutive school days, suitable full-time education will be arranged from the sixth school day by the Local Authority.

Where further evidence becomes available, the Headteacher may issue a further suspension or determine that permanent exclusion should be considered.

The Headteacher will not delay a decision solely because a police investigation or criminal proceedings are underway. Decisions will be made on the balance of probabilities using the evidence available at the time.

A reintegration meeting will be arranged following any suspension to support the pupil's successful return to education.

5.0 REINTEGRATION MEETING

Following a suspension, the school will arrange a reintegration meeting to support the pupil's return.

The meeting will normally involve:

- the Headteacher or nominated senior leader;
- relevant school staff;
- the pupil;
- Parents/Carers.

The purpose of the meeting is to:

- Review the circumstances that led to the suspension.
- Identify any underlying needs or contributing factors.
- Consider whether any additional support, interventions or reasonable adjustments are required.
- Agree restorative approaches and strategies to reduce the likelihood of future incidents.
- Review and update risk assessments where appropriate.
- Agree clear expectations and support arrangements moving forward.

A written reintegration record will be completed and shared with relevant parties.

6.0 PERMANENT EXCLUSION

Permanent exclusion will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and as a last resort.

Before making a decision, the Headteacher will consider:

- whether there has been a serious breach of the school's Behaviour Policy;

- whether allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education, welfare or safety of others;
- the pupil's individual needs and vulnerabilities;
- any safeguarding considerations;
- any reasonable adjustments or alternative strategies that have been considered.

The school will follow its published procedures and notify Parents/Carers and the commissioning Local Authority in writing.

8.0 REFERENCES

The following legislation and guidance have been considered in the preparation of this policy:

- Education Act 2002
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012
- Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended
- Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff (DfE)
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from Maintained Schools, Academies and Pupil Referral Units in England, Including Pupil Movement (DfE, July 2026)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years
- Independent School Standards Regulations 2014 (as amended)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child